

## CHAPTER 1: ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE ANALYSIS – REGIONAL COMPONENT

*This chapter must demonstrate how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information which must include the local planning requirements. Regional teams are encouraged to use the labor market information posted on [Illinois workNet](#) and [Illinois Virtual Labor Market Information System](#), which will provide consistency in the data used for regional analysis throughout the state<sup>1</sup>.*

**A. Plans must include an analysis of:**

- *Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(i));*
- *Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(a)(1)(ii));*
- *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 (§ 679.560(a)(2)); 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<sup>2</sup> (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iv) and § 679.560(a)(3)).*

*Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:*

**1. How were all partners involved in providing, analyzing and agreeing on supply and demand data and the targeted sectors/industries/occupations/skills?**

All core partners and all required partners participated in a series of meetings, telephone conference calls, and the summit to compile and review data, evaluate resources, and identify the key region targeted sectors. The data collected for the Great Northwest Region Plan is courtesy of the University of Illinois Extension Service.

## 2. How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply and occupational demand?

**Population 2000-2014**

	Population (2014*)	Population (2000)	Population Change (2000- 2014*)	Population Percent Change (2000- 2014*)
Bureau County, IL	34,361	35,503	-1,142	-3.2%
Carroll County, IL	15,027	16,674	-1,647	-9.9%
Henry County, IL	50,031	51,020	-989	-1.9%
Jo Daviess County, IL	22,427	22,289	138	0.6%
LaSalle County, IL	112,698	111,509	1,189	1.1%
Lee County, IL	35,248	36,062	-814	-2.3%
Mercer County, IL	16,204	16,957	-753	-4.4%
Putnam County, IL	5,895	6,086	-191	-3.1%
Rock Island County, IL	146,964	149,374	-2,410	-1.6%
Whiteside County, IL	57,680	60,653	-2,973	-4.9%
Great Northwest Region Total	496,535	506,127	-9,592	-1.9%
U.S.	314,107,084	281,421,906	32,685,178	11.6%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2010-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Between 2000 and 2014, the general population in the Great Northwest Region declined by 1.9 percent from 506,127 to 496,535, whereas, the U.S. population increased by 11.6 percent. Only two counties in the region, LaSalle County and Jo Daviess County, increased in population during this time (1.1 percent and 0.6 percent, respectively). Carroll County had the most dramatic decrease in population during this time period with a 9.9 percent decrease in overall population. Whiteside County followed with a 4.9 percent decrease, Mercer County showed a 4.4 percent decrease, and Bureau County lost 3.2 percent of its population in that time period.

### Age Distribution and Change, 2000-2014\*

		2000	2014*
<b>Total Population</b>		506,127	496,535
Under 18		124,134	110,326
18-34		102,265	97,821
35-44		78,350	58,190
45-64		119,976	141,859
65 and over		81,402	88,339
<b>Percent of Total</b>			
Under 18		24.5%	22.2%
18-34		20.2%	19.7%
35-44		15.5%	11.7%
45-64		23.7%	28.6%
65 and over		16.1%	17.8%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Source: Headwaters Economics, 2016

The population decline is striking age cohorts in the Great Northwest Region in a disproportionate manner. The 65 and over population and the age cohort consisting of 45 to 64 year olds have both grown significantly between 2000 and 2014. However, the number of individuals in the 35 to 44 age range decreased by over 20,000 between 2000 and 2014. This is a prime age range for the workforce and shows that there has been substantial outmigration from the Great Northwest Region. A corresponding decrease in the “Under 18” cohort shows that individuals in the 35 to 44 age range are taking their families and moving out of the area. The number of individuals within the 18 to 34 age range has decreased, as well.

This age re-distribution cycle will have a dramatic impact on workforce in the Great Northwest Region for years to come. A growing portion of the population is reaching retirement age and their replacements are not there to take over their positions. More importantly, businesses and industries will need to retain older workers or be prepared to train replacements that might be older and less amenable to developing critical technological skills that will be needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace. It also suggests an urgent need to make linkages and communicate opportunities to younger residents in the area to keep them in the area and in the local workforce.

State/County	2010 Census	Projections 2015	Projections 2020	Projections 2025	% Change in Population, 2010 to 2025
<b>Illinois</b>	12,830,632	12,978,800	13,129,233	13,263,662	3.4%
<b>Bureau</b>	34,978	34,251	33,682	33,144	-5.2%
<b>Carroll</b>	15,387	14,735	14,169	13,601	-11.6%
<b>Henry</b>	50,486	49,243	48,234	47,250	-6.4%
<b>Jo Daviess</b>	22,678	22,408	22,138	21,805	-3.8%
<b>LaSalle</b>	113,924	112,881	112,417	112,034	-1.7%
<b>Lee</b>	36,031	35,972	36,065	36,119	0.2%
<b>Mercer</b>	16,434	16,144	15,897	15,652	-4.8%
<b>Putnam</b>	6,006	6,003	5,998	5,977	-0.5%
<b>Rock Island</b>	147,546	145,010	143,037	141,317	-4.2%
<b>Whiteside</b>	58,498	56,691	55,267	53,922	-7.8%
<b>Great Northwest Region</b>	501,968	493,338	486,904	480,821	-4.2%

Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, 2015

Looking forward, the Great Northwest Region is typified by projected population loss through 2025. Based on Illinois Department of Public Health population projections using the 2010 Census as the baseline, the population of Illinois is expected to increase 3.4 percent through 2025 to 13,263,662. Conversely, the population of the Great Northwest Region is expected to decrease 4.2 percent in the same time period, dropping from 501,968 residents identified in the 2010 Census to 480,821 in 2025. This represents a loss of over 20,000 residents within a span of 15 years.

Some counties in the region are projected to experience larger population losses with Carroll County's population projected to decrease almost 12 percent between 2010 and 2025, followed by Whiteside County with a 7.8 percent population decline, and Henry County with a 6.4 percent decline. The only county that is projected to increase in population is Lee County and that increase is only 0.2 percent. Rock Island County, the largest and most urbanized county within the region is expected to lose nearly 6,000 residents during this time period.

The Thompson Prison changes may change some of projected population declines. If the prison is brought to capacity, up to 11,000 employees may be needed. The existing housing stock in Whiteside and Carroll counties will not be sufficient to meet projected needs, so there may also be growth in construction.

