

Workforce Development Board of Solano County



Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Plan

Program Year 2017 - 2020



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF SOLANO COUNTY

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Program Year 2017-2020
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Solano County
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
Program Year 2017-2020
Strategic Four-Year “Local Plan”
Narrative Sections 3. A through R
(Accompanying Section 1: “Cover Page”; and 2: “Regional Plan”)

3. LOCAL PLAN – for the Solano County Service Area

A. Local Board’s Strategic Vision

i. Strategic Vision to Support Regional Economic Growth and Self-sufficiency

A Shared Vision and Shared Strategy

The public/private partnership between the County of Solano Board of Supervisors and the non-profit Workforce Development Board of Solano County Inc. (WDBSC) is intended to carry out a “shared vision/shared strategy” that can build and sustain a *skilled workforce, a vibrant economy, and a shared prosperity* for the resident workforce and business community of both Solano County and the North Bay region.

This strategic vision elevates expectations for all workforce development entities in the County in order to:

- Best align and integrate service delivery for jobseekers, incumbent workers and businesses;
- Assure appropriate and timely-delivered services for all jobseekers, especially those with barriers to employment;
- Expand the quantity of qualified workers for local/regional businesses, and in so doing support regional growth for the business sector;
- Promote individual and familial self-sufficiency; and
- Best assure a positive return on investment (ROI) for all public resources invested and expended.

This basic vision is *aspirational*, with reliance on WDB leadership and a strengthened public/private partnership between businesses and workforce development service providers.

Job#1: Preparation of an Educated and Skilled Workforce

This Solano Local Plan intends to squarely address the “supply and demand” equation found within the County and regional work force equation.

Supply is to be addressed in both *quantitative terms* (i.e. is there a sufficient number of available and qualified workers/jobseekers), and *qualitative terms* (i.e. do the workers/jobseekers possess the needed hard/soft skills for in-demand occupations.)

Career pathways will serve as well-conceived and jointly-undertaken “maps” for businesses, education/training/employment entities, and jobseekers/workers to navigate - to address demand and fill supply, with an educated and skilled workforce.

A Commitment to Our Shared Customers

The criticism remains that publicly-funded workforce development programs are not as fully responsive as needs may indicate for either workforce participants or employers. Services are not sufficiently targeted, resources are poorly invested, outcomes are subpar (if and when measured), the ultimate “consumers” (i.e. businesses) are not being provided what is needed; and/or workers’ economic standing is not being enhanced.

This Solano Plan intends that service delivery across all workforce development providers be customer-driven and customer-centered. Continuous improvement efforts will center on this principle.

Support of State and Regional Strategies

Within this framework the WDBSC will support both the Governor’s “California Unified Workforce Development Plan” and the Northern San Francisco Bay Area “WIOA Regional Plan” - so as to strategically:

- Align and integrate federal education, employment, and training programs;
- Guide investments to ensure that training and services meet the needs of businesses and job seekers;
- Apply consistent, job-driven training strategies across all relevant federal programs; and
- Engage economic, education and workforce partners in improving the workforce development system.

Local Operational Approaches

The WDBSC will further undertake the following initiatives to benefit Solano’s workforce and business community - so as to operationally:

- Convene, support, and participate in regional efforts;

- Work with Community colleges, adult education programs, apprenticeship programs, and economic development programs to build new kinds of integrated, demand-driven programs, including career pathways;
- Effectively engage and build lasting relationships with businesses; and
- Provide feedback to state institutions, the Legislature, and the Governor about what works and what doesn't.

Building the Americas Job Centers of California (AJCC) Collaboration

A broad base of employers and employer organizations, labor unions, public educational institutions, economic development entities, and community- or faith-based organizations will be successfully engaged through Solano's *center-piece* American Job Centers of California (AJCC) system. While service as a formal signatory party to the AJCC Memo of Understanding (MOU) may remain limited, any/all other workforce development entities can still join in and directly benefit from a connection to the AJCC - without need for written agreements.

A Larger "Community of Practice"

An informal "community of practice" among workforce development practitioners has been initiated in Solano County in part with guidance from the County Board of Supervisors and direct support of a recent State-funded Accelerator 3.0 development grant. The Solano WDB has been charged by the Board of Supervisors to take a lead on implementation of this broadest-possible look at bettering the local workforce system.

The "community of practice" will be develop/sustain a larger-scale enterprise involving all interested/committed workforce development practitioners. Relationships and joint initiatives will be undertaken on a "common playing field" of populations served and services rendered – which still respects individual funding sources/streams, various governance structures, continuance of certain "silos" for programs, various targeted populations to be served, and differing eligibility and planned outcomes.

This community will be a "coalition of the willing" – as a needed community resource that is much more than the mere sum of its parts.

While still in its first stages this expanded set of stakeholders has assisted in the development of this Local Plan's broad-based strategic vision, as laid out here-in. The group will then assist in critical implementation activities to follow across the four-year life of this Local Plan.

Accountability and Metrics – Assuring a Return on Investment (ROI)

A call to action has been issued to many, if not all of the workforce development practitioners, to be individually and collectively accountable to their customers and funding resources (especially taxpayers); and to adopt publicly-available, outcome metrics that are meaningful and transparent.

The further challenge is to adopt *common* metrics – so program efficiencies/effectiveness can be compared across programs by customers, the public, and policy-makers/decision-makers.

This Solano Local Plan commits to: 1) utilization of the new WIOA performance accountability measures as a minimal starting point (for programs required to use such); and 2) a good faith effort to introduce and test a limited set of new, common measures for the broader set of workforce development entities serving as part of the “community of practice” described above.

A Flexible and Adaptable Plan

Solano’s Plan has a four-year time horizon, and will serve as a living document that, based on experience and changing conditions will be revised over time.

- ii. Strategy to Work with Core Program Entities and Other Partners to Align Resources

Building and Enhancing a “Community of Practice”

The WIBSC has a long and successful history in collaborating with a wide range of educational, training, employment, and economic development-related entities within both the Solano community, and North Bay region.

This Plan lays forth an enhanced effort to further such relationships and build a more integrated workforce development system. This enhanced collaboration will include:

- The “core four” federal funding stream programs (i.e. the Title I program, the Wagner Peyser-funded programs, the rehabilitation programs, and the adult education and literacy programs);
- The set of mandated AJCC partner entities;
- The set of added, optional AJCC partner entities; and
- A broader, remaining set of entities –typically as justice system-based, community-based, and/or faith-based organizations

This broadest-possible set of participating entities will generally be termed the “*community of practice*” in the workforce development field of Solano County.

The initial, top-most task for this emerging community of workforce development practitioners will be to identify and address areas of commonality across service populations and/or service delivery efforts – to then better align programs and seek out increased efficiencies/effectiveness for common customers.

A Common Enterprise

The practical goal will be to “meet on a common playing field” where the best interests of funding sources are being served and governing “silos” are respected, yet the greatest possible economic benefit can be derived for the community.

The operative philosophy (and expectation of all) will be to seek out and build upon that which we have in common versus how we are different and history tells us we cannot possibly work together.

A Collective Return on Investment

This collaboration will be marked by the following characteristics.

Customer-focused – for job seekers, incumbent workers, and businesses

Strategically-focused – on practical societal and economic needs

- To provide a “just in time” trained, capable, and productive workforce for local and regional employers.

- To serve those job seekers with barriers to successful, sustainable employment (as needed in either a poor or vibrant economy.)

- To promote and facilitate upward income mobility for individuals and families.

- To anticipate and respond to the major national/state-level economic cycles – which turn from labor surpluses (with high unemployment) to labor shortages (with low unemployment.)

- To forecast and respond to critical labor market and skills shortages, affecting the competitiveness of local/regional businesses.

Accountability – for both customer responsiveness and performance metrics

Efficiency and Effectiveness – to assure a return on investment (ROI) with limited resources

Alignment of Efforts and Resources - to maximize service capabilities and enhance outcomes

Being impactful – so as to truly increase workers career opportunities and earnings capabilities, while serving business’ immediate and longer-term needs.

