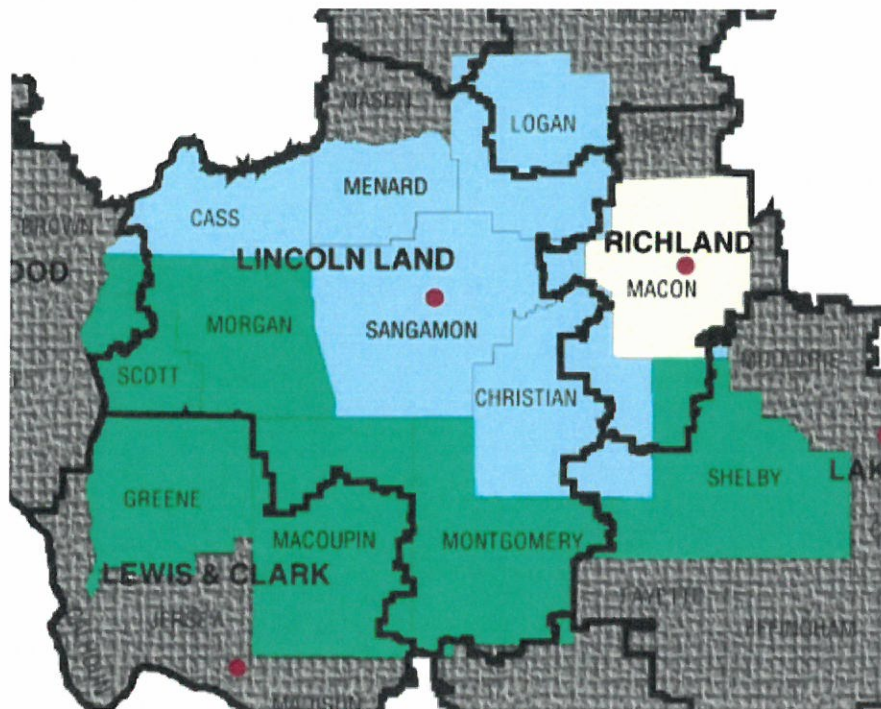


Central Economic Development Region 1

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Regional Plan



**Central Economic Development Region 1
Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Regional Plan**

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Executive Summary

The Central Economic Development Region's (CEDR – 1) plan was developed in accordance with the state and local area plans and in accordance with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) regulations. The Workforce Boards of Local Areas 19, 20 and 21 in association with our partner agencies have produced this regional plan. Our Boards are committed to creating workforce development strategies that promote the economic well-being of both employers and workers in the region. This plan formalizes the regional process for the Central Region to explore innovative means to better meet the needs of our customers and meet the educational, economic development and workforce development needs of the region.

Vision Statement:

The Region is adopting the State of Illinois's vision which is listed below:

“Promote business driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals, and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the state's economy.”

Background:

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the first legislative reform to the public workforce system in 15 years. It envisions a system design that produces the skilled workers that employers need to be competitive both locally and globally. It also seeks to help individuals improve access to employment and training activities that are relevant to current labor market conditions.

WIOA emphasizes training that leads to credentials in targeted growth sectors of the economy. It encourages service coordination among education and workforce partner agencies and the creation and utilization of career pathways in the targeted sectors. The legislation is designed to help workers, including those with barriers, to access services that lead to employment in demand occupations.

The Region's plan is based on coordination of workforce, education and economic development efforts that will meet the needs of both employers and job seekers in our area.

Plan Development:

The Central Economic Development Regional Plan has been developed in accordance with WIOA and State of Illinois Regional Planning guidelines. The CEDR will undertake the processes and strategies outlined in this plan over the next four years.

The Regional Planning Process will include:

- The establishment of regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery agreements;
- The development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region;
- The collection and analysis of regional labor market data (in conjunction with the state) which must include the local planning requirements at § 679.560(a)(1)(i) and (ii);

- The coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate;
- The coordination of transportation and other supportive services as appropriate;
- The coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers; and
- The establishment of an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Sec. 116(c) for local areas or the planning region.

The Local Planning Strategies included:

- Direct investments in economic, education and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers;
- Applying job-driven strategies in the one-stop system;
- Enable economic, education and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment, training and education programs; and
- Incorporate the local plan into the regional plan per 20 CFR 679.540.

Regional System Partners:

In accordance with the Governor's vision for the State Workforce System, the CEDR's regional planning team included representatives from the following core and required partners:

- Capital Area Career Center
- City of Decatur
- City of Litchfield
- Community Action Programs of Central Illinois
- Decatur-Macon County Opportunities Corporation
- Decatur Public Schools #61 Adult Ed
- Department of Aging – Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Department of Corrections – Second Chance Act
- Department of Employment Security
- Department of Human Services – Division of Family and Community Service
- Department of Human Services – Division of Rehabilitation
- Economic Development Corporation of Decatur and Macon County
- Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce
- Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center
- Illinois Migrant Council
- Land of Lincoln Workforce Alliance
- Lincoln Land Community College
- Jacksonville Regional Economic Development Corp.
- Regional Office of Career & Technical Education
- Richland Community College
- Springfield Public Schools District 186
- West Central Development Council
- Workforce Investment Solutions of Macon and DeWitt

Chapter 1 – Economic and Workforce Analysis

This regional component of the plan must demonstrate how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information which must include the local planning requirements.

A. Plans must include an analysis of:

- Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations;
- Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
- An analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Chapter 1 Section A Question 1: How were all partners involved in providing, analyzing and agreeing on supply and demand data and the targeted sectors/ industries/ occupations/ skills?

The Central Region team attended the Regional Planning kick-off meeting in Bloomington on December 10, 2015 sponsored by the four core State of Illinois WIOA partners. Labor market data for the Central Region was presented which targeted the following sectors and occupations: Healthcare, Manufacturing and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics. After reviewing the data along with group discussion, team members agreed that sector information presented for Healthcare, Manufacturing and TDL were consistent with data available from various studies including knowledge and experience in working with employers in the region. The Central Region team also requested additional sector information for Hospitality/Tourism, Sales/Marketing, Government and Business/Finance to explore various occupations, secondary and post-secondary education requirements, and credential/skill level needs of the workforce. The team met in February and March 2016 and reviewed labor market data for the additional sectors. Labor market data shows growth in these sectors except for Government.

The group concluded that Marketing and Sales, Hospitality and Tourism, Business, and Finance were secondary industries that we will continue to keep on our radar and review annually due to large numbers of job openings per year. Per the chart: Central Region – Employment by Industry/Occupational Cluster, these industry clusters will have a net employment change over the next ten years of over 10,000 workers.

The majority of jobs in these industries are entry level, require high school diploma and are lower wage career areas; however, for youth entering the workforce, these jobs provide experience to begin building a work history and earning a wage and are first steps in a career pathway.

Chapter 1 Section A Question 2: How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply and occupational demand?

Nine of the twelve counties in the region experienced an increase in poverty rates between 2010 and 2014 (Table 1), though only in three counties were these increases greater than two percent. During this same reference period median household income increased for all but one of the counties in the region, although the percent increase varied from 5.4 percent to 12.7 percent (Table 2). Macon County had both the highest percentage gain in median household income (12.7 percent) and the largest reduction in its poverty rate (-1.4 percent). Montgomery County had the largest increase in its poverty rate (2.6 percent), and Greene County had the only loss of median income of counties in the region (-1.6 percent). Tables 1

and 2 show the changes in poverty rates and median income for the twelve counties that make up the Central Economic Development Region.

Table 1. Poverty Rates for Central Region Counties			
County	2014	2010	% Change
Cass	13.2	12.8	0.4%
Christian	14.4	14.2	0.2%
Greene	16.2	14.9	1.3%
Logan	12.6	11.5	1.1%
Macon	16.3	17.7	-1.4%
Macoupin	12.9	13.0	-0.1%
Menard	10.1	9.0	1.1%
Montgomery	17.0	14.4	2.6%
Morgan	15.1	14.8	0.3%
Sangamon	15.3	13.2	2.1%
Scott	12.0	9.7	2.3%
Shelby	11.7	12.3	-0.6%

Table 2. Median Household Income, Central Region Counties				
County	2014	2010	Increase	% Increase
Cass	\$ 46,289	\$ 43,183	\$ 3,106	7.1%
Christian	\$ 46,870	\$ 44,253	\$ 2,617	5.9%
Greene	\$ 39,738	\$ 40,399	\$ -661	-1.6%
Logan	\$ 54,353	\$ 48,311	\$ 6,042	12.5%
Macon	\$ 47,575	\$ 42,206	\$ 5,369	12.7%
Macoupin	\$ 48,544	\$ 45,995	\$ 2,549	5.5%
Menard	\$ 61,388	\$ 58,135	\$ 3,253	5.6%
Montgomery	\$ 45,288	\$ 42,468	\$ 2,820	6.6%
Morgan	\$ 46,406	\$ 43,753	\$ 2,653	6.1%
Sangamon	\$ 55,371	\$ 51,057	\$ 4,314	8.4%
Scott	\$ 51,548	\$ 48,890	\$ 2,658	5.4%
Shelby	\$ 48,994	\$ 45,474	\$ 3,520	7.7%

All but one of the counties in the region has suffered a loss of population during the 2010 to 2014 timeframe (Table 3). The overall reduction in regional population is about two percent, (about 10,000 persons) and population changes range from a loss of 5.8 percent (Cass County) to an increase of 0.6 percent (Sangamon County).

Table 3. Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Illinois: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2014			
County	July 2014	April 2010	% Change
Cass	12,847	13,642	-5.8%
Christian	33,642	34,800	-3.3%
Greene	13,241	13,886	-4.6%
Logan	29,494	30,305	-2.7%
Macon	107,303	110,768	-3.1%
Macoupin	46,045	47,765	-3.6%
Menard	12,444	12,705	-2.1%
Montgomery	28,898	30,104	-4.0%
Morgan	34,828	35,547	-2.0%
Sangamon	198,712	197,465	0.6%
Scott	5,092	5,355	-4.9%
Shelby	21,755	22,363	-2.65
Region	544,301	554,705	-1.9%
Source; U.S. Census Bureau (March 2015)			

From 2010 to 2015, the overall labor force in the region declined by 18,468, or 6.4 percent (Table 4). Employment levels declined by 8,025, or 3.1 percent. This lesser decline in employment relative to the labor force allowed the unemployment rate to fall from 9.2 percent to 5.9 percent.

Table -4- Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment Trends for Central Region Labor Force Compared Over 5 Years				
Time Period	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2015	268,780	252,799	15,981	5.9%
2014	268,449	249,735	18,714	7.0%
2013	271,344	247,194	24,150	8.0%
2012	279,878	256,201	23,677	8.5%
2011	285,760	261,013	24,747	8.7%
2010	287,248	260,824	26,424	9.2%
Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Downloaded: 4/3/2016; Not seasonally adjusted estimates				

The longer-term population changes in the region are characterized by an aging population. In 1990, persons in the 20-54 age range represented 46.9 percent of the population; by 2014 this group was 44.8 percent of the population of the region (Table 5). The percentage of those aged 55-64 increased from 9.2 percent to 13.7 percent of the regional population during this timeframe. This demographic shift will continue into the future and will create continued downward pressure on labor supply for the entire region. The aging population is a key contributor to the expected strong demand for healthcare workers.

Table 5: Changes in Age Distribution of Population, Central Region								
Age Category	1990		2000		2010		2014	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Under 5	37,552	6.9%	33,893	6.1%	33,593	6.1%	32,393	5.9%
5 - 19	115,400	21.2%	117,045	21.1%	107,833	19.4%	105,040	19.0%
20 - 34	118,993	21.9%	102,143	18.4%	100,537	18.1%	101,878	18.4%
35 - 54	136,979	25.2%	166,253	29.9%	152,606	27.5%	146,381	26.5%
55 - 64	50,406	9.3%	51,527	9.3%	72,765	13.1%	76,098	13.8%
Over 64	84,428	15.5%	85,010	15.3%	87,371	15.8%	90,664	16.4%
	543,758		555,871		554,705		552,454	

In addition to the decline in the working age population, overall labor force participation rates in the region have declined five percentage points in the past few years, from 69.5% in 2010 to 64.7% in 2014 (based on the estimated population over age 19 from Table 5 and the labor force numbers from Table 4). This decline in labor force participation is consistent with a national trend in weak participation rates seen since the 2008-2009 recession.