**Population by Race, Percent of Total 2014**

	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Is. alone	Some other race alone	Two or more races
Bureau County, IL	95.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%	1.8%	1.1%
Carroll County, IL	96.1%	1.2%	0.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.7%	1.4%
Henry County, IL	93.9%	1.6%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	1.7%	2.3%
Jo Daviess County, IL	97.8%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	1.1%
LaSalle County, IL	94.6%	2.1%	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	1.0%	1.5%
Lee County, IL	91.7%	4.7%	0.1%	0.7%	0.3%	0.9%	1.6%
Mercer County, IL	97.4%	0.4%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	1.0%	0.8%
Putnam County, IL	97.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.8%	1.6%
Rock Island County, IL	81.9%	9.5%	0.3%	1.9%	0.0%	3.3%	3.0%
Whiteside County, IL	92.2%	1.4%	0.3%	0.5%	0.2%	3.2%	2.1%
Great Northwest Region	90.7%	4.1%	0.2%	0.9%	0.1%	2.0%	2.0%
U.S.	73.8%	12.6%	0.8%	5.0%	0.2%	4.7%	2.9%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

In terms of raw numbers, the Hispanic population within the region is 42,863. Rock Island County has the largest Hispanic population with 17,686 residents and is followed by LaSalle County with 9,569 and Whiteside County with 6,606. The second largest group is African American with 19,309 residents in the Great Northwest Region. Rock Island County is home to almost 70 percent of the African American population in the region with other somewhat significant populations in LaSalle and Lee Counties. Almost 60 percent of the region's Asian population is also concentrated in Rock Island County with refugees from Myanmar accounting for much of this growth. Other significant refugee / immigrant populations residing in Rock Island County come from East African countries, particularly Togo, and the war-torn regions within the Central African Republic, Burundi, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Individuals identifying as "two or more races" are concentrated in Rock Island County and, to a lesser extent LaSalle County.

### Hispanic Population, Percent of Total 2014

	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Not Hispanic or Latino	White alone	Black or African American alone	American Indian alone	Asian alone	Native Hawaiian & Oth.Pacific Is. alone	Some other race	Two or more races
Bureau County, IL	8.2%	91.8%	89.4%	0.6%	0.2%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
Carroll County, IL	3.2%	96.8%	94.2%	1.1%	0.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
Henry County, IL	5.1%	94.9%	91.3%	1.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	1.4%
Jo Daviess County, IL	2.9%	97.1%	95.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
LaSalle County, IL	8.5%	91.5%	87.5%	2.0%	0.2%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Lee County, IL	5.4%	94.6%	87.6%	4.6%	0.1%	0.7%	0.3%	0.1%	1.2%
Mercer County, IL	2.0%	98.0%	96.4%	0.4%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.8%
Putnam County, IL	4.6%	95.4%	93.4%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	1.6%
Rock Island County, IL	12.0%	88.0%	74.6%	9.1%	0.2%	1.9%	0.0%	0.1%	2.1%
Whiteside County, IL	11.5%	88.5%	85.3%	1.3%	0.2%	0.5%	0.2%	0.1%	1.0%
Great Northwest Region	8.6%	91.4%	84.9%	3.9%	0.2%	0.9%	0.1%	0.1%	1.4%
U.S.	16.9%	83.1%	62.8%	12.2%	0.7%	4.9%	0.2%	0.2%	2.1%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Over the past decade, the Hispanic population has growth throughout the region. Currently, Hispanics make up 8.6 percent of the Great Northwest Region's population (42,863), whereas, Hispanics make up 16.9 percent of the total U.S. population. Rock Island County and Whiteside County have the largest percentages of Hispanics within their county populations (12.0 percent and 11.5 percent, respectively). Mercer County with a Hispanic population at 2.0 percent of the total county population and Jo Daviess County with a Hispanic population at 2.9 percent of the total population have the smallest Hispanic population percentages.

Some smaller communities within the region including Sterling, Rock Falls, and Kewanee, have also seen significant growth in their Hispanic populations over the past decade.

### Racial/Ethnic Population Change: 2000-2014

	White			Black			American Indian & Alaska Native			Asian		
	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014
<b>Bureau County</b>	34,365	32,784	<b>-4.6%</b>	116	220	<b>89.7%</b>	61	83	<b>36.1%</b>	182	247	<b>35.7%</b>
<b>Carroll County</b>	16,164	14,447	<b>-10.6%</b>	91	177	<b>94.5%</b>	40	15	<b>-62.5%</b>	68	63	<b>-7.4%</b>
<b>Henry County</b>	49,077	48,895	<b>-0.4%</b>	583	794	<b>36.2%</b>	52	83	<b>59.6%</b>	127	196	<b>54.3%</b>
<b>Jo Daviess County</b>	21,991	21,926	<b>-0.3%</b>	44	65	<b>47.7%</b>	23	39	<b>69.6%</b>	36	95	<b>163.9%</b>
<b>La Salle County</b>	105,896	106,603	<b>0.7%</b>	1,723	2,391	<b>38.8%</b>	191	250	<b>30.9%</b>	598	706	<b>18.1%</b>
<b>Lee County</b>	33,422	32,338	<b>-3.2%</b>	1,772	1,667	<b>-5.9%</b>	41	36	<b>-12.2%</b>	202	236	<b>16.8%</b>
<b>Mercer County</b>	16,680	15,785	<b>-5.4%</b>	50	69	<b>38.0%</b>	21	15	<b>-28.6%</b>	29	47	<b>62.1%</b>
<b>Putnam County</b>	5,941	5,730	<b>-3.6%</b>	38	4	<b>-89.5%</b>	21	-	<b>-100.0%</b>	16	18	<b>12.5%</b>
<b>Rock Island County</b>	127,742	120,355	<b>-5.8%</b>	11,260	13,988	<b>24.2%</b>	410	461	<b>12.4%</b>	1,524	2,736	<b>79.5%</b>
<b>Whiteside County</b>	56,294	53,197	<b>-5.5%</b>	616	829	<b>34.6%</b>	158	177	<b>12.0%</b>	254	314	<b>23.6%</b>
<b>Great Northwest Region</b>	467,572	452,060	<b>-3.3%</b>	16,293	20,204	<b>24.0%</b>	1,018	1,159	<b>13.9%</b>	3,036	4,658	<b>53.4%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2014.

Racially and ethnically, the Great Northwest Region has become more diverse between 2000 and 2014, while simultaneously declining in overall population. The White population in the region has declined as a percentage of the population and in real numeric totals. Overall for the region, the White population declined by 3.3 percent between 2000 and 2014 with the steepest decline being in Carroll County (-10.6 percent) followed by Rock Island County (-5.8 percent). Only La Salle County registered an increase in its White population, with a 0.7 percent growth during this time period.

The Black or African American population in the region grew by 24 percent, with the largest jumps being registered in Carroll County (94.5 percent increase) and Bureau County (89.7 percent increase). The Black population in Lee County decreased by 5.9 percent and in Putnam County, it decreased by 89.5 percent. In regards to Putnam County, the Black population was small to begin with so the movement of a number of individuals magnifies the percentage change substantially.