B. Local Program Alignment

i. Description of Workforce Development (WD) System in Area

Overview

Solano’s workforce system continues to evolve and become more so a “system” – albeit at a gradual pace with various parts/components (i.e. institutions) moving forward based on new

legislative mandates, major “systems change” funding opportunities, rallying calls from customers, and/or peer encouragement/pressure. Nonetheless progress is occurring toward a more commonsensical, integrated way of doing business, marked by a customer focus, ease of access to services, best/highest use of limited resources, and meaningful metrics.

State-of-Affairs at this Point in Transitioning From WIA to WIOA

The 16-year history of the WIA program saw major strides to create a “wagon wheel” relationship between the major educational, training and employment-related entities – with the One Stop Career Center system as the hub, a variety of two-way “spokes” from the hub to the outer perimeter (as referral avenues), and then an array of up to 25 entities on the outer rim of the wheel.

This was a commonsensical architecture that could bring multiple agencies together in a common enterprise and afford job seekers a clearer, defined means to access needed services – under a “no wrong door” approach.

The WIOA construct for service delivery has been characterized as a “pin wheel” – much the same as the above-described “wagon wheel.” The Solano WDB intends to utilize these analogies as a simple, yet best-possible ways to describe the inter-relations between partnering entities, and the means by which jobseekers can access needed services.

New Emphases Under WIOA

The new WIOA program has brought forth several sophistications to this wagon wheel – now called a “pin wheel.” These include:

- A comprehensive effort to “collaborate” among institutions, and “integrate” front-line service delivery efforts – while respecting the variety of governance structures, legislative mandates, targeted audiences for service, and expected outcomes for each entity;
- A stronger mandate to include economic development entities and apprenticeship programs as partners;
- A heightened effort on staff training/development across all partner agencies – so a better, informed match of jobseeker or employer can be made to partnering agencies;
- A much more meaningful referral system – to be sure there is a “warm handoff” and “warm reception” (for each referred job seeker), with: a) follow- up to be sure the referral happens b) the referred individual shows up; c) there is a good faith effort to respond and deliver needed services; and d) as appropriate and feasible co-case management and integrated service delivery truly takes place;
- Application of the WIOA performance standards, to at least include the major programs under the WIOA Titles; and
- Development of a common data gathering and case management system (via CalJOBS) – again to at least include the major programs under the WIOA Titles; and

Challenges Going Forward

Solano's system still faces challenges/obstacles that are both externally-imposed and internally-generated. These include:

- An over-arching challenge to find a "common playing field" (to collaborate/integrate upon), and then find new ways to successfully "play the game" as a joint enterprise;
- Demands which exceed the capacity/ability to respond with available resources. As the "system" is refined more jobseekers and employers step forward to avail themselves of service. Yet funding/staffing levels remain constant at best;
- More and more is being asked of the system, notably to perform both "50,000 foot" planning/collaboration/systems-change work *and* "5,000 foot" direct service delivery – with an eye on both the regional and local communities. The system's true abilities to perform on all these goals is yet to be determined. The all party's best efforts will be called upon;
- Solano has particularly seen a loss of community-based organizations involved in the workforce development field, and a loss of private and/or non-profit training institutions (that are able to comply with ETPL requirements.) As a result service delivery capacity is being negatively impacted for the County;
- The best opportunities to re-establishing and build a new top-quality, demand-driven training opportunities may lie with the community college, adult school and formal apprenticeship institutions; and
- Silos still remain, and will likely continue to exist as long as national or state-level legislatures pass new legislation and approve new funding streams.

Needed Investment in Staff Capacity and Capabilities

The Solano WDB remains committed to ongoing broad-based as well as task/function-specific investments in the staff who are truly "practitioners" in this industry. History and perspective on this nation's investment in its workforce (both private and public) is an important foundation, especially for new entrants to the field. Specific investments in critical day-to-day administrative and operational functions are then needed for staff – to assure high performance and accountability for outcomes.

The Solano WDB will continue to provide staff training and technical assistance to its own staff, and participate in regional or State-level training efforts – all to improve basic staff capacity/capability. These efforts are all instrumental for "continuous improvement."

A new challenge under WIOA is to assure a like investment across the system and across multiple entities. The Solano WDB intends to promote and undertake cross-staff training through such means as: 1) broader and free-flowing exchange of basic information; 2) open-enrollment training sessions; 3) cross attendance at conferences/convenings; 4) multi-sponsor (and attendee) "summits"; and other means to convene and inform practitioners.

ii. Support for State Plan's Seven (7) Policy Strategies

This Solano Plan supports the Governor's seven Policy Strategies as follows (in brief.)

1. Utilization of **Business/Industry "Sector Strategies"**

Solano's Approach:

- √ Bringing needed focus to two top-most local industries, namely *healthcare* and *advanced manufacturing*;
- √ Creating/aligning partnerships around these two identified industries;
- √ Capitalizing on investments made with State-funded "SlingShot" resources – to import and replicate state-of-the-art employer engagement strategies;
- √ Sustaining the WDB-driven emphasis to serve employers as an equal customer as job seekers; and
- √ Extending the WDB's 14-year history in providing "business services." Enhancing such services, especially to reach more mid- and small-sized employers.

2. Creating/Sustaining **"Career Pathways"**

Solano's Approach:

- √ Changing the mind set of an "either/or proposition" – that high school and community college students must choose to either go to (and complete) a four-year college program or discontinue educational pursuits and go directly in to the workforce. The proposition needs to more rightly be "continuing education and work";
- √ Supporting the importance of, and seeking expansion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) in high schools and community colleges;
- √ Promoting apprenticeship programs as a viable skills acquisition pathway for a career – with a highly desirable "earn while you learn" opportunity;
- √ Capitalizing on investments made and lessons learned with the two major Career Pathways Trust Fund projects in Solano County (via the City of Vallejo School District) and North Bay (via the Northern California Career Pathways Alliance, or NCCPA);
- √ Bringing the WDB's proven entre to the business community to assist with creation of "work-based learning" and "earn while you learn" training opportunities with businesses;
- √ Extending the WDB's reach in to the high schools (and possibly middle schools) to create "on ramps" to career pathway programs;
- √ Expanding efforts with both the local Community College and Adult Schools to insure course offerings and certificated/credentialed programs are timely-provided in demand occupations;
- √ Taking care to properly plan for the "supply and demand equation" – such that there is a sufficient pipeline of students and graduates to meet demand, and efforts do not either: a) have too few prepared/qualified entering students; or b) provide for an oversupply to meet local/regional hiring needs; and
- √ Identifying and assisting in providing solutions for those personal/financial/familial/ societal causes for students to drop out from their educational pursuits.

5. Provision of Needed **Supportive Services** for Education and Training Participants

Solano's Approach:

√ The Solano WDB has a long history in operating a needs-based system to provide appropriate supportive services for enrolled participants in longer-term service interventions – most typically for classroom vocational skills training activities. This experience with: a) budgeting for such services b) assessing jobseekers' needs; c) having a range of available services; d) having access to service providers for certain needs; and e) having a fiscal system to reimburse participants or pay providers has positioned the WDB to continue such support under the WIOA program; and

√ The new WIOA-complaint system now continues to offer the following supportive services for eligible, enrolled jobseeker participants.

-Reimbursement for certain transportation costs (typically for mileage);

-Advance coverage of public transit costs (typically for transit system "passes");

-Subsidized childcare, through an Information and Referral provider and on to an approved provider;

-Advance payment (or reimbursement) for training-related expenses, such as special fees, books, training materials, expendable supplies, uniforms, tools, testing fees, credential/ certification fees; and

-Advance payment for uniforms and/or basic tools required for initial job placement.