Occupational demand for the targeted occupations in the regions is projected to experience the following change:

- Occupations in the Business Management sector are expected to have an **11.2%** employment change adding **2,060** jobs between 2012 and 2022.
- Occupations in the Healthcare sector are expected to have a **7.0%** employment change adding **2,700** jobs between 2012 and 2022.
- Occupations in the Marketing and Sales sector are expected to have a **7.0%** employment change adding **4,891** jobs between 2012 and 2022.
- Occupations in the Hospitality and Tourism sector are expected to have a **6.8%** employment change adding **3,647** jobs between 2012 and 2022.
- Occupations in the Transportation, Distribution & Logistics sector are expected to have a **6.0%** employment change adding **926** jobs between 2012 and 2022.
- Occupations in the Manufacturing sector are expected to have a **-2.1%** employment change losing **320** jobs between 2012 and 2022.
- Occupations in the Finance sector are expected to have a **-0.5%** employment change losing **65** jobs between 2012 and 2022.

The regional trends in population, labor force and employment demand are consistent with the overall experience of Illinois and the Great Lakes Region since the 2008-2009 recession. The Great Lakes Region as a whole has been slow to recover. Illinois is experiencing slow employment growth overall and this is consistent with what we are seeing in the Central Region. Even though unemployment rates have dropped for the region, job growth is slow. The recovery has further hindered by several major employers in or near the Central region that have had significant mass layoffs or closings in recent years, including Caterpillar, U.S. Steel, and Mitsubishi, along with their supplier companies.

Chapter 1 Section A Question 3: What are the policy and service implications of the current and projected Labor Market Information?

The skills gap between the needs of employers in the business management, healthcare, marketing and sales, hospitality and tourism and transportation, distribution and logistics sectors and the skills of the available workforce will continue to increase. In addition, changes in technology and replacement demand will lead to increased need for skilled manufacturing workers, in spite of projected declines in overall employment in this sector. This will be exacerbated by our aging population and declining labor force.

The regional partners have identified several strategic goals and initiatives that are designed to address the anticipated skill needs of the region. These include:

1. Promote the use of career pathways for lower-skilled and unemployed students and workers. In particular, we want to expand access to bridge programs and create other on-ramps for career pathways for students at many different starting skill levels.
2. Identify the most critical career needs in the region and the appropriate learning pathways and talent pipelines for those jobs, building on the talent pipeline work being done in the state.
3. Create policies and processes that support the use of multiple approaches for each targeted sector, and that leverage our current career pathway models, postsecondary institutions and training investments.
4. Conduct more research on sector policies and sector partnerships, to increase our knowledge of promising practices. Implement pilot projects to expand outreach to employers to form broader and more effective sector partnerships.

Chapter 1 Section A Question 4: What special populations exist in the region, what is their magnitude, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?

Table 6 provides data for several of the key population groups in the region. Some of the realities that these data illustrate are:

- 80,060 individuals are living below the poverty level in the central region.
- 164,930 individuals are receiving public assistance which is twice as high as those living below the poverty level.
- 54,122 adults have disabilities.

Table -6-: Target Population Characteristics, Central Region	
Total civilian noninstitutionalized population: 2014 Estimate	548,138
Persons Below Poverty Level	80,060
Public Aid Recipients	164,930
Adult Public Aid Recipients	92,284
TANF Recipients: 2014 Monthly Average	5,507
SNAP Recipients: 2014 Monthly Average	94,671
Adults with Disabilities	54,122
Total Population with a Disability (Estimate)	78,997
Adult Parolee Population: June 30, 2014	1,452
Language other than English spoken at home, age 5+	20,916
Average Monthly Unemployed	18,714
Older Individuals (Age 65+)	94,083
Single Parents	41,068

In addition to the data from Table 6, the region has a large Veteran population compared to State average (8.6% compare to state average 5.7%). The region has a higher than average high school diploma rate; but nearly 9% lower than state average for Bachelor's degree.

The region is committed to expanding access for targeted populations, especially the long-term unemployed, persons with a disability, out-of-school youth, and veterans. Regionally, the partners will work to establish partnerships and collaborate with community organizations in order to serve job seeker customers to access the services that they need in order to be able to acquire the job skills that will lead to employment.

Due to the State budget impasse, WIOA programs are picking up additional costs for training and support services that are not normally expended. The Monetary Award Program (MAP) has not been funded, and these grants pay a significant portion of the tuition costs for low income individuals. In addition, child care payments through the Community Child Care Connection have been reduced and customer eligibility has changed. Thus, low income customers, including single parents that were previously eligible, may not meet the guidelines. For WIOA, this means additional child care costs must be obligated in order for the participant to continue training. All of these funding restrictions create challenges for the regional workforce system, including upward pressures on the cost per enrollment, and reduced capacity to serve new customers.

Chapter 1 Section A Question 5: What sectors / industries / occupations / skills are in demand and targets of opportunity?

- a. What sectors / industries / occupations have favorable location quotients?
- b. What sectors / industries / occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?
- c. What sectors / industries / occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?
- d. What sectors / industries / occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?
- e. What sectors / industries / occupations are considered emerging in the regional economy?

Table 7 provides data on the key industry clusters, including employment levels in 2012 and projected employment levels in 2022. The industry clusters are sorted by location quotient. The targeted clusters in the region with favorable location quotients include Business Management (1.46), Manufacturing (1.24), Finance (1.03) and Healthcare (1.02).

Cluster	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Net Employment Change	Percent Employment Change	Concentration (Location Quotient)
Agriculture	10,343	10,038	-305	-2.9%	3.72
<i>Business Management</i>	<i>18,436</i>	<i>20,496</i>	<i>2,060</i>	<i>11.2%</i>	<i>1.46</i>
Energy	2,232	2,103	-129	-5.8%	1.34
Manufacturing	15,206	14,886	-320	-2.1%	1.24
<i>Finance</i>	<i>12,585</i>	<i>12,520</i>	<i>-65</i>	<i>-0.5%</i>	<i>1.03</i>
Healthcare	38,671	41,371	2,700	7.0%	1.02
Education and Training	22,712	23,858	1,146	5.0%	0.90
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	15,355	16,281	926	6.0%	0.90
Construction	11,632	12,475	843	7.2%	0.83
<i>Marketing and Sales</i>	<i>70,368</i>	<i>75,259</i>	<i>4,891</i>	<i>7.0%</i>	<i>0.80</i>
<i>Hospitality and Tourism</i>	<i>53,600</i>	<i>57,247</i>	<i>3,647</i>	<i>6.8%</i>	<i>0.71</i>

Table 8 provides data on the key industry clusters, sorted by the projected percent employment change. The targeted clusters in the region with favorable employment demand projections include Business Management (11.2%), Marketing and Sales (7.0%), Healthcare (7.0%), Hospitality and Tourism (6.8%), and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics (6.0%).

Table -8- Employment by Industry/Occupation Cluster (by Percent Employment Change), Central Region

Cluster	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Net Employment Change	Percent Employment Change	Concentration (Location Quotient)
Information Technology	1,279	1,674	395	30.9%	0.34
Law and Public Safety	19,686	22,186	2,500	12.7%	0.55
<i>Business Management</i>	18,436	20,496	2,060	11.2%	1.46
Construction	11,632	12,475	843	7.2%	0.83
<i>Marketing and Sales</i>	70,368	75,259	4,891	7.0%	0.80
Healthcare	38,671	41,371	2,700	7.0%	1.02
Research and Development	1,600	1,711	111	6.9%	0.50
<i>Hospitality and Tourism</i>	53,600	57,247	3,647	6.8%	0.71
Transportation, Distribution & Logistics	15,355	16,281	926	6.0%	0.83
Education and Training	22,172	23,858	1,146	5.0%	0.90
Finance	12,585	12,520	-65	-0.5%	1.03
Manufacturing	15,206	14,886	-320	-2.1%	1.24
Agriculture	10,343	10,038	-305	-2.9%	3.72

Table 9 indicates the maturing industries in the targeted industry clusters. Two industry clusters (Manufacturing and Finance) have maturing industries.

Table -9-: Maturing Industries for Targeted Sectors	
Sector	Maturing Industry
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printing and Related Support Activities • Paper Manufacturing
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit Intermediation and Related Activities • Insurance Carriers and Related Activities

Table 10 indicates the emerging industries in the targeted industry clusters. Each of the targeted industry clusters have one or more emerging industries.

Table -10-: Emerging Industries for Targeted Sectors	
Sector	Emerging Industry
Business Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative and Support Services
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Securities, Commodity Contracts and Other Financial Investments • Accounting, Tax Prep and Payroll Services
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wholesale Trade • Retail Trade • Real Estate • Advertising and Related Services
Hospitality and Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Museums, Historical Sites and Similar Institutions • Accommodation • Food Services and Drinking Places
TDL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Merchant and Wholesalers, Durable Goods • Wholesale Electronic Markets & Agents & Brokers • Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation • Pipeline Transportation • Support Activities for Transportation • Warehousing and Storage
Healthcare	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulatory Health Care Services • Social Assistance
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood Product Manufacturing • Machinery Manufacturing • Transportation Equipment Manufacturing • Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing

In creating the plan these questions were answered with Labor Market Information reports from IDES as well as the Ameren studies. How these sectors will fare in the future is a more difficult question to answer. It is anticipated that job opportunities in manufacturing will not replace the higher paying jobs of the past. The Region has experienced the loss of high paying jobs with good benefits. Without good paying jobs, business and workers are not going to contribute to the tax base in several areas so this will negatively impact local resources. We want to use our resources to positively impact the business climate. There may not be money available to help business expand however filling job opportunities with trained workers will positively impact both business and workers. Targets of opportunity are definitely TDL, CDLs, LPNs, RNs, Automotive Techs, various jobs in Agriculture, electrical maintenance, retail, hospitality and some jobs in manufacturing with emphasis on more technical skills than necessary in the past.

Table 11: Sectors for Priority Focus

NAICS	Industry	Leading, Emerging or Maturing
IDES Data	Healthcare	Leading
IDES Data	Manufacturing	Maturing
IDES Data	Transportation, Distribution and Logistics	Emerging
IDES Data	Marketing/Sales	Emerging
IDES Data	Hospitality/Tourism	Emerging

Chapter 1 Section A Question 6: What are the targeted industries and occupations and how were they determined using primary and secondary supply and demand data?

The regional partners have assembled and reviewed the industry employment data, including cluster data on location quotients, and employment growth. The partners have determined that Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics (TDL) are the three primary industries that will be targeted in the region. The basis for this decision stems from the relative size and steady positive change in employment projected for healthcare, which is expected to grow by 7 percent, and the favorable growth rate for TDL, which is expected to grow by 6 percent. Manufacturing will also be a targeted sector, in light of its strong location quotient and because the industry is a widespread source of employment in the region.

We also recognize as a region that Business Management, Finance, Marketing and Sales, and Hospitality and Tourism are strong contributors to our economy. These four sectors have strong demand projections between 2012 and 2022, including business management at 11.2 percent, marketing and sales at 7.0 percent, and hospitality and tourism at 6.8 percent. In addition, business management has very strong employment concentration in the region. Hospitality and Tourism and Marketing and Sales both provide high employment levels for the region.

Table 12 provides the overview of employment concentration and changes in employment for the major industry categories in the region.