Likewise, the American Indian and Alaska Native population was small in 2000 and remained small in 2014, but still registered growth of 13.9 percent. Jo Daviess County had the largest jump in American Indians and Alaska Natives with a 69.6 percent increase. Putnam County's American Indian and Native Alaskan population ceased to exist during this time period. Again, the numbers in Putnam County were extremely small to begin with so the 100 percent decline in this population should be viewed with caution.

The Asian population in the region grew 53.4 percent between 2000 and 2014 with the highest rates being in Jo Daviess County (163.9 percent increase), Rock Island County (79.5 percent increase), and Mercer County (62.1 percent increase). The only county in the region that saw declining numbers of Asians was Carroll County where the Asian population decreased 7.4 percent between 2000 and 2014. However, this represents only 5 individuals.

**Racial/Ethnic Population Change: 2000-2014 continued**

	Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander			Some Other Race			Two or More Races			Hispanic		
	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014	2000	2014	% Growth 2000-2014
<b>Bureau County</b>	10	4	<b>-60.0%</b>	455	629	<b>38.2%</b>	314	394	<b>25.5%</b>	1,732	2,805	<b>62.0%</b>
<b>Carroll County</b>	5	2	<b>-60.0%</b>	136	110	<b>-19.1%</b>	170	213	<b>25.3%</b>	340	474	<b>39.4%</b>
<b>Henry County</b>	6	7	<b>16.7%</b>	669	842	<b>25.9%</b>	506	1,136	<b>124.5%</b>	1,467	2,554	<b>74.1%</b>
<b>Jo Daviess County</b>	1	6	<b>500.0%</b>	75	41	<b>-45.3%</b>	119	255	<b>114.3%</b>	342	659	<b>92.7%</b>
<b>La Salle County</b>	26	2	<b>-92.3%</b>	1,908	1,081	<b>-43.3%</b>	1,167	1,665	<b>42.7%</b>	5,791	9,569	<b>65.2%</b>
<b>Lee County</b>	8	103	<b>1187.5%</b>	277	311	<b>12.3%</b>	340	563	<b>65.6%</b>	1,147	1,910	<b>66.5%</b>
<b>Mercer County</b>	1	0	<b>-100.0%</b>	60	156	<b>160.0%</b>	116	132	<b>13.8%</b>	216	327	<b>51.4%</b>
<b>Putnam County</b>	0	0	<b>0.0%</b>	38	49	<b>28.9%</b>	32	94	<b>193.8%</b>	171	273	<b>59.6%</b>
<b>Rock Island County</b>	45	39	<b>-13.3%</b>	5,612	4,913	<b>-12.5%</b>	2,781	4,472	<b>60.8%</b>	12,791	17,686	<b>38.3%</b>
<b>Whiteside County</b>	4	122	<b>2950.0%</b>	2,471	1,825	<b>-26.1%</b>	856	1,216	<b>42.1%</b>	5,347	6,606	<b>23.5%</b>
<b>Great Northwest Region</b>	106	285	<b>168.9%</b>	11,701	9,957	<b>-14.9%</b>	6,401	10,140	<b>58.4%</b>	29,344	42,863	<b>46.1%</b>

Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey, 2014.

The Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population grew by 168.9 percent in the Great Northwest Region, the largest percentage growth of any ethnic or racial group in the region. However, the numbers are very small and the high percentage growth is attributed to the movement of just a few individuals. Of particular interest are the counties of Whiteside and Lee where there were substantial jumps in individuals in this category. Whiteside County saw a 2,950 percent increase in Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders with the population jumping from 4 in



2000 to 122 in 2014. Likewise, Lee County's Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander population increased from 8 individuals to 103 individuals, a 1,187.5 percent increase between 2000 and 2014.

The category, "Some Other Race" experienced a general decline over the period of 2000 to 2014. According to the statistics, there were 14.9 percent fewer individuals identifying themselves as "Some Other Race" in 2014 than in 2000. There were pockets of growth in Mercer County (160 percent increase), Bureau County (38.2 percent increase), Putnam County (28.9 percent increase), and Henry County (25.9 percent increase). Part of the reason for the decline could be more individuals self-identifying in the category "Two or More Races". Between 2000 and 2014, the population in the "Two or More Races" category increased by 58.4 percent in the region. In fact, all counties experienced population growth in this category with counties such as Putnam, Henry, and Jo Daviess experiencing the highest percentage growth.

The Hispanic population, which includes all racial categories, grew substantially across the region and within each county over the 14 year period. For the entire region, the Hispanic population increased 46.1 percent during this time period. Jo Daviess County's Hispanic population grew 92.7 percent and Henry County's Hispanic population grew 74.1 percent. Whiteside County's 23.5 percent increase represents the smaller percentage increase of all of the counties but Whiteside County also had a significant Hispanic population present in 2000.

#### Educational Attainment, 2014\*

	Total Population 25 yrs. or older	No high school degree	High school graduate	Associates degree	Bachelor's degree or higher	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional
Bureau County, IL	24,131	2,358	21,773	2,013	4,222	2,675	1,547
Carroll County, IL	10,958	1,155	9,803	923	1,702	1,154	548
Henry County, IL	34,499	3,749	30,750	3,562	6,765	4,548	2,217
Jo Daviess County, IL	16,482	1,372	15,110	1,283	3,870	2,541	1,329
LaSalle County, IL	77,826	8,883	68,943	7,092	12,671	8,600	4,071
Lee County, IL	24,960	2,966	21,994	2,235	4,127	2,735	1,392
Mercer County, IL	11,439	1,093	10,346	1,009	1,777	1,156	621
Putnam County, IL	4,213	442	3,771	487	578	384	194
Rock Island County, IL	100,772	12,280	88,492	9,360	21,826	14,496	7,330
Whiteside County, IL	39,881	4,899	34,982	4,023	6,609	4,199	2,410
Great Northwest Region	345,161	39,197	305,964	31,987	64,147	42,488	21,659
U.S.	209,056,129	28,587,748	180,468,381	16,580,076	61,206,147	38,184,668	23,021,479

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The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Of the 345,161 residents in the Great Northwest Region over the age of 25, 64,147 have attained a Bachelor's degree or higher. With largest total county populations in the region, Rock Island and LaSalle Counties have the largest numbers of residents who have attained these degrees. In the region, 31,987 residents have attained Associates degrees with Rock Island and LaSalle Counties having the largest concentrations. However, both Whiteside Counties and Henry Counties have significant concentrations as well due to the presence of Sauk Valley Community College and Black Hawk College (East Campus) within those counties. In the region, almost the same number of residents have Bachelor's degrees as do residents who have not finished High School.