6. Creation of **Cross-system Data** Capacity

Solano's Approach:

√ The Solano WDB was an early adopter for the State-developed and administered CalJOBS system. This same system is being maintained for the WIOA programs. This system provides: a) data gathering/reporting; b) enrolled job seeker tracking and case management; c) local day-to-day performance management reporting; and c) overall, aggregate performance reporting (for the WIOA performance standards);

√ This CalJOBS system is to be expanded to minimally bring the other WIOA-Titled programs (i.e. Titles II, III and IV) in to one common data system, for tracking participants and reporting performance in a similar manner as for the WDB's Title I programs; and

√ Additional State or locally-administered workforce development programs are intended in the future to be included as users of the CalJOBS system.

7. **Integration of Service Delivery**

Solano's Approach:

√ As referenced above the multiple local workforce development programs and entities are committed first to effective cross-agency *collaboration* as a means to then bring about effective *integration of service delivery* (on the front line of customer services for jobseekers, incumbent workers and employers);

- √ Integration of service delivery will be based on the “wagon wheel” (or “pin wheel”) model of service delivery in the local AJCC (as described in section 3.B.i., above.) In line with Congressional intent the AJCC will be the focal point of the workforce development system;
- √ Full service AJCC “brick and mortar” building sites in Fairfield and Vallejo will be complemented with both: a) an internet-based connectivity between participating partner agencies; and b) use of satellite and intermittent “pop-up” AJCC services in other cities and communities;
- √ Additional partner agencies will also be accessed as training resources, notably the set of trades apprenticeship schools in Solano and Napa counties; and
- √ Across the four-year term of this Plan additional partner agencies will become involved in offering services for job seekers and businesses.

C. Specified Services and Service Delivery Strategies

i. Efforts to Expand Access to Employment, Training, Education and Supportive Services for Eligible Individuals

This Solano Plan intends to undertake dual approaches to promote the full breadth of educational, training and employment resources in the County and ease the process for both applicant job seekers (and/or incumbent workers) and businesses to access such services. The approach will stress “no wrong door: such that customers seeking services not be side-tracked or misdirected from needed services – when accessing any of a full network of local service providers.

To this end the Plan intends to:

1. Fully develop and capitalize on the benefits of centralized services through the AJCC system (which includes both physical building locations in Fairfield and Vallejo and an online connectivity), and
2. Develop/install a “distributed delivery capability” through remote sites (including “pop-up” sites) such as local libraries, community centers, commercial malls, etc.

Access to Employment (for jobseekers and incumbent workers) will be enhanced by maintaining a well-conceived and fully-resourced “one stop” system – which is better known throughout the community. The AJCC system should be the well- recognized and respected “go to” place if you are looking for employment.

Access to Training and Education (for jobseekers and incumbent workers) will be enhanced via an effective referral and follow-up system (for each referral) which increases the basic knowledge of job seekers on what career pathways exist in the North Bay and what training programs feed those pathways – followed by easy-to-navigate “on ramps” to enter such training and careers.

Access to Needed Supportive Services (for jobseekers and incumbent workers) will be enhanced via greater attention given to the real, root cause(s) of a motivated job seeker being unable to apply for, enter in to and/or remain successful within educational or training pursuits, followed by a more integrated collaboration among service providers to “braid resources” and effectively remove such barriers for individuals.

Access via Special “On Ramps” (for those who may have special barriers, including need for remediation and added preparatory efforts) will receive heightened attention, and development of special pilot efforts as part of this Local Plan. Despite the best efforts to build/sustain state-of-the-art vocational pathways the old adage “build it and they will come” does not always prove true. Many are unable to even enter the pathway if they have personal/familial/financial/judicial barriers and/or are in need of educational remediation or mastery of prerequisite education or skills acquisition. New approaches are needed to build career on-ramps.

ii. Development of Career Pathways and Co-enrollments

Career Pathways

The Solano WDB was a founding member of the collaborative which developed and submitted a successful competitive application for a \$15 million Northern California Career Pathway Alliance (NCCPA) project. Additionally the WDB served to support a \$5 million City of Vallejo Unified School District Career Pathway Trust Fund project.

Both Career Pathways projects started in 2014 with the following accomplishments already achieved.

- A first-time-ever multi-county and multi-party regional forum has been created, which serves as a governing body for the NCCPA project, but just as importantly began to build personal relationships between leaders within various organizations;
- Greater focus on local employers’ in-demand hiring needs and career opportunities is being provided students and parents in both middle schools and high schools;
- Much developmental work has been accomplished to align K-12 and community college course work in to a true understandable vertical “ladder” that students can access. High school course work is beginning to receive credit at the community college, for some courses of study;
- Needed connections with local employers have been made to both gain needed input and create work-based learning opportunities – aligned with course work in the schools;
- The set of local WDBs were recognized as having productive relations with businesses and enlisted to directly assist in making these business connections; and
- Two jointly-sponsored North Bay “Summits” have been held between the educational institutions (under the NCCPA project) and the local WDBs (utilizing SlingShot resources) to highlight this new investment in career pathways. Experts and involved stakeholders from

the North Bay, from Northern California, and from other states participated as presenters or panelists.

The Solano WDB is committed to continuing as an active partner in the Career Pathway projects (as they finish out their funding cycle and institutionalize best practices within the schools), and to instill the very concept of well-designed and accessible “pathways” for adult job seekers.

A special emphasis will be undertaken to assist those with barriers to employment, for which added “on-ramp” activities may be needed – to assist with needed educational remediation, completion of prerequisite coursework, provision of critically-needed supportive services, active case management and coaching, and “soft skills” counseling/instruction.

A specific emphasis of the WDB will be to consider and develop/test new approaches for career “on-ramps” as discussed in Section C.1., above.

Co-enrollments Across Programs

Job seeker customers will be afforded the opportunity for co-enrolling in various workforce development programs/activities, where eligible for, and appropriate for concurrent or sequential access to services.

This opportunity will be an expanded aspect of the AJCC’s operation under WIOA in so far as the above-referenced meaningful referral and follow-up system, coupled with multiple points of AJCC access will afford job seekers: a) greater ease of access; b) a more robust initial assessment of needs; c) greater knowledge on available services; and d) a “no wrong door” approach – which places importance on getting job seekers what is needed on a more timely basis.

iii. Improving Access to Activities Leading to Industry-recognized Credentials

As part of this enhanced, more-integrated workforce system institutions which traditionally offer respected credentials/certifications, and/or newly-created training institutions/programs (issuing credentials/certifications) will become the primary, presumptive deliverers of classroom vocational training.

These existing or new training institutions will be required to develop and maintain relations with local/regional businesses (and/or associations) which hire in given occupations for training so as to: a) assure local labor demand; b) develop and maintain appropriate curriculum and training tools/equipment; c) assure proper instruction is occurring in the classroom; d) create a meaningful, industry-recognized testing/achievement processes to show mastery of defined skill sets; e) issue credentials/certifications and f) assure industry recognition of credentials/certifications issued by that training school.

The Solano WDB's leadership in engaging employers (as described in Sections 3.ii.1. and 3.iv. & v.) will serve as a catalyst and aid to such training institutions, with an easy, direct access to local/regional employers in given industries. In-demand hiring needs will more readily be identified and confirmed. Required skill sets will be catalogued and specific curricula and training tools/equipment will be set forth by industry. An alignment between such employers and training institutions will de facto produce industry-recognized credentialing of graduates – not as a printed diploma, but as a proven/successful entry criterion for local employers

Skills, and combined skill sets, may differ slightly from one employer to another and change across time. The Solano WDB is committed to working with local training institutions to assure more than an “diploma” for a student's aggregate performance (in an occupational area) but rather to catalog all the major *skills sets*” mastered, and produce what are stackable and mobile skills credentials. This detail on one's mastery would then be fully available for prospective employers to consider and reward with employment and/or advancement opportunities.

iv. Engagement of Employers in WD Programs

As described above (in Section 3.ii.1.) the Solano WDB has built a foundation in serving employers through both: 1) a long term history offering practical, meaningful “business services” to local/regional businesses; and 2) developing new, state-of-the-art approaches/tools to effectively engage employers on a policy-setting and operational basis – for the workforce development system itself.