Table 12

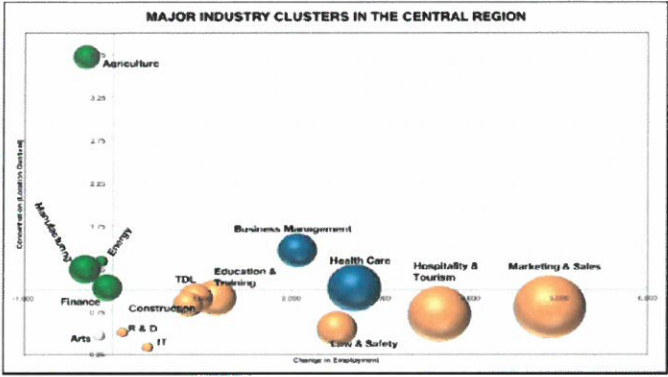


Table 13

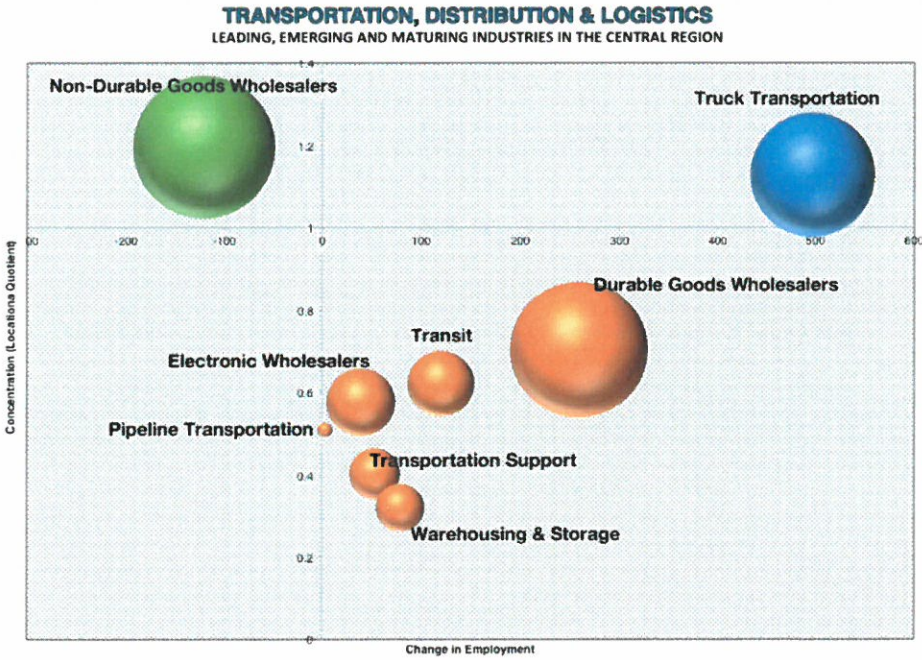


Table 14

TRANSPORTATION, DISTRIBUTION & LOGISTICS							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012-22	Growth Rate	LQ	Industry Class
423	Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods	4,122	4,381	259	6.3%	0.70	Emerging
424	Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods	4,861	4,740	(121)	-2.5%	1.20	Maturing
425	Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers	1,047	1,086	39	3.7%	0.68	Emerging
481	Air Transportation	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
483	Water Transportation	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
484	Truck Transportation	3,144	3,641	497	15.8%	1.13	Leading
485	Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation	876	996	120	13.7%	0.62	Emerging
486	Pipeline Transportation	47	50	3	6.4%	0.51	Emerging
487	Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
488	Support Activities for Transportation	547	600	53	9.7%	0.40	Emerging
492	Couriers and Messengers	259	256	(3)	-1.2%	0.24	
493	Warehousing and Storage	462	531	70	17.5%	0.32	Emerging

Tables 13 and 14 provide Labor Market Information (LMI) on the Transportation, Distribution and Logistics industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. Employment by industry LMI data points to a 6% employment change through 2022. The location quotient shows merchant warehousing/storage and truck transportation as maturing and leading industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Table 15

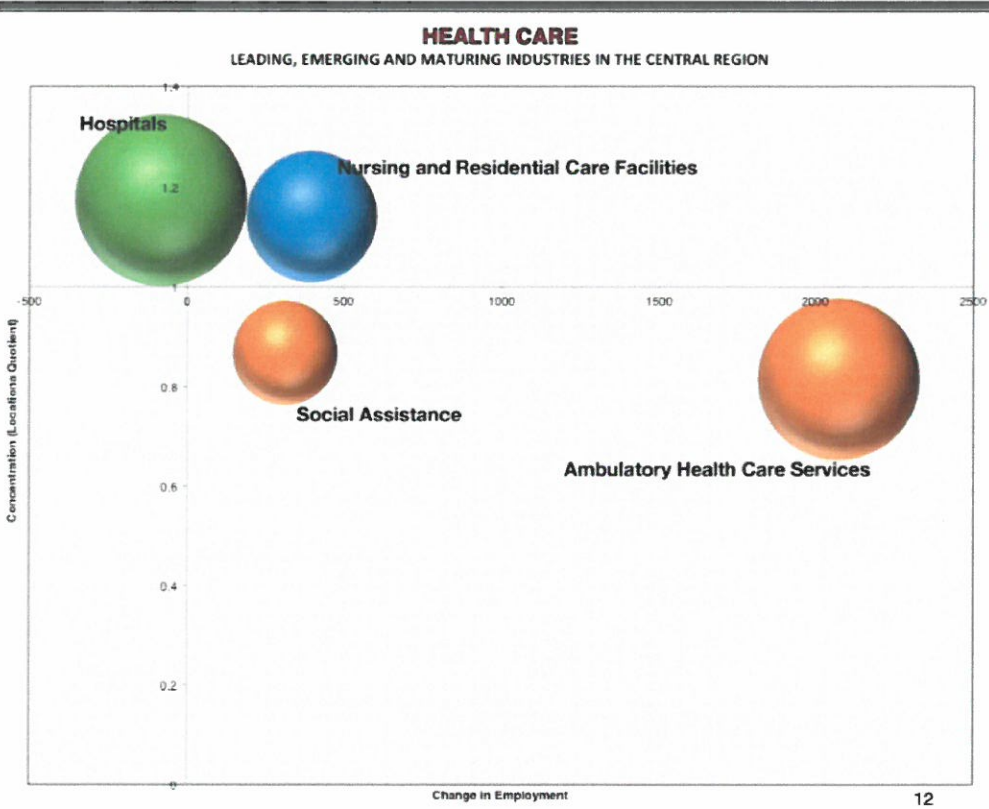


Table 16

HEALTH CARE							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012-22	% Change 2012-22	2014 LQ	Class
621	Ambulatory Health Care Services	10,888	12,044	2,076	19.1%	0.81	Emerging
622	Hospitals	14,685	14,601	(84)	-0.6%	1.17	Maturing
623	Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	8,049	8,445	396	4.9%	1.14	Leading
624	Social Assistance	5,069	5,381	312	6.2%	0.87	Emerging

Tables 15 and 16 provide LMI on the Healthcare industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. Employment by industry LMI data points to a 7% employment change through 2022. The location quotient shows Hospitals and Residential Care Facilities as maturing and leading industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Table 17

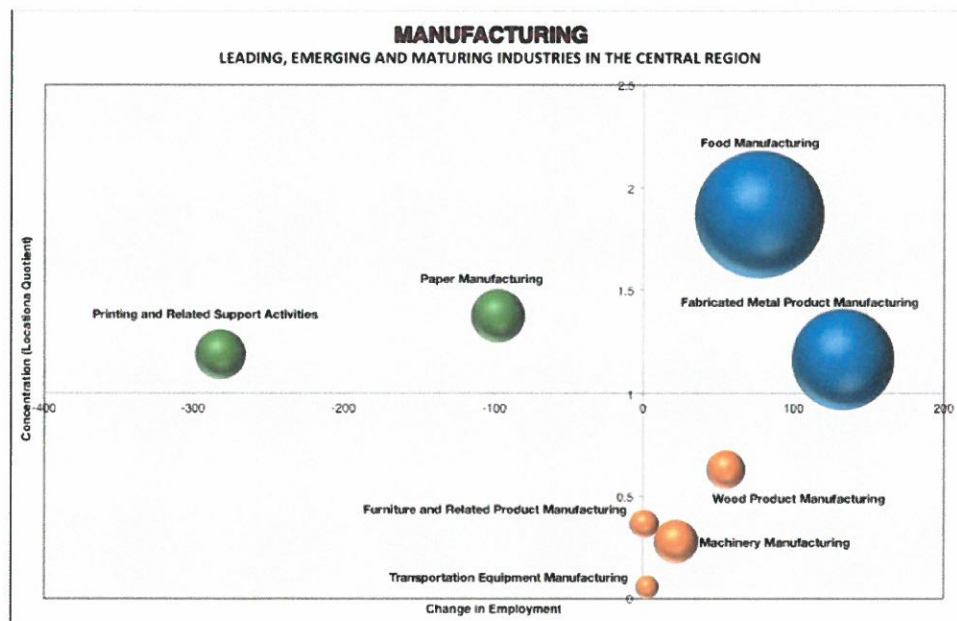


Table 18

MANUFACTURING							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012-22	% Change 2012-22	2014 LQ	Class
311	Food Manufacturing	5,670	5,747	77	1.4%	1.87	Leading
312	Beverage and Tobacco Product Manufacturing	69	60	(9)	-13.0%	0.17	
313	Textile Mills	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
314	Textile Product Mills	14	14	-	0.0%	0.06	
315	Apparel Manufacturing	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
316	Leather and Allied Product Manufacturing	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
321	Wood Product Manufacturing	443	498	55	12.4%	0.63	Emerging
322	Paper Manufacturing	1,083	985	(98)	-9.0%	1.37	Maturing
323	Printing and Related Support Activities	1,141	850	(282)	-24.7%	1.19	Maturing
324	Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
325	Chemical Manufacturing	130	127	(3)	-2.3%	0.08	
326	Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing	143	136	(7)	-4.9%	0.11	
327	Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	453	443	(10)	-2.2%	0.60	
331	Primary Metal Manufacturing	169	167	(2)	-1.1%	0.20	
332	Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	3,406	3,530	133	3.9%	1.16	Leading
333	Machinery Manufacturing	636	658	22	3.5%	0.28	Emerging
334	Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing	1,058	873	(185)	-17.6%	0.47	
335	Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing	-	-	-	0.0%	-	
336	Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	176	181	5	1.7%	0.06	Emerging
337	Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing	265	260	(5)	-1.9%	0.36	Emerging
339	Miscellaneous Manufacturing	348	343	(5)	-1.4%	0.29	

Tables 17 and 18 provide LMI on the Manufacturing industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. The location quotient shows food manufacturing, paper manufacturing and printing and related activities as leading and maturing industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Table 19

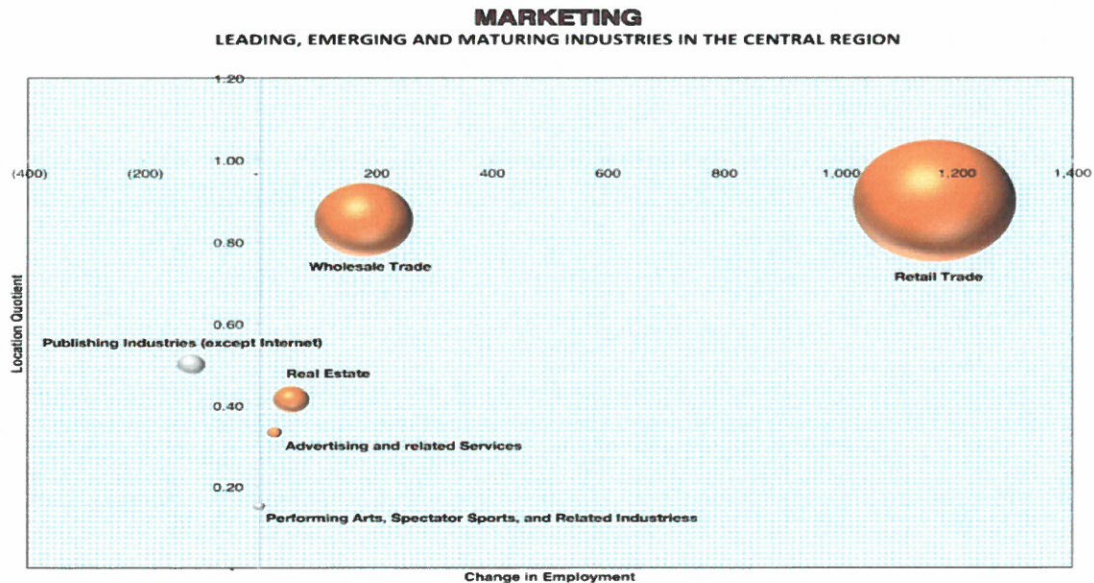


Table 20

MARKETING							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012- 22	% Change 2012-22	2014 LQ	Class
42	Wholesale Trade	10,030	10,207	177	1.8%	0.85	Emerging
44	Retail Trade	27,877	29,038	1,161	4.2%	0.90	Emerging
511	Publishing Industries (except Internet)	763	645	(118)	-15.5%	0.50	
531	Real Estate	1,250	1,303	53	4.2%	0.41	Emerging
5418	Advertising and related Services	189	213	24	12.7%	0.33	Emerging
711	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	133	131	(2)	-1.5%	0.15	