**Educational Attainment, Percent of Total 2014**

	No high school degree	High school graduate	Associates degree	Bachelor's degree or higher	Bachelor's degree	Graduate or professional
Bureau County, IL	9.8%	90.2%	8.3%	17.5%	11.1%	6.4%
Carroll County, IL	10.5%	89.5%	8.4%	15.5%	10.5%	5.0%
Henry County, IL	10.9%	89.1%	10.3%	19.6%	13.2%	6.4%
Jo Daviess County, IL	8.3%	91.7%	7.8%	23.5%	15.4%	8.1%
LaSalle County, IL	11.4%	88.6%	9.1%	16.3%	11.1%	5.2%
Lee County, IL	11.9%	88.1%	9.0%	16.5%	11.0%	5.6%
Mercer County, IL	9.6%	90.4%	8.8%	15.5%	10.1%	5.4%
Putnam County, IL	10.5%	89.5%	11.6%	13.7%	9.1%	4.6%
Rock Island County, IL	12.2%	87.8%	9.3%	21.7%	14.4%	7.3%
Whiteside County, IL	12.3%	87.7%	10.1%	16.6%	10.5%	6.0%
Northwest IL Region	11.4%	88.6%	9.3%	18.6%	12.3%	6.3%
U.S.	13.7%	86.3%	7.9%	29.3%	18.3%	11.0%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

When reviewing educational attainment figures based on percentages, the Great Northwest Region is below the national average for Bachelor's degree and Graduate/Professional degree attainment. While 29.3% of the U.S. population has attained at least a Bachelor's degree, within the Great Northwest Region that figure is 18.6 percent. However, the High School graduate rate in the region exceeds the national average of 86.3 percent with every county in the region surpassing the U.S. High School graduation rate. Additionally, Great Northwest Region's Associates degree attainment rate is higher than the national average of 7.9 percent.

Within the region, Jo Daviess County has the highest proportion of High School, Bachelor's degree, and Graduate or Professional School graduates. Putnam County has the highest percentage of residents who have attained Associates degrees but the lowest percentage of residents with either a Bachelor's or Graduate degree.

**Household Income and Income Distribution, 2014\***

	Bureau County, IL	Carroll County, IL	Henry County, IL	Jo Daviess County, IL	LaSalle County, IL	Lee County, IL	Mercer County, IL	Putnam County, IL	Rock Island County, IL	Whiteside County, IL	Great Northwest Region	U.S.
Per Capita Income (2014 \$s)	\$26,587	\$26,918	\$26,845	\$29,477	\$25,668	\$24,943	\$26,739	\$28,158	\$26,257	\$24,815	na	\$28,555
Median Household Income^ (2014 \$s)	\$49,921	\$49,629	\$52,518	\$52,065	\$51,232	\$52,004	\$51,259	\$55,360	\$48,226	\$48,343	na	\$53,482
<b>Total Households</b>	14,111	6,531	20,237	9,555	43,891	13,468	6,662	2,427	60,367	23,328	200,577	116,211,092
Less than \$10,000	5.2%	5.8%	5.6%	5.5%	6.7%	5.9%	5.1%	3.1%	7.6%	5.8%	6.4%	7.2%
\$10,000 to \$14,999	5.4%	6.6%	4.9%	5.1%	6.1%	5.5%	4.3%	3.4%	5.3%	4.7%	5.3%	5.3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	13.7%	11.0%	10.4%	10.3%	11.0%	10.2%	10.8%	14.0%	11.4%	12.7%	11.4%	10.7%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	11.1%	12.3%	11.0%	11.2%	10.3%	12.0%	9.3%	9.1%	11.7%	12.5%	11.3%	10.2%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	14.7%	14.7%	15.4%	15.4%	14.9%	14.7%	19.3%	15.7%	15.9%	15.8%	15.5%	13.5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	20.3%	20.7%	21.5%	19.1%	19.9%	21.1%	20.5%	18.7%	20.0%	20.6%	20.3%	17.8%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	13.1%	12.7%	12.2%	14.9%	12.9%	14.1%	14.1%	15.5%	11.7%	13.5%	12.8%	12.2%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	11.5%	12.0%	13.4%	11.9%	13.3%	10.8%	12.4%	14.4%	10.8%	10.0%	11.7%	13.0%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	2.6%	2.0%	3.3%	4.0%	2.9%	3.2%	1.7%	2.2%	3.0%	3.1%	3.0%	5.0%
\$200,000 or more	2.4%	2.3%	2.2%	2.7%	2.1%	2.4%	2.4%	3.7%	2.7%	1.4%	2.3%	5.0%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2010-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Jo Daviess County has the highest Per Capita Income within the region at \$29,477, and it is the only county in the region that exceeds the U.S. average of \$28,565. Putnam County comes in second in the region at \$28,158. Whiteside County has the lowest Per Capita Income at \$24,815. In regards to Median Household Income, Putnam County has the highest figure in the region, \$55,360. The lowest Median Household Income figure is in Rock Island County at \$48,226.

In terms of income distribution, the \$50,000 to \$74,999 income range contains the largest percentage of residents both regionally and nationally. Within the region, income distribution is concentrated in the middle with U.S. having larger percentages in the bottom income levels and in the higher income levels. Rock Island and LaSalle Counties, both more urbanized areas than the region as a whole, have larger percentages of residents making less than \$10,000 per year than the rest of the region.

**Poverty, 2014\***

	Bureau County, IL	Carroll County, IL	Henry County, IL	Jo Daviess County, IL	LaSalle County, IL	Lee County, IL	Mercer County, IL	Putnam County, IL	Rock Island County, IL	Whiteside County, IL	Great Northwest Region	U.S.
People	33,828	14,764	49,107	22,183	109,636	32,536	15,965	5,889	142,124	56,483	482,515	306,226,394
Families	9,348	4,258	13,600	6,401	29,108	8,921	4,723	1,662	37,351	15,490	130,862	76,958,064
People Below Poverty	4,069	1,940	5,299	1,988	14,175	3,501	1,736	616	20,658	6,745	60,727	47,755,606
Families below poverty	892	397	1,097	336	2,888	692	430	119	3,970	1,263	12,084	8,824,660
<b>Percent of Total</b>												
People Below Poverty	12.0%	13.1%	10.8%	9.0%	12.9%	10.8%	10.9%	10.5%	14.5%	11.9%	12.6%	15.6%
Families below poverty	9.5%	9.3%	8.1%	5.2%	9.9%	7.8%	9.1%	7.2%	10.6%	8.2%	9.2%	11.5%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2010-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

For the U.S., 15.6 percent of the population is classified as living below the poverty level and 11.5 percent of families live below the poverty level. In comparison, 12.6 percent of the residents in the Great Northwest Region live below the poverty level while 9.2 percent of the 130,862 families in the Northwest Region live below the poverty line.

Rock Island County has 14.5 percent of its total population and 10.6 percent of its families living below the poverty level, the highest rates in the region. The lowest poverty rates for individuals and families exists in Jo Daviess County where 9.0 percent of individuals and 5.2 percent of families reside below poverty levels.