The WDB intends to maintain its traditional investment in staff resources for “business services.” However, the WDB has initiated a re-organization of its staffing so as to best engage employers on the larger stage of workforce development policy and operations. A dedicated Business and Workforce Liaison position has been created, with much autonomy and independence for such an incumbent to serve as an active liaison with business and a go-between (i.e. broker) to bring together needed partner entities to address identified business needs.

The WDB intends to strengthen and institutionalize this level of staff support to effectively engage employers. All efforts will be undertaken with a keen sense not to “over-promise and under-deliver” and in so doing build lasting relationships with local and regional businesses.

v. Support of WDB and Partners to Meet Needs of Business

As part of this integrated workforce development system a new enhanced system will be instituted across various partnering agencies, as follows

- The WDB will maintain a lead role to identify and capitalize on working relations with local and regional businesses. This will be maintained given: a) the WDB's Board of Directors being a business-led group; b) the WDB agency's excellent history in providing a range of valued “business services”; and c) the WDB benefitting from a number of recent “systems investment” grant opportunities (notably a State-funded “SlingShot grant) – where state-of-

the-art approaches to serving businesses have been tested and incorporated in to mainstream operations;

- The WDB will develop and share a range of new “business information products” which will be freely shared with any/all local workforce development practitioners. These will be based on special labor market studies, newly available “big data” sources, and new tools and Customer Relations Management (CRM) systems being developed with economic development partners;
- Partnering agencies will be encouraged to adapt their approaches in serving businesses based on new lessons being learned, respect for the limited time and energy of businesses to interact with staff from multiple agencies, and a sharing of information/data on the area’s business needs - so as to avoid duplicative studies/surveys/forums/etc. with local and regional businesses; and
- Further integration of business outreach and responsiveness to business will be developed across the course of this four-year Plan – with options considered and possible plans developed/implemented for coordinated business contracts/tracking and actual service delivery – across a fuller breadth of workforce development entities.

vi. Coordination of WD Program With Economic Development Efforts

The Solano WDB has a long-standing history of cooperation and collaboration with both the county-level economic development entity (known as the Solano Economic Development Corporation, or SEDC) and the individual city-based economic development departments. A senior staff member from one of these entities has held a seat on the previous Workforce Investment Board and now holds a seat on the WDB. The WDB President/Executive Director holds a seat on the SEDC Board of Directors.

The meaningful, productive working relations between the WDB and these entities have been expanded/enhanced in the last 3 years as an outcome of both the SEDC participating in several major economic development projects (Example: The Department of Defense-funded “Moving Solano Forward” project), and the WDB’s creation of the above-cited Business and Workforce Liaison position (which can more readily interact with economic development staff on policy/operational matters affecting local /regional businesses.)

Benefits have accrued for WDB staff when now taking a broader look at the economic vitality of the region and County, as well as given industries and businesses. Economic development staff have benefitted when faced with the rising concerns of business about “workforce” and knowing that the WDB (and related, partnering entities) can serve as a reliable resource, with the best interests of that business in mind.

vii. Strengthening Linkages Between One-Stop System and Unemployment Insurance System

Solano's two full-service AJCC facilities (in Fairfield and Vallejo) will continue to provide jobseeker access to the State-administered Unemployment Insurance (UI) system – either with on-site staff assistance or remote telephone or internet-based assistance. Freely-available information on eligibility for UI, and the application process for UI, will be distributed through the complete AJCC system – beyond these two sites. Further assistance will be available to “trouble shoot” problems that UI recipients may experience during the time of their receipt of UI aid.

Local “Rapid Response” activities will continue to offer very timely and complete information on available UI resources, through the direct involvement of EDD Workforce Services and UI staff members.

The Solano WDB acknowledges an increased level of participation by senior UI administrators in development of the new AJCC Memos of Understanding (MOUs.) The WDB anticipates much enhanced linkages between the operation of the AJCC system, those jobseekers who unfortunately must access UI benefits, and the State UI system staff – based on these new AJCC MOUs.

D. Information on Local AJCCs

i. Assurance of Continuous Improvement for the AJCCs (and all service providers)

- Role of the WDB and Its Committees

The WDB (and its Committees) have traditionally overseen all aspects of operations and received regular, full reports on compliance issues and performance outcomes. The full feedback circle exists within this structure of bodies that “plan” and then also “review.” Needed course corrections and/or full-scale redesigns are thus identified and undertaken in a timely manner. This input/feedback loop will continue and be enhanced as new reporting tools become available.

During the life of this four-year Local Plan the WDB will undertake efforts to sophisticate its oversight abilities utilizing such means as: broadening efforts to solicit competitive proposals from capable service providers; building common performance metrics across programs (as referenced in Section 3.A.i.); use of an integrated “data dashboard”; and Board members possibly making site visits to providers (as a learning and possible rating process), as examples.

- Continuous Improvement for AJCC Operations

In accord with WIOA's expectations for: a) periodic procurement of certain aspects of the AJCC operation; b) regular review/oversight of the AJCC's administration/operation by the WDB; c) investments made in staff training and technical assistance (for AJCC staff); and d) continuous improvement for the AJCC the Solano WDB will utilize the services of its standing “Planning and Oversight Committee” and ad hoc “Solano Employment Connection AJCC Steering

Committee” to provide top-most-level oversight of WIOA-funded activities (with an initial focus for Title I.)

- *Continuous Improvement for Title I Career Services*

Additionally, this Local Plan is predicated on in-house WDB staff performing delivery of the critical “Career Services” component for the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker grants. As such the WDB (and its committees) will likewise provide direct oversight of performance and instill needed continuous improvement efforts for the provision of high-quality career services

ii. Facilitating Access to AJCC Services

The two AJCC sites (in Fairfield and Vallejo) meet all appropriate federal and/or state requirements for physical access under applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

These two AJCC sites are: located in major cities of the County (including the County seat); in visible, business-like settings; and located along major public transit bus lines. Sufficient no-cost off-street parking is available at each site.

As cited above, the AJCCs will evolve and incorporate more sites/tools/technologies to offer services remotely (in physical mini-satellites or “pop-up” settings) and/or to provide more robust online services for jobseekers and businesses.

iii. Compliance With Physical Access Requirements

As noted above the two AJCC sites meet all applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for physical access and use-ability for those with disabilities. Each site has adaptive equipment to ease use of services for those with disabilities.

Concern for physical access is maintained throughout all aspects of the Solano WDB’s administration and operation of programs. This concern spans not just WIOA-related activities but expands beyond to any/all WDB undertakings either directly or in partnership with others (and activities under other funding sources.) A recent example (as cited in Section 3.J.i) includes assurance that the “community input forums” held to gain input on the forthcoming Regional and Local Plans were held in ADA accessible sites.

This strict compliance to provide free and unfettered access will be maintained as part of this Local Plan.

iv. Roles and Resource Contributions of AJCC Partners

- Overview

The Solano WDB has approached creation and maintenance of AJCC relations across partnering entities on both an *evolutionary basis* (from the 16-year experience with One Stop system under

the WIA law) and what is a *realistic approach* given fiscal/staffing realities for many agencies for 2017-2010.

The Solano environment is one of harmonious and supportive relations between governmental entities, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, advocacy groups, and others. This spirit has guided relations across the WIA program’s One Stop system operation and has continued in the development/refinement of the WIOA-authorized AJCC system.