Tables 19 and 20 provide LMI on the Marketing industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. Employment by industry LMI data points to 7% employment change through 2022. The location quotients show Retail Trade and Wholesale Trade as emerging industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Table 21

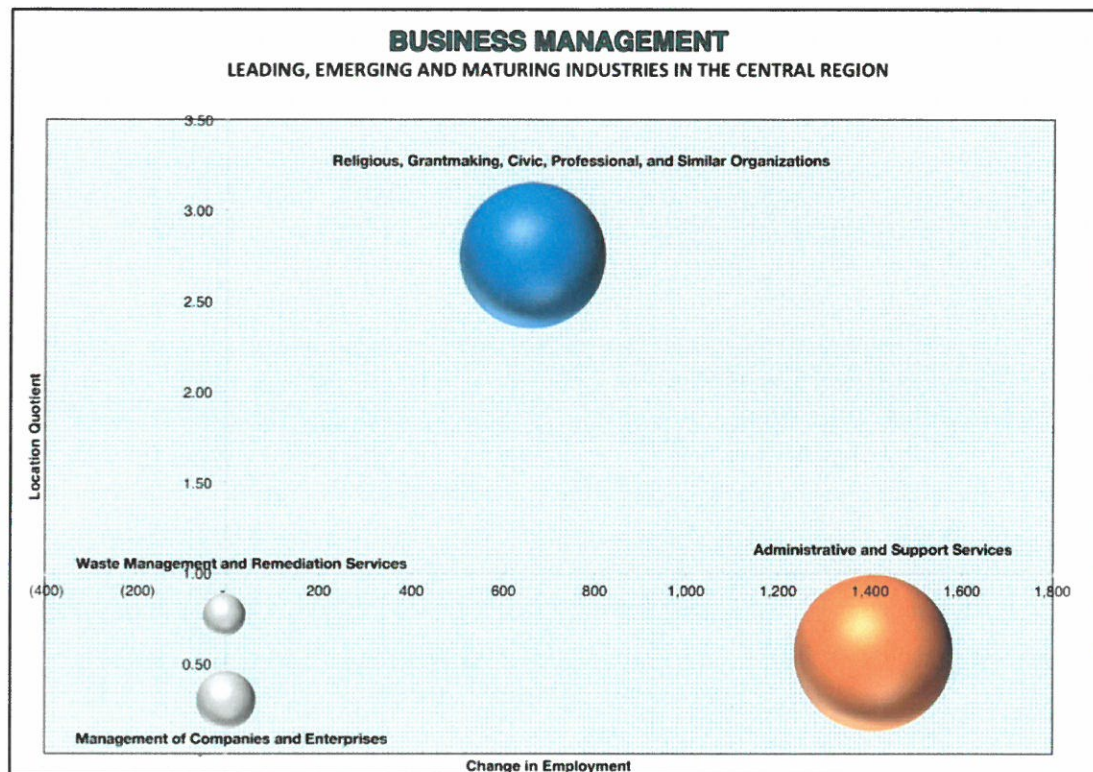


Table 22

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012- 22	% Change 2012-22	2014 LQ	Class
551	Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,234	1,232	(2)	-0.2%	0.30	
561	Administrative and Support Services	8,880	10,287	1,407	15.8%	0.66	Emerging
562	Waste Management and Remediation Services	643	637	(6)	-0.9%	0.77	
813	Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations	7,679	8,340	661	8.6%	2.75	Leading

Tables 21 and 22 provide LMI on the Business Management industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. Employment by industry LMI data points to an 11.2% employment change through 2022. The location quotients show Religious, Grant making, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations the leading industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Table 23

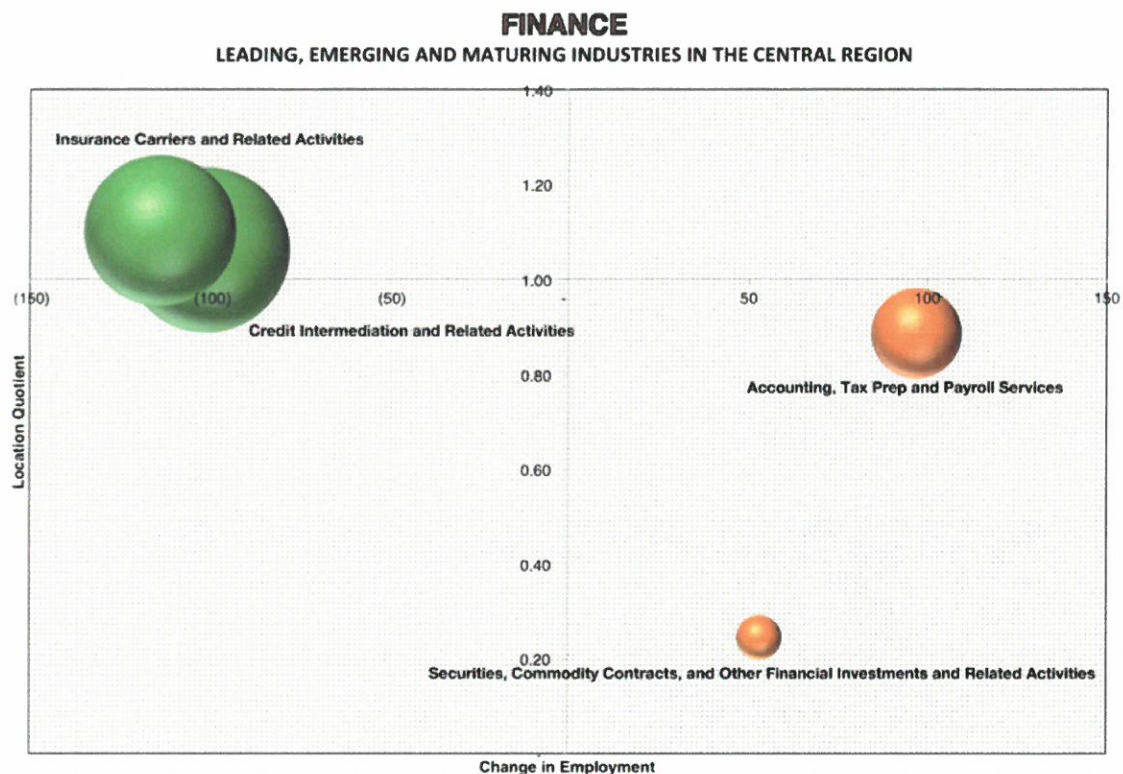


Table 24

FINANCE							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012-22	% Change 2012-22	2014 LQ	Class
522	Credit Intermediation and Related Activities	5,716	5,615	(101)	-1.8%	1.06	Mature
523	Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments and Related Activities	418	468	53	12.8%	0.25	Emerging
524	Insurance Carriers and Related Activities	4,760	4,646	(114)	-2.4%	1.10	Mature
525	Funds, Trusts, and Other Financial Vehicles	-	-	-	#DIV/0!	-	
5412	Accounting, Tax Prep and Payroll Services	1,694	1,791	97	5.7%	0.89	Emerging

Tables 23 and 24 provide LMI on the Finance industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. The location quotients show Insurance Carriers and Related Activities and Credit Intermediation and Related Activities as maturing industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Table 25

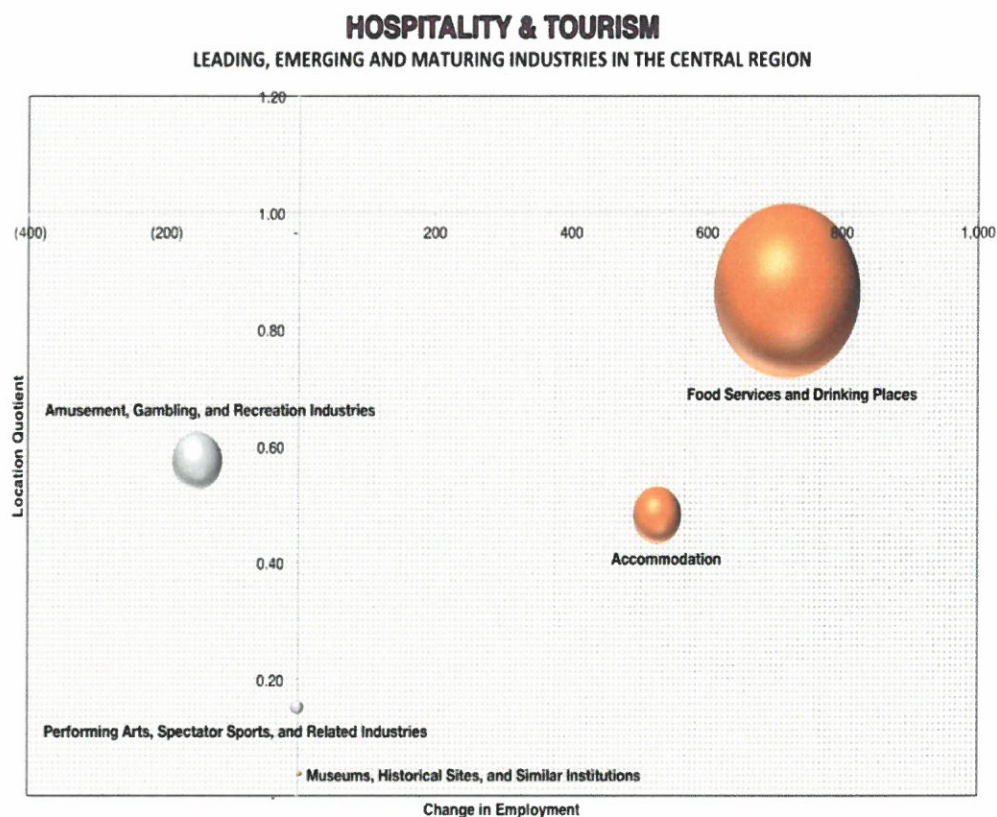


Table 26

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM							
LEADING, EMERGING AND MATURING INDUSTRIES IN THE CENTRAL REGION							
NAICS	DESCRIPTION	2012 Employment	2022 Employment	Employment Change 2012- 22	% Change 2012-22	2014 LO	Class
711	Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries	133	131	(2)	-1.5%	0.15	
712	Museums, Historical Sites, and Similar Institutions	18	20	2	11.1%	0.04	Emerging
713	Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	2,053	1,902	(151)	-7.4%	0.57	
721	Accommodation	1,880	2,407	527	28.0%	0.48	Emerging
722	Food Services and Drinking Places	17,924	18,642	718	4.0%	0.87	Emerging

Tables 25 and 26 provide LMI on the Hospitality and Tourism industry in the region. Employment opportunities in this industry remain in high demand. Employment by industry LMI data points to a 6.8 % employment change through 2022. The location quotient shows Food Service and Drinking Places and Accommodation as emerging industries in the Central region compared to the national average.

Chapter 1 Section B: Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region.

Chapter 1 section B Question 1: What sectors/industries/occupations/skills are the regional priorities and how was this determined? (This question refers to how the targeted sectors/industries were ranked to establish a priority. Explain how the status of growing, maturing and emerging was factored into the ranking.)

Regional priorities (sectors/industries) for the region are healthcare, manufacturing and distribution logistics/transportation, in order of ranking. This information was determined by looking at five-year historical data and ten year projected data. Over the next 10 years, the fastest growing occupation group in the Central EDR is expected to be Computer and Mathematical Occupations with a +11.9% growth during that period. The strongest forecast by number of annual average job openings for these sectors over this period is expected for Transportation & Material Moving Occupations (+534 jobs) and Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations (+481). Additionally, we examined location quotients for all three industries, healthcare (1.02), manufacturing (1.24) and Transportation/Distribution/Logistics (.90). All of these are acceptable location quotients.

These sector priorities, their respective specialties and career potential pathways were developed by reviewing the available labor market information, recent labor market studies, and as a result of discussion among the regional planning team. This includes a study conducted by FQL Economic Development Consulting following a detailed analysis of our regional workforce, historical industrial patterns, agricultural and industrial infrastructure and geography in 2015. In addition, labor market analyses produced by Ameren for the region were reviewed.

Chapter 1 section B Question 2: What sector-based partnerships exist in the region? If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in planning?

Sector based partnerships that exist in the region include:

[IMEC](#) – Manufacturing: IMEC was established in 1996 to improve the productivity and competitiveness of Illinois' small and mid-sized manufacturing firms.