### Employment by Industry, 2014\*

	Civilian employed population > 16 years	Ag, forestry, fishing & hunting, mining	Const.	Mfg.	Wholesale trade	Retail trade	Transp., warehousing, and utilities	Info.	Finance and insurance, and real estate	Prof, scientific, mgmt, admin, & waste mgmt	Education, health care, & social assistance	Arts, entertain., rec., accommodation, & food	Other services, except public admin	Public admin
Bureau County, IL	16,231	1,024	1,143	2,427	610	2,520	1,053	186	717	785	3,203	1,270	758	535
Carroll County, IL	7,013	564	435	1,460	190	802	390	90	344	377	1,446	376	320	219
Henry County, IL	23,572	855	1,765	4,210	758	2,683	1,557	384	1,150	1,507	4,941	1,598	1,083	1,081
Jo Davies County, IL	11,179	515	767	1,546	209	1,310	836	251	632	710	2,231	1,114	675	383
LaSalle County, IL	51,263	1,813	3,149	7,302	1,376	7,556	3,501	681	2,354	3,596	10,671	4,539	2,743	1,982
Lee County, IL	15,893	471	761	2,852	502	1,582	1,023	207	748	1,001	4,083	1,418	573	672
Mercer County, IL	7,632	481	639	1,352	188	811	518	150	376	412	1,563	533	345	264
Putnam County, IL	2,707	125	187	466	136	397	245	42	119	153	495	160	62	120
Rock Island County, IL	67,927	771	3,533	12,492	1,782	7,828	4,118	1,454	2,733	5,662	15,256	5,956	3,295	3,047
Whiteside County, IL	26,434	750	1,287	5,361	497	3,832	1,307	241	1,169	1,622	6,240	1,785	1,371	972
Great Northwest Region	229,851	7,369	13,666	39,468	6,248	29,321	14,548	3,686	10,342	15,825	50,129	18,749	11,225	9,275
U.S.	143,435,233	2,807,292	8,843,718	14,955,235	3,937,598	16,598,718	7,066,666	3,064,078	9,467,555	15,618,627	33,297,237	13,610,162	7,112,579	7,055,768

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

### Employment by Industry, Percent of Total 2014

	Ag, forestry, fishing & hunting, mining	Constructi on	Mfg.	Wholesale trade	Retail trade	Transp., warehousing , and utilities	Information	Finance and insurance, and real estate	Prof, scientific, mgmt, admin, & waste mgmt	Education , health care, & social assistanc e	Arts, entertain., rec., accommodation , & food	Other services, except public administratio n	Public admin
Bureau County, IL	6.3%	7.0%	15.0%	3.8%	15.5%	6.5%	1.1%	4.4%	4.8%	19.7%	7.8%	4.7%	3.3%
Carroll County, IL	8.0%	6.2%	20.8%	2.7%	11.4%	5.6%	1.3%	4.9%	5.4%	20.6%	5.4%	4.6%	3.1%
Henry County, IL	3.6%	7.5%	17.9%	3.2%	11.4%	6.6%	1.6%	4.9%	6.4%	21.0%	6.8%	4.6%	4.6%
Jo Daviess County, IL	4.6%	6.9%	13.8%	1.9%	11.7%	7.5%	2.2%	5.7%	6.4%	20.0%	10.0%	6.0%	3.4%
LaSalle County, IL	3.5%	6.1%	14.2%	2.7%	14.7%	6.8%	1.3%	4.6%	7.0%	20.8%	8.9%	5.4%	3.9%
Lee County, IL	3.0%	4.8%	17.9%	3.2%	10.0%	6.4%	1.3%	4.7%	6.3%	25.7%	8.9%	3.6%	4.2%
Mercer County, IL	6.3%	8.4%	17.7%	2.5%	10.6%	6.8%	2.0%	4.9%	5.4%	20.5%	7.0%	4.5%	3.5%
Putnam County, IL	4.6%	6.9%	17.2%	5.0%	14.7%	9.1%	1.6%	4.4%	5.7%	18.3%	5.9%	2.3%	4.4%
Rock Island County, IL	1.1%	5.2%	18.4%	2.6%	11.5%	6.1%	2.1%	4.0%	8.3%	22.5%	8.8%	4.9%	4.5%
Whiteside County, IL	2.8%	4.9%	20.3%	1.9%	14.5%	4.9%	0.9%	4.4%	6.1%	23.6%	6.8%	5.2%	3.7%
Great Northwes t Region	3.2%	5.9%	17.2%	2.7%	12.8%	6.3%	1.6%	4.5%	6.9%	21.8%	8.2%	4.9%	4.0%
U.S.	2.0%	6.2%	10.4%	2.7%	11.6%	4.9%	2.1%	6.6%	10.9%	23.2%	9.5%	5.0%	4.9%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Within the Great Northwest Region, the Education, Healthcare & Social Assistance sector employs more workers than any of the other categories listed above at 21.8 percent of the area's workforce employed in this sector. The other top sectors include Manufacturing employing 17.2 percent and Retail Trade employing 12.8 percent. Within the region, Lee County has the highest percentage of residents employed in the Education, Healthcare, and Social Assistance and Carroll County has the highest percentage of population employed in Manufacturing at 20.8 percent.

#### Employment by Occupation, 2014\*

	Civilian employed population > 16 years	Management, professional, & related	Service	Sales and office	Farming, fishing, and forestry	Construction, extraction, maint., & repair	Production, transportation, & material moving
Bureau County, IL	16,231	4,140	3,056	3,853	384	941	3,263
Carroll County, IL	7,013	1,985	1,251	1,326	175	344	1,740
Henry County, IL	23,572	7,311	3,959	5,498	179	1,426	4,241
Jo Daviess County, IL	11,179	3,226	1,938	2,694	193	637	1,826
LaSalle County, IL	51,263	13,693	10,128	12,127	508	2,853	9,865
Lee County, IL	15,893	4,701	3,308	3,533	175	677	2,975
Mercer County, IL	7,632	2,328	999	1,749	122	528	1,553
Putnam County, IL	2,707	742	411	664	5	178	552
Rock Island County, IL	67,927	20,390	13,061	16,543	183	3,055	12,422
Whiteside County, IL	26,434	7,261	4,673	6,361	214	1,167	5,785
Great Northwest Region	229,851	65,777	42,784	54,348	2,138	11,806	44,222
U.S.	143,435,233	52,234,574	26,053,338	34,935,133	1,050,726	7,169,365	17,336,254