- Involvement of “Core-four” Agencies

Primary emphasis has been upon active participation of the WIOA-specific “core four” programs, as authorized under the major Titles of the WIOA legislation. These include the following funding avenues, and participating partner agencies:

<u>Funding Avenue</u>	<u>Participating Agency</u>
The Title I, including:	
- Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth and special discretionary-funded programs/projects	WDB Governor’s
- Job Corps grant program	Job Corps
- Native American grant programs	
- Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker grant programs	CA Human Development
The Title II adult education and literacy programs; and	Adult Schools
The Title III traditional Wagner-Peyser-authorized “labor exchange” programs; and	State EDD
The Title IV rehabilitation programs.	State Dept. of Rehabilitation

- Focus on Mandated AJCC Partner Agencies

Solano County has had a long-term history with One Stop Career Center systems/operation and has, for the life of the prior Workforce Investment Act (WIA) era, had a “*come one, come all*” approach whereby any/all motivated/interested “mandatory” and/or “voluntary” partner agencies were accepted as One Stop partner agencies and signatories to the formal One Stop memo of understanding (MOU.) Membership typically included 21 to 25 agencies across the life of the WIA program. True, active participation varied tremendously, however.

The WDB’s approach for WIOA has brought greater focus on *active participation* (and consideration for cost-sharing) to the set of mandated partner agencies (including the core-four cited above.) This includes the following added funding avenues and participating partner agencies:

<u>Funding Avenue</u>	<u>Participating Agency</u>
Older American Act grant programs	DOL-approved contractor now in transition
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE)grant programs	Community College
Title II of the Trade Act of 1974 grant programs	State EDD
Chapter 41 of Title 38, US Code grant programs	State EDD
Community Services Block Grant Act employment and training grant programs	CAP Solano
US Dept of Housing and Urban Renewal employment and training grant programs (NOTE: No E&T activities currently in place for Solano)	N/A
State unemployment insurance (UI) programs	State EDD
Federal Second Chance Act of 2007 grant programs (NOTE: No grants currently in place for Solano)	NA
US Social Security Act Title IV Part A grant programs.	County Social Services/TANF

- Expanded, Open Opportunity for Additional Agencies to Benefit

The Solano WDB intends to offer additional agencies an open invitation, and opportunity to become engaged in AJCC activities. Such agencies will be informed on and kept abreast of AJCC services, special events, job postings, workshops, employer hirings, online resources, etc. and encouraged to make such resources fully available to their constituents/customers.

- Use of a “Master MOU” and Set of “Partner Agency MOUs”

The Solano WDB has utilized a two-tier approach to formally engage partner agencies in the AJCC enterprise. These tiers include:

An overarching Master MOU which makes the basic commitment of all agencies to support the AJCC and work together. The document is meant to be long-lasting and not subject to variations or continuous updates/edits/etc. The document is approved and signed off upon by the WDB itself and County Board of Supervisors. Mandated partnering agencies are listed there-in. WDB staff is authorized therein to negotiate and sign off on individual Partner Agency MOUs.

A set of accompanying Partner Agency MOUs, which: memorialize the commitment by each agency (with cross reference to the Master MOU); account for some limited customization for each agency; and commit to specific, negotiated cost-sharing arrangements. These MOUs may be updated/modified from time to time. Additional agencies could be added across time (or deleted, if provided for in legislation.)

- Specific Roles and Resources Contributions for AJCC Agency Participation

Exhibit 1 provides a matrix highlighting the roles and contributions of the partnering agencies for the Solano AJCC system with notation whether via the Fairfield and/or Vallejo sites.

v. Executed and/or In-process AJCC MOUs and/or Agreements (Appendices)

Please see Attachments TBD through TBD for the *executed* “Master MOU Agreement” and associated “Partner Agency MOUs.”

Please see Attachments TBD through TBD for remaining *draft* “Partner Agency MOUs” for those agreements which have been agreed to in principle by all parties, but have *yet to be fully executed*.

Those that are still “*in process*” include the following, with an explanation as to current delays or impediments.

<u>Funding Stream/Agency</u>	<u>Status</u>
(NOTE: To be updated in final Local Plan submittal - with most-current status.)	
_____	_____
_____	_____

vi. Provision of Access for Indian and Native American Populations

The Solano WDB has had a long-standing relationship with the major, regional Department of Labor-funded provider of WIA/WIOA services for Native Americans. This relationship has been with “California Indian Manpower Consortium” (CIMC.) The CIMC Executive Director had previously been a long-serving member of the WIB of Solano County.

The CIMC has been an involved member in the development of the new WIOA AJCC Memo of Understanding (MOU) and serves as a signatory. Relationships embedded in the AJCC MOU will afford participants served by AIMC to be informed of AJCC services and be able to benefit from the enhanced inter-agency referral/tracking system (as described above in Section 3.B.7.)

The “no wrong door” approach will be afforded the Indian and Native American population, as a means to ease access to services.

vii. Provision of Access for Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers

The Solano WDB has had a long-standing relationship with the major, regional Department of Labor-funded provider of WIA/WIOA services for Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers This relationship has been with the “California Human Development (CHD) organization A senior CHD executive has previously been a long-serving member of the WIB of Solano County. An executive currently sits on the WDB and serves on its Executive Committee.

The CHD organization has been an involved member in the development of the new WIOA AJCC Memo of Understanding (MOU) and serves as a signatory. Relationships embedded in the AJCC MOU will afford participants served by CHD to be informed of AJCC services and be able to benefit from the enhanced inter-agency referral/tracking system (as described above in Section 3.B.7.)

The “no wrong door” approach will be afforded the Migrant and Seasonal Farm Worker population, as a means to ease access to services.

viii. AJCCs as an On-ramp for Regional Sector Pathways

As highlighted above (in Section 3.A.ii.2.) the Solano WDB has invested efforts in building “on ramps” to career pathways with two initiatives, namely: 1) as an active partner in the two local Career Pathway Trust Fund projects; and 2) assisting in creating a pre-apprentice “feeder” program for the local building trades apprenticeship training schools.

The local AJCC will continue to publicize these options for those jobseekers who need exposure to new career opportunities and a clear means to prepare for, apply for, and be considered for entry (via a defined “on-ramp.”)

The goal will be to avoid gaps where an applicant could otherwise drop out or be side-tracked from successfully pursuing that immediate training opportunity and further career paths.

E. Specific Programs, Populations and Partners

i. Coordination With Regional Economic Development Activities in Area

The Solano WDB has long-standing working relationships with its local county-wide and city-based economic development organizations. These relationships will continue and be enhanced across the life of this four-year Plan.

The WDB Executive Director typically serves as an elected Board of Directors member of the county-wide “Solano Economic Development Corporation (SEDC.) The Executive Director, and WDB staff additionally participate in standing or ad hoc SEDC committees.

WDB staff work with city-based economic development staff through: a) the SEDC’s efforts (which convenes all the city staff); and b) individual contacts/requests which typically surround Rapid Response efforts (for a local business layoff or closure) or hiring needs of a local business (as a new, expanding, or incoming business.)

Under the dual emphasis of the WIOA legislation for regional efforts and an elevated role for economic development WDB staff has been: a) seeking out and encouraging more regional ties between economic development entities across the North Bay; and b) gradually sponsoring or joining in upon joint ventures (beginning with cross ties to the four North Bay WDBs.)

An example of a joint venture is the current effort to replicate a joint Sonoma WDB/Sonoma Economic Development Agency “Job Market Tracker” system across the full North Bay. While this hasn’t yet come to fruition the model speaks to enhanced, not-present-heretofore working relations between the WDBs and economic development entities in the North Bay.

Entrepreneurship opportunities will continue to be promoted and supported primarily through the Community College-sponsored Small Business Development Center (SBDC) with which the WDB has had a long-standing relationship.

ii. Description of Available Adult and Dislocated Worker Activities in Area

The Solano WDB has in place a time-proven and performance-tested approach to administer and operate the WIOA-authorized Adult, Dislocated, and occasional special Adult/Dislocated Governor-funded discretionary grant program. The delivery system is based on two principle paths for jobseekers, namely for: 1) those in need of and desirous of vocational skills training for an in-demand occupation; or 2) those possessing marketable job histories and skills and express need for immediate placement assistance. The former path is entitled locally as the “Career Training Connect” (CTC) program; the latter the “Job Connect” (JC) program.