[Midwest Trucking Association](#) – Logistics and Transportation: Mid-West Truckers Association represents and services over 3,000 members in 15 states. Members are comprised of trucking companies and companies that operate trucks as part of their business.

[BJC Collaborative](#) – Healthcare: BJC HealthCare of St. Louis, CoxHealth of Springfield, Mo., Memorial Health System of Springfield, Ill., and Saint Luke's Health System of Kansas City, Mo., partnered together in October 2012 to create The BJC Collaborative to achieve even higher quality care for the patients served by the independent not-for-profit health care organizations. Blessing Health System in Quincy, Ill., joined the Collaborative in May 2013 and Southern Illinois Healthcare in Carbondale, Ill., in September 2013. Sarah Bush Lincoln Health System of Mattoon, Ill. joined in November 2015 and Decatur Memorial Hospital joined in February 2016.

[International Warehouse Logistics Association](#) – Logistics and Warehousing: IWLA members include companies that provide many services: warehousing; fulfillment; reverse logistics; transportation; freight-forwarding and brokerage services; inventory and supply chain management; and a broad range of manufacturing and value-added services.

[Grow Decatur](#) – Inter-sector interests and community growth. Grow Decatur is a collaborative development and growth initiative working to transform Decatur, Illinois into a robust community.

All of these associations are business-led organizations that represent the interest of their member organizations when they are consulted on various planning initiatives including the establishment of regional workforce standards.

In addition, the Central Region will continue to explore partnerships. One strategy could be to designate a regional Sector Based partnership committee that would be charged with doing outreach in the region. WIB members from our three boards could be selected to serve on the committee and focus on of Healthcare, Manufacturing and TDL. WIB participation would assure that the sector partnership was business led.

Chapter 1 section B Question 3: What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?

- Workforce Investment Solutions – Macon & Dewitt Counties Workforce Investment Act agency that works to coordinate and retrain prospective employees to enter or re-enter the job market.
- Richland Community College – RCC provides quality, affordable education and training to area residents.
- The Education Coalition of Macon County - EdCo exists to form a nexus where community groups can interface over issues related to education in the community. Those groups include early childhood, municipal, institutional (publicly funded schools), professional alliance and after school providers. They span the whole lifecycle from birth to death through those institutions, as well as all socioeconomic strata.

Table 27: Regional Sector Assets and Partnerships

Organization	Key Programs & Service Assets	Service Area & Population Served	Industries Targeted
Illinois Pathways - SIU	Career Pathways	Youth, Adult, Dislocated worker	Numerous
SCORE - Small Business Development Center	Small Business Development	all populations	Entrepreneurship
SHRM	Human Resource Managers	Job Seekers	all industries
Community Action agencies		same population as WIOA	supportive services, employability skills
LOCAL Partnerships	Chambers of Commerce, Business Education Coalitions, Grow Decatur, Springfield Job Council, etc.,	Business Populations	No Targets

Chapter 1 section B Question 4: What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?

Neutral conveners in the Central Region that have the capacity to help establish sector partnerships include:

- Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center – IMEC provides assistance to Illinois’ small and mid-sized manufactures in identifying and solving performance gaps and building a culture that supports sustained improvements.
- The Economic Development Corporation of Decatur & Macon County – The EDC’s primary role is to provide support and a point of contact for prospective area employers that are non-retail in nature as well as an advocate for the establishment of their presence in the community. Additionally, they administer Illinois Enterprise Zone benefits as they apply.
- The Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce - The chamber advocates on behalf of members for business-friendly legislation and offers programs, services, and networking opportunities to help make local business thrive and grow.
- Grow Decatur – A community organization comprised of interested local professionals attempting to identify and promote the strengths of Decatur as a whole as well as addressing the weakness of the community.
- Local Workforce Boards in our Region – these business led boards are ideally situated to convene employers for development of Sector Initiatives. Members come from the industries that are being targeted in the Region.
- Any business that is planning to expand could be considered a neutral convener. Their role could be determining skills levels for various occupations, assisting with developing training/curriculum that would train skilled workers, participating on advisory councils or workforce boards and providing equipment or skill training at their business location.
- Sector associations could be neutral conveners including – Illinois Manufacturing Association, Illinois Medical Association, Illinois Hospital Association, Midwest Truckers, etc.

Chapter 1 section B Question 5: How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local business?

In our Region as in the rest of the State the gap in skills between what a potential employee possesses and what an employer needs is a complex issue. We hear frequently that there are not enough of the right graduates for in-demand jobs. Many of the job seekers in our region have lost their jobs from occupations that are declining. To meet the needs of employers for skilled workers in healthcare, TDL, and manufacturing these individuals need training. This is the case for low-income adults and youth as well.

In a recent study by the Workforce Investment Board, Economic Development Corporation for Decatur and Macon County and the Society for Human Resource Management, Essential Skills was identified as a key barrier to individuals entering employment. Not only do employers want individuals with specific occupational skills, they want individuals with essential skills as well.

The study showed that employers considered the following qualifications as essential to being hired:

- Reliability
- Communication
- Personal Responsibility
- Attendance

Table 28 shows the educational attainment of the population in the Central Region. There has not been a large variance in educational attainment rates between 2010 and 2014. The regions partners plan to increase the number of individuals who possess the skills required by employers through sector and career pathway initiatives that are based on strong employer input in the region.

Table -28-: Educational Attainment of Population, Central Region						
Educational Levels	2000		2010		2014	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less than 9th grade	16,597	5.6%	14,849	3.9%	11,817	3.1%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	30,808	10.4%	30,937	8.2%	26,999	7.1%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	109,380	37.0%	135,351	35.9%	133,584	35.1%
Some college, no degree	62,943	21.3%	85,088	22.5%	88,817	23.3%
Associate degree	17,285	5.8%	28,127	7.5%	30,014	7.9%
Bachelor's degree	38,649	13.1%	53,832	14.3%	57,778	15.2%
Graduate or professional degree	20,110	6.8%	29,333	7.8%	31,685	8.3%
	295,772		377,517		380,694	

Chapter 2: Integration of Strategies and Services

The regional component of the plan must describe the regional service strategies including the use of cooperative service delivery strategies.

- A. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers. Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement.

Chapter 2 Section A Question 1: How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepared job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?

The Central Region has numerous postsecondary institutions that provide a wide array of educational services, including three community colleges, eight BA-granting institutions, one public university, a medical school, two nursing colleges, one private two-year college, and two occupational schools. Table 29 – lists the existing postsecondary institutions in the region.

Table -29-: Central Region Postsecondary Institutions		
Institution	Location	Type
<u>Benedictine University in Springfield</u>	1500 North 5 th Street, Springfield, IL 62702	4-Year Private
<u>Blackburn College</u>	700 College Avenue Carlinville, IL 62626	4-Year Private
<u>Capital Area School of Practical Nursing</u>	2201 Toronto Road Springfield, IL 62712-3803	Nursing
<u>Illinois College</u>	1101 West College Jacksonville, IL 62650	4-Year Private
<u>ITT Technical Institute</u>	2501 Wabash Ave Springfield, IL 62704	2-Year Private
<u>Lewis and Clark Community College</u>	5800 Godfrey Road Godfrey, IL 62035	2-Year Public
<u>Lincoln Christian University</u>	100 Campus View Drive Lincoln, IL 62656	4-Year Private
<u>Lincoln College</u>	300 Keokuk Lincoln, IL 62656	4-Year Private
<u>Lincoln Land Community College</u>	5250 Shepherd Road Springfield, IL 62794-9256	2-Year Public
<u>MacMurray College</u>	447 East College Jacksonville, IL 62650	4-Year Private
<u>Midwest Technical Institute</u>	2731 Farmers Market Rd Springfield, IL 62707	Private Occupational
<u>Milliken University</u>	1184 West Main Street Decatur, IL 62522	4-Year Private
<u>Richland Community College</u>	One College Park Decatur, IL 62521	2-Year Public
<u>Robert Morris University</u>	2205 West Wabash	4-Year Private

Table -29-: Central Region Postsecondary Institutions		
Institution	Location	Type
	<i>Springfield, IL 62704</i>	
Saint John's College of Nursing	729 East Carpenter Street Springfield, IL 62702	Nursing
Southern Illinois University - School of Medicine	P.O. Box 19624 Springfield, IL 62794-9624	Professional
University of Illinois at Springfield	One University Plaza - UHB 1015 Springfield, IL 62703	4-Year Public
<u>University of Spa and Cosmetology Arts</u>	2913 West White Oaks Drive Springfield, IL 62704	Private Occupational

Table 30 – provides a count of graduates from each of the three community colleges that serve the region. The columns show the graduates in each of the career clusters associated with the primary or secondary targeted sectors. The primary sectors are highlighted.

Table-30-: Illinois Community College Graduates by Career Cluster, FY 2014, Central Region							
College	Health Science	Manufacturing	TDL	Hospitality/ Tourism	Marketing and Sales	Finance	Business Management
Lewis & Clark	435	76	38	0	3	14	77
Lincoln Land	590	77	242	18	0	0	131
Richland	136	42	39	45	1	0	41
State Total	18,294	2,799	5,964	1729	331	27	3,098
% of State Total	6.3%	7.0%	5.3%	3.6%	1.2%	51.9%	8.0%

Table 31 – shows the trend in enrollments and completions for Lincoln Land Community College for the three primary career clusters: health sciences, manufacturing and transportation, distribution and logistics. This is the type of information that the region's educational institutions will develop to assist in assessment of the capacity of the training institutions in the region.

Table -31--: Lincoln Land Community College, Enrollment and Completions in Selected Programs, FY 2013-2015

Program	Sector	FY 13			FY14			FY15		
		Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed	Enrolled	Completed
ADN 204	HC			249	101		249	104	223	85
NAS 207	HC			377	426		183	334	116	236
PCN 206	HC			24	21		47	22	51	20
EMS 203	HC			39	24		46	18	47	15
EMS 201	HC			55	40		30	45	45	45
OTA 100	HC			45	15		42	8	44	11
MCS 160	HC			62	11		35	20	32	15
EMS 101	HC			9	0		18	0	28	3
RDT 224	HC			24	10		21	9	25	12
RCP 100	HC			0	0		18	7	24	7
NDT 101	HC			0	0		15	5	19	7
SGT 101	HC			20	6		18	8	18	6
MOA 140	HC			7	9		4	6	8	5
EMS 100	HC			0	0		0	0	5	7
SGT 100	HC			0	0		0	0	0	0
WEL 110	MFG			30	2		44	14	47	11
ELT 211	MFG			37	1		23	3	18	0
TEL 254	MFG			21	1		29	4	18	2
WEL 210	MFG			17	20		18	23	18	20
CAD 155	MFG			10	2		3	1	7	1
ELT 234	MFG			6	2		3	5	3	1
WIT 101	MFG			0	0		0	0	0	0
TDS 203	TDL			103	166		92	133	113	153
AUT 205	TDL			85	5		80	5	74	10

Central Economic Development Region 1 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Regional Plan

AUB 210	TDL	AUTO BODY TECHNOLOGY	33	1	42	0	34	2
AUT 202	TDL	AUTOMOTIVE TECHNICIAN	39	22	35	36	34	16
ACM 210	TDL	AIRFRAME & POWERPLANT AVIATION MECH.	33	2	31	2	30	2
AUB 207	TDL	AUTO BODY REPAIR	22	10	24	26	19	18
ACM 250	TDL	AVIATION AIRFRAME TECHNICIAN	7	11	12	22	4	7
ACM 225	TDL	AVIATION POWERPLANT TECHNICIAN	3	12	2	19	3	6
Source of Data: Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Submission to ICCB								

Analysis of capacity, strengths and weaknesses:

The regional partners worked together as part of the regional planning meetings to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) most relevant for the region. The results of this analysis are shown in Table 32.

Figure -32-: SWOT Analysis for Central Region		
	Helpful	Harmful
Internal Origin	Strengths: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational services • Training Opportunities • Community Partners • Large number of small employers • Diverse economic make-up 	Weaknesses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills shortage • Working in Silos • Communicating services • Generational weaknesses • Working together – knowing partners • Undefined roles
External Origin	Opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some growing Industries in our area (Healthcare, TDL, Retail, Hospitality, etc.,) • New/emerging education/career pathways • Regional collaboration • Align services and goals 	Threats: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few declining industries (manufacturing/mining) in our region • Loss of large employers • Economic downturn • Loss of Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities • Lack of CTE Teachers and facilities • Funding – lack of from both state and other sources

Strengths: In addition to the overall strengths identified by the partners, there are a number of specific strengths of our workforce development system in the region. These can be categorized into two groups: a wide array of workforce development and educational services, and strong workforce development processes and business practices.