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

### Employment by Occupation, Percent of Total 2014

	Management, professional, & related	Service	Sales and office	Farming, fishing, and forestry	Construction, extraction, maint., & repair	Production, transportation, & material moving
Bureau County, IL	25.5%	18.8%	23.7%	2.4%	5.8%	20.1%
Carroll County, IL	28.3%	17.8%	18.9%	2.5%	4.9%	24.8%
Henry County, IL	31.0%	16.8%	23.3%	0.8%	6.0%	18.0%
Jo Daviess County, IL	28.9%	17.3%	24.1%	1.7%	5.7%	16.3%
LaSalle County, IL	26.7%	19.8%	23.7%	1.0%	5.6%	19.2%
Lee County, IL	29.6%	20.8%	22.2%	1.1%	4.3%	18.7%
Mercer County, IL	30.5%	13.1%	22.9%	1.6%	6.9%	20.3%
Putnam County, IL	27.4%	15.2%	24.5%	0.2%	6.6%	20.4%
Rock Island County, IL	30.0%	19.2%	24.4%	0.3%	4.5%	18.3%
Whiteside County, IL	27.5%	17.7%	24.1%	0.8%	4.4%	21.9%
Great Northwest Region	28.6%	18.6%	23.6%	0.9%	5.1%	19.2%
U.S.	36.4%	18.2%	24.4%	0.7%	5.0%	12.1%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

In regards to occupational data for the Great Northwest Region, the largest occupational category for the area is Management, Professional and Related Occupations with 28.6 percent of the area's population working in these occupations. Another 23.6 percent are employed in Sales and Office Occupations and 19.2 percent of the population is employed in Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations in the area.

Within the region, Henry County has the highest proportion of its residents employed in Management, Professional and Related Occupations with 31.0 percent of its population working in these occupations. Conversely, Bureau County has the lowest proportion of its working population employed in these occupations. Putnam County has the highest proportion of residents employed in Sales and Office Occupations (24.5 percent) with Carroll County having the lowest proportion of residents employed in Sales and Office Occupations (18.9 percent). However, Carroll County has the highest proportion of residents employed in Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations (24.8 percent) and Jo Daviess County has the lowest proportion of residents in these occupations. The region has a significantly higher proportion of its population employed in the Production, Transportation and Material Moving Occupations than the nation as a whole (U. S. Figure =12.1 percent). However, it has fewer residents employed in the Management, Professional and Related Occupations than the U.S does, as a whole (U.S. Figure =36.4 percent).



### Labor Participation Characteristics, 2014\*

	Bureau County, IL	Carroll County, IL	Henry County, IL	Jo Daviess County, IL	LaSalle County, IL	Lee County, IL	Mercer County, IL	Putnam County, IL	Rock Island County, IL	Whiteside County, IL	Great Northwest Region	U.S.
<b>Population 16 to 64</b>	<b>21,083</b>	<b>9,093</b>	<b>31,013</b>	<b>13,386</b>	<b>70,998</b>	<b>22,868</b>	<b>9,891</b>	<b>3,705</b>	<b>92,924</b>	<b>35,444</b>	<b>310,405</b>	<b>205,597,667</b>
<b>WEEKS WORKED PER YEAR:</b>												
Worked 50 to 52 weeks	59.3%	58.5%	60.8%	61.0%	55.5%	54.4%	59.3%	55.3%	56.6%	58.7%	57.3%	55.1%
Worked 27 to 49 weeks	11.5%	12.2%	9.8%	12.7%	11.2%	11.6%	11.3%	11.5%	11.3%	10.9%	11.2%	10.3%
Worked 1 to 26 weeks	8.5%	9.7%	7.5%	9.9%	10.9%	8.5%	8.9%	9.9%	9.8%	8.8%	9.5%	9.2%
Did not work	20.6%	19.6%	21.9%	16.4%	22.4%	25.5%	20.5%	23.3%	22.3%	21.6%	21.9%	25.3%
<b>HOURS WORKED PER WEEK:</b>												
Worked 35 or more hours per week	60.8%	60.0%	60.6%	62.0%	56.5%	57.3%	62.1%	56.6%	57.6%	58.4%	58.3%	56.7%
Worked 15 to 34 hours per week	14.8%	16.6%	13.7%	16.7%	17.2%	12.9%	13.4%	15.0%	15.5%	16.7%	15.6%	14.4%
Worked 1 to 14 hours per week	3.7%	3.9%	3.9%	4.8%	4.0%	4.3%	4.0%	5.1%	4.7%	3.3%	4.1%	3.6%
Did not work	20.6%	19.6%	21.9%	16.4%	22.4%	25.5%	20.5%	23.3%	22.3%	21.6%	21.9%	25.3%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2010-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

In 2014, 55.1 percent of the U.S. population worked 50 to 52 weeks; 10.3 percent worked 27 to 49 weeks per year; 9.2 percent worked 1 to 26 weeks per year; and 25.3 percent did not work. In the region, Jo Daviess County had the highest percentage of residents between the ages of 16 to 64 who worked 50 to 52 weeks per year at 61.0 percent followed by Henry County at 60.8 percent. Lee County had the lowest percentage of residents in this category at 54.4 percent.

The region had higher percentages of labor participation for all three levels than the U.S. averages. However, nationally 25.3 percent of the

U.S. population did not work in the preceding year while in the Great Northwest Region, 21.9 percent of residents reported that they did not work in the previous year. The only county to exceed the U.S. rate for non-participation in the labor market was Lee County where 25.5 percent of the population between the ages of 16 and 64 did not work in the previous year.

Jo Daviess County had the lowest percentage of residents in the 16 to 64 age range who reported that they had not worked in the previous year at 16.4 percent.

In regards to hours worked per week, Mercer County had the highest proportion of residents between the ages of 16 and 64 who worked at least 35 hours a week at 62.1 percent followed by Jo Daviess County at 62.0 percent and Henry County at 60.8 percent. LaSalle County residents reported the lowest percentage of residents who worked more than 35 hours per week at 56.5 percent.

At all levels of hours worked per week, the Great Northwest Region's total labor participation rates exceeded the U.S. levels. While more Great Northwest Region residents were participating in full time work, more of our residents were also participating in part time arrangements than the U.S. population as a whole. The major difference was that the percentage of the U.S. population that reported that they had not worked in the past year was higher.

### **3. What are the policy and service implications of the current and projected Labor Market Information?**

Based on LMI data, both current and projected, combined with the population demographics included here, demand in occupations will be driven largely by replacements, with some growth attributed to expanding industry sectors. One of the primary issues facing the region includes the aging of the population and the outmigration of younger individuals who typically make up the bulk of the workforce. With waves of retirements for the Baby Boom generation beginning, industries will need to replace these workers and the natural population growth will hamper industries' ability to recruit new workers, put pressures on education providers to meet business and industry demands, and require economic development organizations and chambers of commerce to become even more creative in attracting and retaining workforce talent to their communities.