Solano WDB staff is in place to perform all needed functions to: market; recruit; eligibilize; enroll; assess; counsel; develop an employment plan for; provide supportive services for; refer to either CTC services - for vocational classroom instruction, with credential attainment, or JC services - for direct placement or on-the-job training OJT); provide job readiness assistance (including soft skills enhancement); offer access to ETPL-approved institutions/courses; job develop; place in to employment; provide follow up services; track participation, report on participation and outcomes; prepare and utilize management reports; track and record expenses; utilize the State CalJOBS system, and provide other needed services – for eligible, enrolled Adult and Dislocated Worker participants.

This full range of WIOA-prescribed “Career Services” is provided via a set of WDB staff – which functions as outreach staff, intake workers, eligibility workers, employability specialists, placement coaches, workshop presenters, business services representatives, fiscal staff, MIS staff, IT staff, office support staff, and managers/supervisors.

The WDB procures certain services, such as centralized childcare information and referral services and information technology (IT) support. The WDB contracts for vocational classroom instruction via individual referrals (aka an individual “vouchering” system) with training entities with approved courses on the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) – within an approximate 50 mile radius inside and outside the County boundaries.

Duplication of efforts is avoided under an administrative approach of “*let each party do that which it does best.*” The WDB Career Services staff provide instrumental career

guidance/coaching, and subsequent connecting of job seekers with employers. The local/regional training providers provide in-demand skills training and credentialing. Other contractors provide very narrowly-defined support to the system.

iii. Coordination of Rapid Response Activities in Area

- Early-identifiers: the “Eyes and Ears”

City and County-based economic development staff are actively engaged in local rapid response activities. These staff are more so “in the know” on the health of their local businesses and whether relocations out of the area or downturns in business activities are expected.

Such staff know of the WDB’s/EDD’s resources and serve to alert WDB staff of any looming or actual business layoffs/closures. On occasion these staff members will bring WDB staff in early, on a confidential basis, to be of assistance to businesses. A trust factor has been built such that these city/county staff are comfortable to share information with WDB staff – knowing that high quality, timely services will follow.

Additionally, as an integral part of a US Department of Defense-funded project, administered by the Solano Economic Development Corporation, a new “customer relations management” (CRM) tool is being implemented across the cities/county/WDB to track, record and share information on contacts made with local businesses.

This tool is the “Executive Pulse” system and will dramatically advance the joint ability of “business problem solvers” to know of local business’ challenges and be better able to bring solutions forward. A major element of Executive Pulse is a special adjunct “workforce component” that will capture and share recruitment, hiring, training, and/or retention challenges for local businesses.

This combined recording and sharing of information will serve as added “eyes and ears” as it relates to businesses “at risk” of closure/downsizing, or relocating out of the area. Layoff aversion opportunities will be identified more readily with these staff resources and technology tools – to allow the WDB the opportunity to, under best conditions, avert layoffs or closures (when working with other city or county resources.)

The WDB also benefits from: 1) official notifications of qualifying layoffs/ closures via the formal WARN process; and 2) the “gossip mill” - typically as a newly-laid-off worker first accesses AJCC services, or affected workers spread word through family/acquaintances/etc.

- Institutional Responders – the Rapid Response Team

Solano has a long-standing, very positive working relationship between the two key response entities, namely the WDB itself and the State EDD (for both its Workforce Services and Unemployment Insurance Divisions.) This is based on decades of experience in operating plant closure/layoff response activities where-in logical lead roles and needed partnerships have been developed and institutionalized.

While the identified WDB Rapid Response Coordinator fulfills certain lead roles it is a team of WDB and EDD staff that approach the affected employer, arrange for assistance, and follow through for timely service delivery.

Resources quickly come to bear during periods of high activity with multiple incidents (such as has occurred in 2016), as well as when there has been little activity across several years and a quick re-assembly of staff capability is suddenly called for.

The WDB staff plays an added role in assessing demand for in-depth services to follow (for affected workers) and being a part of the WDB team which may prepare a request for Governor's WIOA Additional Dislocated Worker Assistance Funding.

- *Business Partners*

Businesses become involved in three areas of Rapid Response, to include:

Direct participation as the employer-of-record for the affected workforce. Ideally this would include pre-layoff assistance and use of on-site facilities/resources. Where feasible such businesses may offer transfer opportunities to other business locations;
Specially-targeted Hiring Employer, as a business which steps forward immediately and seeks special access to the soon-to-be or recently laid off workforce. This may include cross-sharing of candidates or a special "hiring fair" just for affected workers; and/or
General Community of Employers for whom job development and placement efforts are targeted.

- *Affected Employees and Their Representatives (e.g. Organized Labor)*

The direct input of affected workers is always sought, initially via any feedback or suggestions gained in initial sessions held with affected workers. A formal survey is administered with workers, with results helping guide WDB staff (and partners) on how best to conduct the initial response activities and possibly build a request for Governor's WIOA Additional Dislocated Worker Assistance Funding.

In circumstances where the workforce is represented by a labor organization the WDB staff act immediately to partner with such labor organization(s) and gain the organization's advice, guidance and possible direct assistance on project planning/development/refinement, partnering with the employer, communicating with affected workers, marketing available WDB services to workers, and providing in-kind support to the WDB and/or workers, where feasible.

iv. Description of Youth Activities in Area

The Solano WDB has a long-term, performance-tested history in designing, operating, and refining a “youth program” under the series of DOL-administered workforce development block grants – up through WIA and now for WIOA.

As described in Section 3.E.ii., above (for the Adult and Dislocated Worker activities) the WDB has a full array of staff resources devoted to both the administrative and operational aspects of delivering WIOA Title I Youth Grant services. Additionally the WDB has procured a service provider to offer tutoring, leadership training, and financial literacy training services for enrolled youth participants.

The Solano community has a traditional array of youth-serving public, private-non-profit, and faith-based organizations – most often providing but one element of what a youth or young adult needs to properly prepare for the competitive adult labor market. Compounding this situation is a longer-term lack of any County-wide collaboration across these various organizations. Businesses which want to provide entry points for young workers find frustration in how to interact with the youth workforce development “system” – as it is. Great strides are underway, however to promote Career and Technical Education (CTE) for youth and to apply Career Pathway models to assist youth (and their parents) to navigate the work-preparation system

In accord with the new emphases of the WIOA legislation the WDB has undertaken: 1) its own expanded outreach and engagement strategies with youth- and young adult-serving agencies to build a here-to-fore-absent “youth collaboration” for youth employment; 2) actively engage in the two Career Pathway Trust Fund project within the County; and 3) merge efforts in to the fast-emerging “Youth Employment Solano” (YES) initiative – bringing both a collaboration of youth-serving agencies and local businesses together to address the employment needs of youth and young adults.

While “silos” may still exist between school-based, governmental-based, community-based, faith-based and employer-based efforts to prepare tomorrow’s workforce, a new spirit of collaboration and public/private partnerships is emerging in Solano County.

The collaboration between youth-serving entities and businesses is in parallel to the above-referenced building of a “community of practice” which is devoted more so to the adult workforce.

v. Coordination With Relevant Secondary and Post-secondary Activities in Area

The Solano WDB has a long-term practice of engaging adult schools, regional occupational programs (ROPs), and community colleges so as to access high-quality, in-demand vocational classroom instruction (and credentialing of successful graduates.)

Unfortunately the ROP efforts were eliminated a number of years ago and only in 2016-17 (and now beyond) are adult schools rebuilding their capacity to offer training/credentialing – with new California Adult Education Block Grant funds, and/or competitively-derived WIOA Title II resources.

Additional work is required for the local adult education and literacy providers to once more be a major provider of vocational classroom instruction, in support of the local WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth programs.

The WDB partners with the local Solano Community College on any of three bases, as follows.

- For individual referrals/enrollments of a Title I-enrolled participants for training in an in-demand occupation. These are referred to as “onesy-twosy” co-enrollments;
- For WDB sponsorship of a full block of classroom slots – for a highly -in-demand occupational area – as controlling law allows for; and
- Via a “wrap around” model where in-place, Title I eligible college students are identified and enrolled in the WDB program and: a) the WDB provides career counseling support, job placement assistance and certain supportive services; while b) the college and/or student supports the tuition/fee costs.