Workforce development and educational services:

- Development of Individual Employment Plan
- Job Search Assistance
- Job Placement Service
- Career Exploration
- Assessment
- Basic Skills instruction
- ESL
- HSE – Adult Secondary Education
- Bridge Programs
- Occupation Training
- Work Based Learning – Work Experience / On-The-Job Training
- Supportive Services – Childcare / Transportation / Tools / Supplies
- Labor Market Information

- On-Line Opportunities - Illinois workNet, Illinois Job Link, Career Information System
- Unemployment Benefits
- Cash Assistance / SNAP

Workforce development processes and business practices:

- Recruitment, Assessment, Selection Process
- Proven experience with NEG Accelerated Short Term MFG, TDL and CDL Training
- Strong ties to the community agencies
- Established relationships/partnerships with employers
- Established relationships with SHRM, EDC, Education Coalition, etc....
- Aligning efforts to demand industries, occupations and skills
- Value Stream Mapping
- Previous success with previous Regional collaboration
- Consistently meet/exceed performance goals (enter employment, retention, credential attainment)

Weaknesses: In contrast, the regional partners identified some weaknesses or opportunities for improvement, including the ongoing skill shortage, the continued tendency to work in our respective silos, the length of time it takes to train workers in our existing institutions, and challenges in recruiting dislocated workers into training programs.

Capacity: The Region is well-positioned to provide services to individuals with barriers to employment, including Underemployed / Unemployed, Ex-Offenders, Low Skill / Literacy Levels, Individuals with Disabilities, Substance Abuse, Older Americans, Out of School Youth, Veterans, Homeless, ESL Individuals, Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers.

By taking a holistic approach and collaboration with core partners, the Region will be able to better serve at risk populations. These partners include WIOA, ICCB, IDES, IDHS TANF/DRS, Aging, Corrections, Adult Education, and Community Action Agencies.

In addition, thorough recruitment, assessment and selection processes will be utilized to identify career goals for lifelong learning and the appropriate Partner that can best assist the job seeker with education, training and workforce focus to obtain / retain employment in high growth occupations.

By aligning services, our Region will be able to expand employment opportunities for job seekers and Partners will collaborate services offered to reduce duplication of services and better utilize resources.

Services to Veterans: WIOA incorporates a mandate to provide “Priority of Service for veterans and eligible spouses in all qualified job training programs funded in whole or in part by the US Department of Labor (Reference; Veterans Program Letter No 07-09 issued by the Department of Labor). These requirements are included in the priority of service provisions for veterans in section 4215 of title 38, United States Code.

IDES provides services to eligible veterans under its Jobs for Veterans State Grant (JVSG). This includes two distinct staff functions: Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives (LVERs), and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOPs). The services that each of these staff provide are listed below.

Local Veterans’ Employment Representatives (LVERs) provide employer outreach services on behalf of Veterans, including guidance and implementation of standards and procedures for delivery of Veteran services priority requirement. They provide individualized job development for Veterans, and coordinate

with DVOPs and other local office staff for job development referrals. They are responsible for US DOL-Veterans' Employment and Training Service mandated training attendance, recording all Business Services activities and Employment Services provided to Veterans in IL Labor Exchange system, explaining tax credit programs and benefits to employers, and posting employer position vacancies. They coordinate with unions, apprenticeship programs, and business organizations to promote Veterans. They provide Job assistance workshops, individualized vocational guidance, and labor market information for Veterans, and attends events for Veterans (i.e. Chambers of Commerce, Veteran Service Organizations, job clubs, etc.).

Disabled Veterans Outreach Program Specialists (DVOP) provide employment services for disabled veterans, including Veterans outreach and registration, work history assessment, vocational guidance, employment planning, employability services, and referral and job placement. They also work with potential employers and community organizations on behalf of disabled veteran's potential employment. DVOPs function as case manager for Veteran's Administration Chapter 31 Vocational Rehabilitation and Counseling (VR&C) participants and other veteran training programs, and coordinate with federal VR&C program representatives. They review the work of local office staff assigned to assist veterans, and provides special assistance to disabled veterans in need of special training for changes in vocations. They maintain regular contact with veteran's organizations, and provide job assistance workshops, individualized vocational guidance, and labor market information for disabled veterans. DVOPs attend events for Veterans (i.e. Chambers of Commerce, Veteran Service Organizations, job clubs, etc.), and administer the US DOL-Veterans' Employment and Training Service mandated training attendance.

Chapter 2 Section A Question 2: What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment (ROI)?

Although no Return on Investment information was available that enabled the region to directly analyze its existing service delivery strategies, the partners have discussed and identified those service models that they consider to be effective based on prior results, and that should be considered for expansion and scaling throughout the region. These include:

- Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing (ATIM) Training Protocol: The ATIM model includes a group meeting, assessment procedure, individual participant interview, drug screening, and a training agreement sign off.
- Intensive Work Readiness Training for Youth – This program provides intensive intervention for youth to improve their pre-employment skills and address major challenges to employment retention. Challenges can include variables such as attendance, child care, housing, basic needs, decision making, etc.
- Work Based Learning – The region will devote resources to the expansion of OJT/Work Experience, Incumbent Worker Training and development of a protocol for Transitional Jobs. This type of training provides a hands-on learning experience for the job seeker while providing instruction that is customized to meet the employer's specific needs.

Chapter 2 Section A Question 3: What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising ROI?

New service strategies will be developed that build upon career pathway models in our key industry sectors. This could include the expansion of bridge programs and the development of apprenticeships for targeted occupations.

Chapter 2 Section A Question 4: What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal ROI?

The partners have not identified at this point any existing service delivery strategies that will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal ROI, since reliable ROI results are not available to the region. The partners will continue to measure the results of their service strategies, and will work to improve results for the common measures, and other outcomes as appropriate. Over time, this will probably result in changes to the service mix.

Chapter 2 Section A Question 5: What steps will be taken to support the state strategies and goals to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development (see Chapter 7 of the Illinois Unified Plan)?

Strategy 1: Coordinated and Demand-Driven Strategic Planning at the State and Regional Levels

This strategy area includes three activities:

Activity 1.1: Develop Strategic Indicators, Benchmarks and Related Planning Data Resources

Activity 1.2: Establish Regional Planning Areas

Activity 1.3: Conduct Integrated Regional Planning

Most of the work at the regional level for this strategy will be focused on Activity 1.3. Of course, this plan is the product of the regional planning process as outlined in the Illinois WIOA Unified Plan. As required by WIOA, our plan includes the development and implementation of sector initiatives for our primary and secondary industry sectors.

In developing our plan, the Central Region used the regional industry and occupational projections provided by IDES in determining our targeted industry sectors. The partners participated in state sponsored workgroups and summits for regional planning, and reviewed IDES data including indicators of industry employment growth and occupational demand projections. We also used data provided by the Illinois Community College Board on individuals with post-secondary degrees. We will continue to access these resources during plan implementation.

Strategy 2: Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives

This strategy area includes two activities:

Activity 2.1: Promote Employer-Driven Regional Sector Partnerships

Activity 2.2: Promote Sector-Based Business Services and Employer Initiatives

The partners will work together to expand or develop sector partnerships, building on what has already been accomplished as described in Chapter 1, and beginning with the three targeted industry sectors (Healthcare, Manufacturing, and Transportation, Distribution and Logistics), and then extending to secondary sectors (Hospitality/Tourism, Marketing and Sales, Finance, and Business Management). Within each of these sectors, the partners will collaborate to create a common message to employers about the services and training programs that are available to support the employer's skill needs. We will support this messaging with cross-training of our staff.

Healthcare: We will build on what has been learned through our participation in the Healthcare Critical Skills Shortage Initiative to increase our capacity to respond to the anticipated continued high demand for skilled workers in this sector. The communications between local health providers and LLCC also lead to our ability to respond to local immediate and projected shortages. It is mainly the limited number of clinical sites that prevent more training from taking place. Because these are high-demand positions with relatively high pay, attracting and retaining students is not an issue.

Manufacturing: We intend to build on what has been learned through our participation in the Accelerated Training for Illinois Manufacturing Initiative (ATIM) to expand our work in this sector. In particular, we plan to target active employers under the ATIM initiative, and build out partnerships from these employers, as we seek to scale the work to the sector throughout the region. Though our community colleges (LLCC, RCC, and LCCC) have state-of-the-art advanced manufacturing equipment and programs, they are not attracting a sufficient number of students into their program.

Transportation, Distribution and Logistics: We will build on our experience with operating NEG grants for long-term unemployed with a focus on this sector, as well as our other work with existing employers. For example, Lincoln Land Community College serves the transportation industry by preparing approximately 180 CDL drivers per year. Though the industry is experiencing a critical shortage of truck drivers, it is mainly because turnover is so high.

Strategy 3: Career Pathways for Economic Advancement

This strategy area includes four activities:

Activity 3.1: Promote Leading Career Pathway Models and Best Practices

Activity 3.2: Expand and Improve Bridge and Integrated Education and Training Models

Activity 3.3: Promote Innovation in Career Pathway Solutions

Activity 3.4: Promote the Use of Apprenticeships

The regional partners have committed to the expansion of existing career pathways models and expanding access to existing career pathways over the next several years, and will work together to promote promising models and practices, expand bridge programs, and explore the development of apprenticeships for targeted occupations.

Promoting leading models and adopting innovative practices: As the partners have worked together over the past few years to implement career pathway initiatives under Shifting Gears and Accelerating Opportunities, as well as community college career pathway efforts in targeted sectors, several promising practices have emerged these include:

- Engaging employers in the development stage of bridge programs and pathways,
- Partnering with agencies who serve similar populations for braided funding and/or wraparound services,
- Building an essential knowledge and skills component (soft skills, college readiness),
- Providing a comprehensive assessment process, inclusive of testing reading and math skills, personal interviews with applicants, identification of barriers, career assessment, goal setting, and

more. Enrolling students in an appropriate program is key to success,

- Providing a case management component, through the use of a transition coordinator.

Finally, as a best practice, it is important to recognize that successful programs need development time and the use of pilot projects prior to starting. Bridge programs and career pathways are expensive, and successful outcomes are key to continued funding. It is important to have the time to develop strong programs and identify eligible and appropriate students for each cohort.

Expanding Bridge and Integrated Education: The Adult Education (Title II) programs in our region either provide or have developed the following career pathway / bridge programs, as education and training to support the state strategies and goals for integrating education, workforce and economic development:

- Bridge programs in healthcare, hospitality, construction and manufacturing
- Integrated career pathways in healthcare, manufacturing, early childhood education
- Pre-bridge for CNA
- Career awareness
- Newly developed IT bridge
- Expansion is planned in culinary and automotive, pending funding.

Exploring Apprenticeships: In response to promoting apprenticeships, our region currently offers some work experience and internships through Title II. We also have opportunities for current students to gain workplace skills while enrolled in the bridge program or career pathway, providing an opportunity for students to experience a “pre” apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships are becoming an effective way to recruit youth to consider careers in manufacturing and other sectors. Following the examples of companies in Danville and Sullivan who’ve recently begun hosting high school apprenticeships, the Central IL EDR will explore the potential to form partnerships with local school officials, business leaders, and other community leaders to initiate discussions on apprenticeships.

Each year LLCC and Richland serves the construction industry by offering a pre-apprenticeship training course for 45 students at Lincoln Land and 25 students at Richland that fall within “underserved populations”. The targeted groups include women, minorities, formerly incarcerated and others. Fifteen local unions are involved in the program, serving on the advisory committee, speaking to classes, offering on-site demonstrations, and ultimately hiring their graduates.

Using the learning identified by other companies, the Central EDR will work to clear potential barriers that most companies believe keep them from hiring Junior and Senior students in high school. In addition, a focus will be placed upon making the learning a collaborative approach between the schools, companies, parents and the students. Youth apprenticeships would create opportunities for students interested in all aspects of the business – from front line employees to salaried workers to specialists – so that they have a comprehensive view of all potential careers. With enhanced opportunities to be introduced to careers, more people in the high risk category of 18 – 25 will be employable as employers are able to put emphasis on continued learning with the educational system.