It will also be important to recognize the importance of older adults and their contributions to the labor pool over the coming years. Increasingly, education providers – community colleges, universities, local workforce investment boards – will need to develop action steps to accommodate these non-traditional learners and re-emphasize the importance of lifelong learning. Additionally, to shore up the number of new workers that can be directed into the workforce, programs focused on a diverse population including Hispanics, African Americans, and other growing minority groups along with first and second generation immigrants and refugees, and Veterans will need to be developed.

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?

Language Spoken at Home, 2014\*

	Population 5 yrs. or older	Speak only English	Speak a language other than English	Spanish or Spanish Creole	Other Indo- European languages	Asian and Pacific Island languages	Other languages	Speak English less than "very well"
Bureau County, IL	32,511	29,995	2,516	1,779	518	193	26	660
Carroll County, IL	14,284	13,739	545	303	184	35	23	246
Henry County, IL	47,227	44,981	2,246	1,689	342	129	86	900
Jo Daviess County, IL	21,383	20,406	977	479	338	58	102	274
LaSalle County, IL	106,308	99,535	6,773	5,332	856	538	47	2,729
Lee County, IL	33,314	31,576	1,738	1,053	510	164	11	456
Mercer County, IL	15,336	15,015	321	141	142	15	23	83
Putnam County, IL	5,554	5,322	232	140	80	12	0	51
Rock Island County, IL	137,788	121,783	16,005	10,203	3,137	1,660	1,005	6,801
Whiteside County, IL	54,407	50,987	3,420	2,513	683	142	82	1,060
Great Northwest Region	468,112	433,339	34,773	23,632	6,790	2,946	1,405	13,260
U.S.	294,133,373	232,724,203	61,409,170	38,098,698	10,806,493	9,776,631	2,727,348	25,305,202

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

**Language Spoken at Home, Percent of Total 2014**

	Speak only English	Speak a language other than English	Spanish or Spanish Creole	Other Indo-European languages	Asian and Pacific Island languages	Other languages	Speak English less than "very well"
Bureau County, IL	92.3%	7.7%	5.5%	1.6%	0.6%	0.1%	2.0%
Carroll County, IL	96.2%	3.8%	2.1%	1.3%	0.2%	0.2%	1.7%
Henry County, IL	95.2%	4.8%	3.6%	0.7%	0.3%	0.2%	1.9%
Jo Daviess County, IL	95.4%	4.6%	2.2%	1.6%	0.3%	0.5%	1.3%
LaSalle County, IL	93.6%	6.4%	5.0%	0.8%	0.5%	0.0%	2.6%
Lee County, IL	94.8%	5.2%	3.2%	1.5%	0.5%	0.0%	1.4%
Mercer County, IL	97.9%	2.1%	0.9%	0.9%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%
Putnam County, IL	95.8%	4.2%	2.5%	1.4%	0.2%	0.0%	0.9%
Rock Island County, IL	88.4%	11.6%	7.4%	2.3%	1.2%	0.7%	4.9%
Whiteside County, IL	93.7%	6.3%	4.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.2%	1.9%
Great Northwest Region	92.6%	7.4%	5.0%	1.5%	0.6%	0.3%	2.8%
U.S.	79.1%	20.9%	13.0%	3.7%	3.3%	0.9%	8.6%

\* The data in this table are calculated by ACS using annual surveys conducted during 2009-2014 and are representative of average characteristics during this period.

Besides a growing Hispanic population within the region, Rock Island County is home to World Relief, an organization that assists in the relocation of refugees to the Quad Cities metropolitan area. As a result of World Relief's efforts and refugee and immigrant secondary migration, there is a significant population in the area that speaks languages other than English as a first language. The refugee / immigrant population includes a significant number of West Africans, Central Africans, Burmese, Iraqis, and Central Americans.

Additionally, from a workforce perspective, the population in this region is older with younger residents migrating away from the area. From a workforce policy standpoint, this requires an approach to workforce development that emphasizes "lifelong learning" and helping workers who are already in the workforce to identify educational and career paths that are not traditional. Recent changes in the criminal justice system regarding sentencing and early release will increase the number of returning citizens who will require education and workforce services.

The area also has a larger than average population that have worked in production oriented fields. Oftentimes, when entering these fields, very little advanced training was required but with the changing dynamics of manufacturing, there is a premium place on more technical skills

that are developed beyond the High School level. A focus for this population needs to be taking their real world skills and transforming them into applicable and certifiable skills that local manufacturers are demanding of their employees.

## **5. What sectors / industries / occupations / skills are in demand and targets of opportunity?**

Sectors and Industries where demand is prevalent in the Great Northwest Region include General Production; Sand, Gravel, Clay and Ceramic and Refractory Mining and Quarrying; Electric Distribution; Animal Food Manufacturing; Food Manufacturing; Animal Slaughtering and Processing; Footwear Manufacturing; Chemical Product and Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing; Hardware Manufacturing; Machinery Manufacturing; Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing; Industrial Machinery Manufacturing; Appliance Manufacturing; Wholesalers of Chemical Products; Inland Water Transportation; General Freight Trucking; Warehousing and Storage; Management of Companies and Enterprises; Travel Arrangement and Reservation Services; Support Services; and Health Care Services (including nursing care facilities and assisted living facilities).

With regards to occupations, production occupations; farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, and transportation occupations have the highest locations quotients.

### **a. What sectors / industries / occupations have favorable location quotients?**

At the most basic level, those industries with a location quotients of 1 or more include: Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting, Mining/Quarrying/Oil and Gas Extraction, Utilities, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade, Retail Trade, Transportation/Warehousing, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Public Administration. Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting, Utilities, Manufacturing and Transportation/Warehousing maintain the strongest representation in the area with a location quotient of 1.39 (Transportation/Warehousing) to 1.99 (Agriculture/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting). Healthcare and Social Assistance, long a key industry in the region, comes in with a location quotient of .88 and Education maintains an important presence with a location quotient of .94. When one takes a closer look at the actual occupations within these industries a more precise picture of the area can be viewed.

Looking at the occupations within the region, one notices that while an occupation may have a large presence within the region it may not be experience demand growth. This is true for all of the occupations with a location quotient of 1 or more: Management Occupations, Education/Training/Library Occupations, Protective Service Occupations; Farming/Fishing/Forestry Occupations, Installation/Maintenance/Repair Occupations, Production Occupations, and Transportation and Material Moving Occupations. While demand growth is not expected through 2022, replace demand is expected to very high and run into the thousands in for most of these occupations.

Turning to Healthcare and Healthcare Support Occupations, one of the regions targeted industries/occupational clusters, one see a location quotient lower than the occupations listed above yet these areas are expected to experience actual growth demand in addition to replacement

demand. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations are expected to grow at an average of .03% annually through 2022. Likewise, Healthcare Support Occupations will grow at 1.1% through 2022 as well as experience a moderate replacement demand.