The Solano WDB deploys similar efforts with neighboring community colleges in Contra Costa and Napa Counties – so as to access unique training opportunities.

Under the WIOA emphasis on sector-driven efforts in support of growth industries the Solano WDB is emphasizing that Adult Education and Community College providers customize their offerings to meet the needs of identified in-demand occupations. Such an effort is in parallel to the reemergence of well-considered Adult School vocational offerings and the “Doing What matters” and “Strong Workforce” initiatives of California’s community colleges.

vi. Coordination With Transportation and Other Supportive Services in Area

- Transportation Assistance

The Solano WDB administers and operates its WIOA programs with an underlying commitment that administrative offices, AJCC “brick and mortar” locations, and vocational classroom instruction sites are all as accessible-as-possible/practicable to both public mass transit services and private transportation.

The supportive service of transportation assistance, via either “transportation cost reimbursement” or up-front “public transit pass” purchases, is made available for WIOA-

enrolled participants, - on an assessed and needed basis. This best assures participants can plan for and account for needed transportation around the County and within a reasonable distance from the County – for: 1) interactions (i.e. appointments) with WDB and other staff; 2) attendance in training; and/or 3) job interviews.

- Other Supportive Services

The Solano WDB additionally administers and operates a system of “support services” for enrolled Title I participants. These include, on an as-needed/as-determined basis (and within fiscal limitations): transportation cost reimbursement, or advanced provision of public transit “passes”; childcare payments/reimbursements; payment for training books/supplies/expendables/uniforms; payment for special testings/assessments and/or credentialing requirements; payment for training- or placement-related tools, and payment for other minor training or job placement expenses.

vii. Coordination With Wagner-Peyser Act Services in Area

The Solano WDB maintains a long-standing cooperative working relationship with the local and regional State EDD Wagner-Peyser funded “Workforce Services Branch” field staff/operation. Such Wagner-Peyser staff is located in both the Fairfield and Vallejo AJCCs.

Working relations include shared AJCC and administrative office space, shared staffing support for AJCC operations, cross referrals of potential jobseeker customers to programs/projects, and certain cross-training and provision of in-fill staff capacity for one another.

Under the new emphases of the WIOA legislation the WDB looks to the Wagner- Peyser-funded resources to primarily provide for “labor exchange” within the AJCC system; the WDB Title I program in turn supports: 1) other AJCC activities; 2) more intensive, case manager-assisted services for eligible Adults, Dislocated Worker and Youth populations; and 3) business services.

Each party assumes its principle responsibilities. Further collaboration and joint enterprises (such as “Rapid Response”) are then built upon this basic foundation.

viii. Coordination With Adult Education and Literacy Activities in Area

As stated above the Solano WDB has a long-standing successful history in utilizing local Adult Education resources for high-quality, in-demand vocational classroom instruction. The WDB anticipates enhancing this relationship with expanded literacy training offerings.

The WDB has provided its full support for the re-establishment of a steady, reliable funding stream for Adult Education and Literacy program through both California’s AEBG program and forthcoming competitive WIOA Title grants- seeking efforts.

The newly-established Solano “Adult Education Consortium”, with a dedicated lead staff person, has opened opportunities for greater collaboration throughout Solano’s workforce development system. Multiple conversations have taken place (and are ongoing) with an intent to more fully integrate the efforts of the WDB, the Career Pathway projects, the Solano Community College, and others – with Adult Education block grant and WIOA Title II resources.

As cited elsewhere the launch point will be each party performing that which it does best first, and then meeting on a common playing field where further collaboration, and avoidance of duplication can be achieved. The WDB has interest for the Adult Schools to be: 1) major providers of high-quality, in-demand occupational instruction (with credentials); and 2) providers of adjunct academic remediation programs, English instruction, and possibly “soft skills” instruction, as examples.

- ix. Coordination With Limited English Proficiency Activities (Not Applicable for Solano County)

Critical NOTE: In accord with the State’s determination Solano County is not one of the California counties that is required to add this Local Plan component.

F. Grants and Grants Administration

- i. Entity Responsible for Disbursement of Grant Funds

The County of Solano serves as the WIOA grant recipient. The County Auditor/Controller’s Office receives all WIOA grant funds (and all other funds secured by and to be administered by the WDB) and disburses payments to the WDB and all approved sub-recipients/providers/vendors/contractors/etc. - based on invoices reviewed/approved by the WDB staff. There have been no adverse audit findings across the 16-year span of previous WIA programs.

- ii. Competitive Process to Award Sub-grants and Contracts for Title I Activities

The WDB has a complete working knowledge of all federal, state, county and WDB-developed procurement policies and procedures. At the core of these policies/procedures is a competitive process to award sub-grants or contracts.

The WDB has had 16 years’ experience in administering a fully-compliant procurement system under the WIA program. Such good administrative practices will continue under the WIOA Program.

G. Performance Goals

- i. Negotiated Levels of Performance

Solano’s negotiated WIOA performance standards for 2016-17 (as an initial, baseline year of WIOA programming) and 2017-18 are as follows.

Approved PY 2016-17 Performance Goals				
	Adults	Dislocated Workers	Youth	
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	62.0	64.0	55.0	Employment or Placement Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	58.0	60.0	52.5	Employment or Placement Rate 4th Quarter After Exit
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,500	\$5,800	BASELINE	Median Earnings
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	48.0	55.0	35.0	Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit

Approved PY 2017-18 Performance Goals				
	Adults	Dislocated Workers	Youth	
Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	65.0	68.0	62.4	Employment or Placement Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit
Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	62.5	66.5	55.0	Employment or Placement Rate 4th Quarter After Exit
Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$4,957	\$6,500	BASELINE	Median Earnings
Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	52.9	60.0	33.0	Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit

Future years’ standards will be negotiated and agreed upon with the State in advance of each year’s operation.

H. “High Performing Boards” Information

- i. Compliance with State Policies on Priority of Service, AJCC Phase I MOUs, and AJCC Phase II MOUs.

- *Priority of Service*

As cited in Section 3.L.11. the WDB is fully informed upon and compliant upon “priority of service” obligations – notably for Veterans and for the set of sub-population groups as specified

in the WIA legislation. Effective policies/procedures and day-to-day practices are in place to account for exercising such priority for: a) applicant processing; and b) decision-making on who to enroll for Title I programs.

- *Status on AJCC Phase I MOUs*

As cited in Section 3.L.ii the Solano WDB has undertaken a two-tier approach to AJCC MOUs – with both a “Master MOU” and then a set of “Partner Agency MOUs.”

The Phase I Master MOU is fully in place with all required approvals/signatures. Phase I Partner Agency MOUs have been agreed to in principle, with a small set of agreements still requiring full signatures. Capturing all signatures will be accomplished in a reasonable time period

- *Status on AJCC Phase II MOUs*

As cited in Section 3.L.ii. the Partner Agency MOUs are customize-able (to a degree) for each agency, and will be the locale within which the critical cost-sharing aspects of Phase II MOUs will reside. The WDB is still in the process of finalizing cost-sharing plans. The Partner Agency MOUs will be updated with details on such sharing- for affected agencies which share. Finalizing cost sharing costs and amending Partner Agency MOUs will be accomplished in a reasonable time period.

I. Training Activities

i. Description of Training Services Through Individual Training Accounts (ITAs)

The Solano WDB has a 20+ year history in administering an ITA-based means to engage local/regional, approved training institutions to enroll and provide career-focused vocational classroom training for WDB-sponsored participants. This began as a “voucher” approach in the 1990s for the Mare Island Navy Shipyard Closure Project and came to be an ITA system under the WIA (and now WIOA) program. The system remains based on “informed customer choice.”

The WDB has updated its policies/procedures for use of ITAs under the WIOA program and will continue to provide ITAs for eligible/enrolled participants in the WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker programs (as well as any other discretionary WIOA-funded projects requiring use of ITAs.)