Strategy 4: Coordinated and Enhanced Career Services and Case Management

This strategy area includes four activities:

Activity 4.1: Provide Coordinated and Enhanced Career Services

Activity 4.2: Provide Coordinated and Enhanced Case Management Services

Activity 4.3: Promote Continuous Improvement and Ongoing Professional Development

Activity 4.4: Promote the Incorporation of Required Partner Services

The Region will align, integrate and fund activities to carry out the desired strategies and encourage wrap around activities with other required partners for coordinated non-duplicated efforts. Services for job seekers and businesses with core and non-core partners. In particular, the partners will:

- Encourage use of the enhanced information from the Career Information System to help customers evaluate their career choices;
- Support case management staff to participate in training provided by the state in the use of case management data from the states integrated case management system.
- Participate in initiatives developed by the state that promote continuous improvement in career services; and
- Encourage all staff to use materials developed by the state that incorporate services of the comprehensive one-stop partners into case management and career services materials. This will include information on business services, career services, training services and support services.

Strategy 5: Expand Employer and Job Seeker Access to Labor Market Information

This strategy area includes four activities:

Activity 5.1: Improve Employer Tools for Communicating and Accessing Information

Activity 5.2: Improve Access to Career and Education Guidance Tools and Information

Activity 5.3: Improve Access and Integration of Eligible Training Provider Lists

Activity 5.4: Improve Access and Utilization of Labor Market and Workforce System Information

Most of the developmental work under this strategy will take place at the state level. However, the regional partners will do their part to support these efforts, and will utilize any new tools developed by the state in furtherance of their strategic goal to expand access to labor market information. We will encourage regional employers to communicate their forecasted demand for worker, including short-term, using state developed systems. The regional plans to fully explore the development of talent pipeline solutions based on the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Initiative.

Regional partners will formally incorporate the use of the Career Information System (CIS) into their career services. They will encourage the use of the improved workNet website to employers and job seekers. In addition, we will use the Illinois Virtual Labor Market website to access labor market and workforce system information.

Strategy 6: Improved Public-Private Data Infrastructure

This strategy area includes three activities:

Activity 6.1: Enhance the State Labor Market Information System

Activity 6.2: Expand and Improve the State Longitudinal Data System

Activity 6.3: Improve the Integration of Program and Case Management Information Systems.

Again, it would seem that most of the developmental work under this strategy will take place at the state level. The regional partners will support these efforts to the extent we can, by utilizing data and information produced by the state under strategy 6. Through enhanced labor market information on the Customer Information System (CIS) partner programs will provide job seekers with career service information. We will also encourage regional employers to use state systems to report real time data on labor force needs.

Chapter 2 Section A Question 6: What formal and informal cooperative procedures will the core partners and other required partners establish to align services and coordinate delivery?

The partners will use the MOU process, service matrixes, and resource sharing agreements to work toward a better alignment of services and coordination of service delivery. In Illinois, there are special challenges in realizing a greater integration of customer services, in as each of the core programs is administered by a different agency at the state level, and these agencies have separate systems for eligibility determination, intake, assessment, tracking etc. The partners will work together to align services and coordinate service delivery for our job-seeker and business customers. Process mapping will be used to collectively understand and improve or current processes, and set the stage for better integration of services and ongoing improvements. These process improvement efforts will be supported through cross-training of relevant staff from the partner programs. In particular, the partners will focus on the following service areas and challenges:

Customer wait times: One issue that the partners would like to address is the problem with wait times and the various steps prospective customers must go through to access and receive workforce training. The partners will be engaging in a value stream mapping process to understand our current customer processes, and identify ways in which they can be coordinated and streamlined, including the enrollment process by sharing intake data.

Business services: Most of the regional partners provide services to area businesses, and conduct outreach, marketing and customer relations with employers in the region. Better coordination of these services will reduce duplication, and improve results. The partners will work together to expand and formalize the work of Business Service Teams, including economic development partners in the region, and leverage the work of these teams to support the engagement of employers in the primary and secondary targeted sectors. Business Service Managers (BSM) from IDES are mandated to engage in meetings with LWIA partners, community groups, legislators and HR organizations within their respective regions of coverage. Discussions are held regarding workforce and business activities that create opportunities to collectively leverage individual agency programs, services and resources that will benefit business and job seeker alike. IDES has the following staff members assigned to address these needs: Business Service Managers, Business Service Coordinators, Employment Service staff, Veterans' Services Staff, Bonding Coordinator, Hire the Future (HTF) program Coordinator, and Re-entry Employment Service. In addition, the Department of Rehabilitation Services has staff members that conduct outreach to business to expand access to employment for the individuals that serve.

In addition, the DRS Rehabilitation Counselors and Employment Resource Specialists work to engage area businesses to promote job development. The Springfield, Decatur and Jacksonville DRS office Rehabilitation Services Supervisors also sit on the local WIB boards which allows them to partner with IDES and workNet staff, community college reps, adult education reps, and other community agency and business partners involved in the local workforce delivery systems.

Assessment and career guidance for job-seekers: Most of the regional partners provide or require some form of assessment of prospective and current job-seeker customers. In many cases, the assessment purposes and tools are mandated by the state agency through which funds flow, or are required by institution-wide policies for student placement assessment. The different purposes, tools and procedures for assessment often result in job-seeker customers being assessed multiple times. There is a potential for improved service to customers by reducing duplicative assessments. The partners will examine existing assessment processes and tools, with a view toward identifying circumstances in which existing assessments can be used by multiple partners, or where partners may be able to coordinate the assessment process for a given customer. We currently use [Prove It](#), career coach, career cruising. We will use CIS across partners to help our customers to research career options.

Short-term training options: Another challenge faced by job-seekers in our region is the limited choices that customers have for short-term training that results in a decent paying job. Many of our customers want shorter training that they can complete and get jobs with better starting wages and benefits. The partners will work together to identify or develop more short-term training options.

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

Chapter 2 Section B Question 1: What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?
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The regional organizations that currently provide or could provide supportive services include:

- American Red Cross,
- Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland,
- Catholic Charities,
- Community Action Agencies – CEFS, DMCOC, SCCR, etc.
- Salvation Army,
- Goodwill Industries,
- Lincoln’s Challenge,
- Community Connection Point,
- Child and Family Connection,
- IDHS,
- Veterans Affairs,
- IVEDC,
- IMPACT,
- Job Center,
- Lincoln Land Community College,
- Lewis and Clark Community College,

- Richland Community College,
- Locust Street Resource Center,
- Housing Authorities,
- Health Departments,
- Public Transportation Systems,
- Domestic Violence agencies,
- Medical and Dental Clinics,
- ROEs,
- U of I Extension,
- United Way,
- Urban League
- Visiting Nurse Association,
- Wells Center.

Chapter 2 Section B Question 2: What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?

Local workforce areas have supportive service policies in place that promote coordination among community providers. Customers entering training must apply to Community Child Care Connection for child care funding prior to supportive services being awarded by WIOA. Transportation is more difficult to coordinate as mass transit and rural transportation organizations require payment even if it is a minimal amount.

The partners will work through the MOU process to identify better ways to promote coordination of supportive services. We will develop a regional transportation and childcare provider list, building on what has been done in LWIA 21. The region plans to hold a supportive services fair in which providers from across the region share information on the ways that they can assist individuals with their childcare, transportation and other needs.

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

Chapter 2 Section C Question 1: What economic development organizations or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?

The following economic development organizations are engaged in regional planning:

- **Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce** - At the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, we are focused on transforming the economy of Sangamon County. We represent more than 1,600 organizations that care about the progress of our community. As The Chamber, we see ourselves as conveners, collaborators, catalysts, and most importantly, community advocates.
- **City of Springfield** - We are dedicated to being on the cutting edge with technological, social and cultural advances. That means an environment that provides flexibility and ample resources. Springfield offers those benefits along with a skilled, educated workforce and tremendous quality of life.

- **City of Decatur Economic Development** - The City of Decatur offers a Dynamic Business Climate, Productive Workforce, Wonderful Quality of Life and can be a city in which you want to locate or expand your business.
- **Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce** - With more than 125 years serving as the "Voice of Business" for the Decatur community, the Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce is proud to promote opportunity and prosperity in local commerce. The chamber advocates on behalf of members for business-friendly legislation and offers programs, services, and networking opportunities to help make local business thrive and grow.
- **Economic Development Corporation for Decatur and Macon County**
- **City of Litchfield** - The City of Litchfield is dedicated to providing high quality customer service to the community. Commitment and a strong sense of pride, enables the City to remain at the forefront of municipal advancement.
- **Kelly Services Temp Agency**
- **Staffing and Employment Agencies**
- **Regional Planning Commissions** - Planning Commissions are involved in many activities of interest to municipal officials in the planning region, state and federal agencies with which they interact, and the general public.
- **Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation** - We have several governing businesses who strive to improve the communities that they serve. Our strength lies in our private and public partnerships. Our goal is to promote our cities for development opportunities, but also to help businesses thrive and expand within Montgomery County.

While there are many area industries that are consulted on regional planning, the most active for profit business in the region is Ameren Illinois. Ameren has a full-time economic development staff person for the area (Steve Warren / Sr. Economic Development Executive).

Chapter 2 Section C Question 2: What economic development organizations or businesses were invited to participate but declined?

None of the invited economic development organizations or business have declined to participate.

Chapter 2 Section C Question 3: What input was provided by regional economic development organizations and businesses?

Some of the key contributors for the planning process were the Economic Development Corporation for Decatur and Macon County, The City of Decatur, Ameren Illinois, The Greater Decatur Chamber of Commerce, Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce, City of Springfield, City of Litchfield.

Table 33 – provides lists the existing industry sector research studies that were reviewed for the regional planning process.

Table -33-: Existing Industry Sector Research Studies Reviewed for Regional Plan		
Resource Name	Authorizing Organization(s)	Brief Description
2013 Decatur Workforce Survey	Decatur Area Jobs Council & SHRM - Society for Human Resource Management	An analysis of the Macon County workforce completed by SHRM

2015 Macon IL Region - Workforce Profile	Ameren	Macon, McLean, Logan, DeWitt, Piatt, Champaign, Sangamon, Christian, Shelby, Moultrie, Coles, Douglas
Decatur 2006 Workforce Analysis	Economic Development Council of Decatur & Macon and the Workforce Board	An analysis of the Decatur area Workforce needs.
Decatur 2011 Labor Report Full	Growth Services Group	Macon County
Montgomery Co. Regional Workforce Profile	Ameren	Montgomery, Sangamon, Christian, Macoupin, Madison, Bond, Fayette
Montgomery Co. Workforce Profile	Ameren	Montgomery County
Springfield IL Regional Economy Profile 2015	Ameren	Sangamon & Menard
Springfield IL Labor Availability Report 2014	Pathfinders	Cass, Christian, Logan Menard and Sangamon counties

Chapter 2 Section C Question 4: What input provided by economic development and businesses was incorporated into the regional plan?

Regional economic development organizations contributed to the identification of the primary sectors for the development of our sector strategies. The work of these organizations has influenced our decision to look at the assessment and development of essential skills of our customers, and it has influenced our decision to improve our coordination of business services.

D. Describe the coordination of administrative costs arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.

Each of the Local Workforce Development Areas in the region has developed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and its One-Stop system infrastructure and system cost allocation. These MOUs and One-Stop system budgets are submitted separately to the State in the spring of each year. The MOU for PY 2016 was approved, submitted and is currently in place through June 30, 2017. The PY 2017 MOU has been approved by the local Boards and will be submitted when signatures are garnered prior to June 30. The PY 2017 MOU will begin July 1, 2017. The regional partners participate in local MOU negotiations and commit to a good-faith effort when developing appropriate cost sharing arrangements that are consistent with our broader strategies for service integration and coordination as outlined in this plan.

The LWIAs in the Central Region have arranged to coordinate administrative costs through various means including pooling funds for initiatives, free or nominal meeting space and staff time and effort supported by the respective partner. The community college has volunteered meeting space and costs (if needed) for speakers/consultants, etc., will be pooled for payment by the LWIAs. In addition, the Central Region has been awarded a regional partnership grant to begin work on regional business engagement activities.

Chapter 3: Vision, Goals and Strategies

A. Describe the strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth.

The Central Economic Development Region 1 has adopted the State of Illinois strategic vision to support regional economic growth:

Vision: Promote business driven talent solutions that integrate education, workforce and economic development resources across systems to provide businesses, individuals and communities with the opportunity to prosper and contribute to growing the State's economy.

The Central Region will work toward a regional system that is

- *Is employer-centric and built upon common efforts of our economic development partners with strong industry partnerships in place.*
- *Is holistically focused on the industry sectors that are being targeted.*
- *Uses regional labor market data to have an up-to-date understanding of both the supply and demand sides of our regional economy, including the talent needs and qualifications of employers and our education and training systems effectiveness in meeting them.*
- *Builds upon educational efforts throughout the region to identify and create job relevant career pathways for all on-ramps within a given industry sector and their associated occupations.*
- *Advances opportunities for all job seekers including low skilled adults, youth, individuals with disabilities, veterans and other individuals with multiple barriers to employment.*
- *Creates a system of workforce, education and economic development partners that provide excellence in meeting the needs of businesses and individuals thus growing a vibrant and robust regional economy.*

B. Describe the goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), and goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators described in 20 CFR 677.155(a) (1).

The regional partners have considered the overall needs of their respective communities, the challenges of businesses and job seekers and the existing capacity of the workforce development system to respond to these needs. We have adopted the following goals to guide our work together during the next few years:

1. Develop and expand career pathways. The Region will perform a review of existing pathways to determine what middle skill jobs exist within it. Upon identification of said jobs the region will target our training resources to expanding access for individuals, including those with barriers, to such jobs.
2. Expand the use of the full range of work-based learning ("earn and learn") models for training, including work experience, internships, transitional employment, on-the-job training, apprenticeships and incumbent worker training.
3. Work with the Local Chamber to research the development of talent pipelines within targeted industry sectors.
4. Research and develop an initiative for assessing and improving the essential skills of our customers.

With respect to the performance accountability measures required in WIOA and the implementing rule, the LWIAs in the Central Region have collectively negotiated and reached agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for the performance accountability measures. During WIOA implementation, performance measures were delayed; however, negotiations occur each year and measures are in place for PY 2017. In addition, partners will actively engage in whatever process is implemented by the respective state agencies for negotiating and setting targets for these measures. It is our understanding that at least with respect to the accountability measures as specified in Section 116 of WIOA, the local goals for the Title I programs will be set through the use of a multiple regression model to be developed by USDOL and USDOE. Once these procedures are in place, the partners will consult with their respective state agency contacts and meet to discuss the implications of the proposed performance measures and required targets for service delivery and integration. As partners we are especially concerned about the impact of the new common measures and related accountability provisions on the availability of services to targeted populations, especially lower-skilled adults, out-of-school youth, and other customers with significant barriers to employment. The Core Partners will work cooperatively to report performance outcomes across all programs to advance the goals of improving access and success for these persons.

C. Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and goals.

This must include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local areas:

Chapter 3 Section C Question 1: To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;

We will use our Workforce Development Boards to create strategies for employer engagement and to lead engagement efforts for specific industries, particularly for the primary targeted sectors.

We will create sector task forces of employers that meet periodically to advise us on a range of issues. Sector task forces will be created for each of the primary and secondary targeted sectors.

We will work with the existing community college program advisory committees to leverage the work of these committees to inform our planning and policies for career pathway development, and to help ensure that these advisory committees benefit from the perspectives of the workforce system. Program advisory committees exist for each AAS program offered by a community college. They meet at least once during each program review cycle, and often more frequently. They have well-established procedures for garnering employer input into the skill needs of the occupations for which the programs prepare students.

Chapter 3 Section C Question 2: To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local areas;

We will work with Chambers of Commerce and existing economic development agency retention efforts to coordinate our outreach efforts to employers. The focus of this effort will be more oriented toward marketing the services of the workforce development system to regional employers as part of the overall economic development business retention effort.

We will also use our business service teams (discussed in Chapter 2) to engage employers. The focus of this effort will be oriented toward responding to the specific workforce needs of individual employers who come to the attention of any of the business service personnel of the regional partners.

Chapter 3 Section C Question 3: To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development;

The Economic Development community of Decatur and Macon County primarily serves as link between local businesses and workforce development initiatives through our Business Development & Retention program (BDR) by providing timely feedback from employers concerning the state of employment and recruitment on the ground as they see it. This information allows for a more dynamic response by workforce developers as employers needs evolve.

Chapter 3 Section C Question 4: To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs;

Process mapping will be used to identify the services provided by the partners, to eliminate any overlapping services, and to streamline the delivery of services for the customer. A common Intake Assessment Tool should be developed with input from all partners in order to assess the customers' needs. All intake staff should be cross-trained in all partner programs in order to recognize the needs of the customer. All intake staff should be trained on IllinoisJobLink.com (IJL) in order to enter all services so that customers' progress can be tracked. Updated procedures for Unemployment Insurance will make it mandatory that claimants enter a complete IJL registration and upload a resume prior to receiving UI benefits. Partner staff will be able to access this registration to enter services and track customer's progress.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) is the State employment office for Illinois businesses and workers, providing no-cost human resources solutions linking hiring businesses to qualified job seekers. Every office has designated staff members that focus on Wagner-Peyser/Employment Services (WP/ES) offered to job seekers.

The job seeker population represents all Illinoisans that may be seeking employment today or in the future. Job seekers are often woefully unprepared for a job search. Work search services offered to this population are designed to assist job seekers to return to the workforce as quickly as possible. WP/ES offers work search assistance via one-on-one services or workshops and events. WP/ES staff develops and maintain connections with partner and community organizations. These connections are essential when a barrier to employment has been identified. WP/ES staff focuses on job seekers who are receiving unemployment insurance benefits to encourage economic growth and stability.

Employment services include the state labor exchange system (illinoisjoblink.com), resume preparation assistance, on-line job search & application techniques, interviewing techniques and job matching. WP/ES staff is prepared to provide job seekers with information on all programs and services provided by IDES. This includes but is not limited to: Veterans, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, IllinoisJobLink.com (IJL), The Illinois Career Information System, Labor Market Information, Higher the Future, and Re-Entry Service Programs.

Through outreach conducted via phone and email (eblast) we notify job seeking customers of ongoing workshops, job fairs, on-site hiring events, and partner and employer orientations. WP/ES utilizes IJL to track and record referrals to job opportunities, partner services, community services and service delivery.

The WP/ES staff references the employer information entered by the business service team to identify employment opportunities for job seekers. WP/ES review job orders to understand the job description, qualifications and requirements of available positions within an organization to help ensure that employers are receiving the most qualified candidates.

Chapter 3 Section C Question 5: To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services;

Concerning the Decatur IL, MSA, the following organizations are active in business development for this area:

- SCORE – A national network of business start-up mentoring and planning experts providing training, insight and general support.
- Business Development Resource Center – A centralized point of contact for all available community and regional services providing referrals and directional advice to potential new businesses.
- Center for Entrepreneurship - A dedicated resource for entrepreneurs at every level. Through a variety of programs and development opportunities, The Center serves Milliken faculty and students, youth (ranging in age from elementary to high school level), community, and local businesses.
- SBDC - Illinois Small Business Development Centers are located throughout the state and provide information, confidential business guidance, training and other resources to start-up and existing small businesses.
- The Business Center of Decatur – This is a business incubator in which a number of new and growing businesses operate with affordable rents, shared office services and access to professional, technical and financial assistance during early, critical stages of development.

In the Springfield, IL area, the following are some of the organizations involved in business development:

The Illinois Small Business Development Center at Lincoln Land Community College is the main provider of services that support the establishment and expansion of small business in our local area. Services include classes, one-on-one counseling, assistance with business plan development and loan applications, marketing plan development, etc.

Local Chambers of Commerce, such as the Greater Springfield Chamber also provide support for existing businesses to help them flourish and expand, as well as attract new companies to relocate to this area.

Recently, a privately funded business incubator called Innovate Springfield (iSPI) was established. It is a downtown Springfield location offering a synergistic environment, office space for rent and many resources to help fledgling companies address various needs including financial, IT, marketing and networking.

Lincoln Land Community College has secured some funding and is working to establish a Community Commercial Kitchen which would allow many would-be entrepreneurs to start food related businesses such as developing and producing products, preserving locally grown foods, opening catering businesses, etc. There would be space for training, as well as the opportunity for entrepreneurs to rent space. A

maker space is also envisioned, where tech savvy individuals could develop innovative solutions utilizing 3D printing technologies, receive training on topics such as patent acquisition, bringing a product to market, etc., and receive advice and support through the mentorship of seasoned inventors.

Sangamon CEO is one of many programs in the state that introduce entrepreneurship to high school students. It is a year-long program where students develop their own businesses while receiving entrepreneurship training at various local company facilities.

There are also investors, aside from commercial banks willing and seeking companies to invest in.

These are just some of the exciting resources that are in place. The organizations are currently working together in a productive way and may even, at some point, be collocated.

Chapter 3 Section C Question 6: To implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers.

The regional partners will explore the creation of a Regional Business Services Team that would incorporate members from each of the three local workforce area business services teams. This regional business services team could support our regional sector strategies by serving as a business intermediary between the partners and businesses within each of the targeted sectors. This would allow us to leverage our limited resources and provide a more robust menu of work-based learning opportunities to area businesses, including incumbent worker training, OJT and customized training.

The partners will implement a regional Career Pathways Team to examine the state of development of our existing career pathway initiatives, and identify opportunities to expand access to existing career pathways as well as unmet skill needs of employers that may be addressed through the development of new career pathway programs or modification of existing pathways.

D. Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state goals to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development including:

Chapter 3 Section D Question 1: Fostering the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors that are the engine of economic growth for the state and its regions.

The region will foster the improvement and expansion of employer-driven regional sector partnerships to increase the focus on critical in-demand occupations in key sectors through the following efforts.

1. Work with our economic development partners within our region to identify existing partnerships and initiatives with employers in our key sectors.
2. Identify local employers willing to provide expertise to our sector initiatives.
3. Work with Neutral Conveners to organize and or expand work within existing partnerships or create new partnerships.

Chapter 3 Section D Question 2: Expanding career pathway opportunities through more accelerated and work-based training and align and integrate programs of study leading to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.

Adult Education programs will expand career pathways by understanding the need to provide an intensive assessment component. Adult Education has identified key components by developing pilot programs and trial and error. There is a strong need for adult education learners to complete the Essentials skills and Bridge programs to prepare for industry level and stackable certificates. The expansion will come from a better prepared learner, that has been exposed to career awareness and work experience before entering the industry recognized program (ICAPS) The alignment must include a buy in from college Deans and faculty to support pathways. A higher success rate for completion will prevail once the alignment is present.

We will build upon the successful experience of the ATIM grant to create an “ATIM 2.0” accelerated manufacturing program. Based on that experience we will explore the expansion of that program design to other sectors that we have identified as being in demand in the region.

Chapter 3 Section D Question 3: Expanding career services and opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to close the gap in educational attainment and economic advancement through career pathways and improved career services and expansion of bridge programs.

The partners will continue to work with local community groups to identify persons, who with some encouragement, might benefit from WIOA services. We recognize that in order for customers with significant barriers to employment to be successful, basic needs, education barriers, perceptions of work, peer pressure and a range of issues have to be addressed. Career services need to include support and counseling services from grass roots people who work with persons facing multiple barriers on an ongoing basis.

The partners will work to expand career services and opportunities while placing emphasis on working with nontraditional employers who are willing to work with persons facing barriers, such as job-seekers with arrest records, past drug usage and possible relapse, or with limited skills, lack of education, or lack of computer literacy skills. It will be important to expose these persons to positive work ethics, in a manner understandable to them.

Community organizations must work together and find the most effect ways to identify and serve nontraditional participants. Services include everything from helping make the family more stable, to supporting them while they struggle to move past depending on SNAP, medical cards, and TANF, to becoming completely self-sufficient.

Chapter 3 Section D Question 4: Expanding information for employers and job-seekers to access services by improving the Illinois public-private data infrastructure to support the alignment and integration of economic development, workforce development and education initiatives for supporting sector partnerships and career pathways.

The Region will utilize systems developed by the State of Illinois that expand information for employers and job seekers to use for their workforce related needs. We will participate in any training provided by the state on these systems and provide input on their development if asked.