The Solano WDB utilizes the available list of training institutions and courses on the State-administered “Eligible Training Providers List” (ETPL) to engage schools offering in-demand occupational training within an approximate 50 mile radius from the County’s boundaries. Although rare, training schools may be utilized from as far as San Francisco, Santa Rosa, the Sacramento area, and Stockton.

The current list of in-demand occupational training courses being utilized for ITA-based referrals/enrollments includes the following (as examples.)

Accounting Technician	Administrative Assistant	Advanced security guard
CAN / Home Health Aide	Networking Associate	Class A Truck Driver
Class B Transit Driver	Clinical Medical Assistant	Clinical Trials Manager
Computer IT Support	Electrician	Emergency Nurse
Emergency Medical Tech	Project Manager	Exec Admin Assistant
Exec HR Manager	Health Info tech	HR Manger
Industrial Maint Mechanic	Iron Worker	Loss Prevention Officer
Medical Admin Billing	Medical Assistant	Med Front Off Receptionist
Phlebotomy Tech	SAS/IT Programmer	School Bus Driver
Sterile Processing Tech		

The WDB’s professional “Employability Specialists” perform a series of interviews and assessments/testings to identify participants’ interests/desires/ aptitudes and match such individuals to possible occupational courses of study. An employment plan is then developed and each participant visits prospective schools offering such training (as approved on the ETPL.) A mutual agreement is then reached between the participant, the school, and the WDB staff to sponsor that participant for that course.

The WDB utilizes the ITA approach in order to sponsor an eligible/enrolled participant’s costs (as required or called for) for tuition, training fees, initial testing fees, books, expendable supplies, uniforms, equipment, tools, accreditation-related testing fees, and other purely training-related expenses.

The WDB offers a set of supportive services to accompany such ITA costs – on an assessed, as-needed basis. These costs are external to the ITA expense and may include childcare expense payment, and transportation expense payment (or purchase of transportation system passes).

J. Public Transparency, Accessibility and Inclusivity

i. Process for Public Comment on Plan, Accessibility for Those With Disabilities, and Outreach for Input From Stakeholders

The Solano WDB has conjoined the work of developing and providing community input/review processes for both the North Bay RPU “Regional Plan” (referenced here-in) and Solano “Local Plan.”

To this end the following three-step process has been undertaken to assure a much expanded avenue for the public, for city/county representatives, for involved stakeholders, for advocates for service populations (including those serving /advocating for those with disabilities) to participate and influence the content of final North Bay and Solano Plans. (NOTE: This effort was much more expansive than any public-input undertaking for the previous WIA-based plans.)

- The Solano WDB facilitated two “community input forums” (in Fairfield on 12/1/16 and Vallejo on 12/8/16) to gain input on both the Regional and Local Plans. Over 200 “stakeholder” parties involved in workforce development were invited to attend one or both of these sessions. (This was first-time effort to merge several “contact lists” and created a first-time listing of 200 parties.) A total of 35 individuals attended. Attendees were very active in providing input; each party was invited to follow up and use the public input process to give specific feedback on the actual Draft Plans.
- Informational briefings were provided both the WDB (on 1/20/17) and Board of Supervisors (on 1/24/16) regarding the in-progress drafts of the Regional and Local Plans;
- Public announcements were provided on the availability of both draft Plans (beginning January 30, 2017) and the public was provided fully 30 days to request copies and provide comments. (NOTE: Comments disagreeing with the Plans are attached here-in.)

This outreach effort with conduct of community input sessions held in locations other than WDB offices (or WDB meeting sites) was a much more robust process than any similar effort under WIA.

K. Common Intake and Case Management Efforts

i. Intake and Case Management Approaches, and Co-enrollment Tracking

- Intake

The Solano WDB utilizes an in-house staff capability to perform outreach/recruitment, initial orientations, eligibility documentation and determination, and official “intake” for Title I programs. This is a part of the provision of “Career Services” via in-house WDB staff resources.

- Case Management

The Solano WDB utilizes an in-house staff capability to perform “case management” for Title I enrolled participants. Staff is arrayed as either “Employability Specialists” or “Placement Coaches” to fulfill the case management functions. This too is part of in-house provision of “Career Services.”

- Co-enrollment Tracking

The Solano WDB utilizes the State-designed and implemented “CalJOBS system as its basic case management, participant tracking, management reporting and State reporting tool/system. The expanded use of CalJOBS by providers of other WIOA programs (for Titles II, II, and IV) will be the basic for tracking co-enrollments and participant activities/exits. The addition of other workforce development programs that will utilize CalJOBS will further facilitate such co-enrollment and tracking across funding sources and program providers.

L. Miscellaneous Information

i. Access for Title II Program Applicants To Review the Local Plan for Development of Title II Applications for Funding

The Solano WDB has developed excellent, direct working relations with individual Adult Education service providers (in four local city school districts) and the leadership of the new Solano County Adult Education Block Grant Consortium.

Active cross-communication has occurred between the WDB and these education administrators on new requirements under the WIOA Title II program and California's Adult Education Block Grant program. These communications continued as the Title II request for applications (RFA) was released in December 2016, with a requirement for specific cross-sharing of certain information and ability to access these WIOA Regional and Local Plans (as contained here-in.)

A simple plan of action was agreed to between parties for the WDB to share these Regional and Local Plans with any/all potential applicants for Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funds.

As soon as it is determined which local parties will be applying the WDB will proactively reach out and make copies of both the Regional and Local Plans available to such parties.

ii. Means to Meet Priority of Service Requirements

The Solano WDB is fully informed and compliant on all aspects of "priority of services" for program applicants – based on history of such under the WIA program and what are updated approaches for the WIOA program. The continuing obligations for veterans' priority and for the sub-populations as specified in WIOA will be fully observed.

The WDB's operation of the outreach/recruitment and ultimate intake/enrollment process provides assurance that enrollment decisions are made in full compliance with the priority of service mandates.

iii. Portions of Local Plan Incorporated in Regional Plan

The North Bay Regional Planning Unit's (RPU's) "Regional Plan" is largely a self-contained document addressing the environmental layout, the business and workforce makeup/climate, and the Plan alignment with the State's Strategic Workforce Plan. As such this Solano Local Plan: 1) aligns and builds upon the Regional Plan; and 2) does not rely upon the Regional Plan to cover or expound upon what are local strategic and operational plans for Solano County.

M. Local Board Assurances

- See Attachment 4

N. List of Comprehensive One-Stops and AJCC Partners

- See Exhibit 1

O. AJCC Memos Of Understanding

- See Exhibit 2 and Exhibit 3

P. Local Grant Recipient Listing

- See Attachment 5

The in-place, designated WIOA Title I grant recipient is the County of Solano (through the Board of Supervisors) with administrative controls/oversight provided by the County Administrator, County Counsel, and Auditor Controller.)

A written, multi-year “County-WDBSC Agreement” is in place, which delineates mutually-agreed-upon roles and responsibilities of the County and the non-profit Workforce Development Board of Solano County, Inc. (WDBSC.) In accord with this Agreement the County is the recognized grant recipient for both WIOA Title I funds and any non-WIOA funds to be received by and administered by the WSBSC.

All funds are deposited in a special WDBSC account with the County, with disbursements made from this account. The WDBSC is covered by the Auditor/Controller’s audit requirements/procedures.

Q. Copy of Local Bylaws (Attachment 6)

Please see Attachment 6 for a set of Draft WDB Bylaws which have had an affirmative “first reading” and are pending final approval by the WDB. These are being updated from previous WIB Bylaws to now conform specifically with WIOA requirements.

R. Program Administration Designee and Plan Signatures (Attachment 7)

i. Administration Designee

In accordance with the in-place “County-WDB Agreement” the 501(c)(3) non-profit WDB of Solano County, Inc. serves as the designated WIOA administrative entity.

ii. Plan Signatures

Please see attached signature page

S. Summary of Public Comments That Disagree on Local Plan

- See Attachment 8