**b. What sectors / industries / occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?**

Sectors and industries within Great Northwest Region with the most favorable demand projections based on growth include the following:

Residential Building Construction; Contractors (Equipment , Finishing and Specialty Trade); Wood product manufacturing; Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing; Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing; Transportation Equipment Manufacturing; Cement & Concrete Manufacturing; Warehousing & Storage; Specialized Trucking; Architectural, Engineering & Related Services; Computer Systems Design and Related Services; Management, Scientific, and Technical Consulting Services; Employment Services; Business Support Services; Services to Buildings and Dwellings; Other Business Support Services; Offices of Physicians, Dentists, other Healthcare Practitioners; Outpatient Care Centers; Home Health Care Services; Other Ambulatory Health Care Services; General Medical and Surgical Hospitals; Skilled Nursing Care Facilities; Residential Intellectual and Developmental Disability, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Facilities; Assisted Living Facilities for the Elderly; and Individual and Family Services.

Occupations with the most favorable demand based on growth projections in the Great Northwest Region include the following: Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations; Construction and Extraction Occupations; Healthcare Support Occupations; and Personal Care and Service Occupations.

**c. What sectors / industries / occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?**

For the Great Northwest Region, the top sectors and industries that have favorable demand projection based on replacement estimates through the year 2022 include the following:

Electrical Power Generation, Transmission, and Distribution; Animal Slaughtering and Processing; Plastics Product Manufacturing; Other Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing; Agriculture, Construction, and Mining Machinery Manufacturing; General Freight Trucking; Specialized Trucking; Warehousing and Storage; Management of Companies and Enterprises; Employment Services; Services to Buildings and Dwellings; Other Business Support Services; Elementary and Secondary Education; Offices of Physicians; General Medical and Surgical Hospitals; Skilled Nursing Facilities; Assisted Living Facilities for the Elderly; and Individual and Family Services.

The top occupations with favorable demand projections based on replacements in the Great Northwest Region include the following:

Office and Administrative Support Occupations; Sales and Related Occupations; Production Occupations; Transportation and Material Moving Occupations; Education, Training, and Library Occupations; Management Occupations, and Healthcare Practitioner and Technical Occupations.

**d. What sectors / industries / occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?**

Within the Great Northwest Region, the manufacturing industry has had a long history and has served as a major employer. However, some manufacturing industries are maturing and their impact on employment, while important, is not as large as it once was in the past. Among these industries that are considered maturing but still important to the regional economy are the following: Chemical Manufacturing; Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing; and Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component Manufacturing.

**e. What sectors / industries / occupations are considered emerging in the regional economy?**

There are a number of newer industries that are beginning to expand within the Great Northwest Region. Many, at this time, have few employees but based on projections and industry demand, they have the potential to grow into significant sectors for the regional economy. These include the following: Food Manufacturing; Textile Product Mills; Wood Product Manufacturing; Petroleum and Coal Products Manufacturing; Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing; Primary Metals Manufacturing; Fabricated Metal Manufacturing; Machinery Manufacturing; Transportation Equipment Manufacturing; Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing; Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing; Miscellaneous Manufacturing; Merchant Wholesalers - Durable Goods; Merchant Wholesales – Nondurable Goods; Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers; Truck Transportation; Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation; Scenic Sightseeing Transportation; Support Activities for Transportation; Couriers and Messengers; Warehousing & Storage; Ambulatory Health Care Services; Nursing and Residential Care Facilities; and Social Assistance.

Our goal is to narrow the number of sectors that we will focus on to a few primary sectors for which we can more carefully and strategically match our resources and responses.

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<sup>1</sup> For clarity on what resources to use, regions can discuss the most appropriate data to select with their local IDES labor market economist.

<sup>2</sup> The term “individual with barrier to employment” means one or more of the following populations: displaced homemakers, low-income individuals, Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities, older individuals, ex-offenders, homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths, youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system, individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, individuals within 2 years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act, single parents, including pregnant single women, long-term unemployed individuals, and such other groups as the Governor determines to have barriers to employment (WIOA Sec. 3(24)).

**6. What are the targeted industries and occupations and how were they determined using primary and secondary supply and demand data?**

The Great Northwest Region has determined that there are three primary industries that will be focused on with regards to the regional plan: Manufacturing; Transportation/Logistics; and Healthcare. Information Technology and its impact on the three primary industries will also be included within the regional plan.

The three primary industries were selected due to their prominence in the regional economy, the LMI data that indicated that these three fields had higher than average location quotients and demand projections, and also because the Labor Market Exchange system's (IllinoisJobLink.com) job order data supports the inclusion of these industries. Communications with local employers and industry experts indicate that there is heavy demand in these three sectors and there are significant issues with recruiting and retaining workers in these fields.

***B. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives<sup>3</sup> for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region. (§ 679.510(a)(1)(iii))***

Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:

**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.)**

All core partners and all required partners participated in a series of meetings, telephone conference calls, and the summit to compile and review data, evaluate resources, and identify the key regional targeted sectors. Four community colleges have significant portions of their districts housed within the Northwest Region so many initial planning discussions tended to revolve around data compiled by the respective colleges. This data was combined with the on-the-ground experiences of all core partners and other required partners. This method also insured that the varying needs of the large region were considered.

**Black Hawk College**

The Black Hawk College District covers most or all of Rock Island, Mercer, and Henry counties and combines both rural and urban areas. This district is also impacted significantly by proximity to the Iowa counties of Scott and Muscatine. As a result, much of the data used to



determine sector initiatives in this portion of the Northwest Region is specific to the Davenport-Moline-Rock Island, IA-IL Metropolitan Statistical Area. Economic Modeling Software, Inc. (EMSI) projects strong growth between 2015 and 2023 in:

- Healthcare – Registered Nurses, Nursing Assistants, Personal Care Aides, Home Health Aides, Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses, Medical Assistants
- Logistics – Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers, Heavy and Tractor Trailer Drivers, Light Truck or Delivery Services Drivers
- Manufacturing/Trades – Industrial Machinery Mechanics, Machinists, Maintenance and Repair Workers, Team Assemblers, Electricians, Plumbers, Pipefitter, Steamfitters
- Agriculture – Farmers, Ranchers, Other Agricultural Managers, Landscaping and Grounds keeping
- IT – Computer Systems Analysts, Software Developers, Applications, Computer User Support Specialists (combined with IT requirements in many of the other fields)

In addition to the EMSI data, we reviewed the five key industries identified for each county in the Bi-State Region based on Location Quotient (LQ) and total jobs. (LQ is a measure of the concentration of a certain industry sector in an area relative to the concentration of that industry sector in the U.S.) Key industries for each county are:

Rock Island – Agricultural and Construction Machinery Manufacturing, Military Manufacturing and Logistics, Packaging and Labeling Services, Animal Slaughtering, Nuclear Electric Power Generation

Henry County – Small Arms Manufacturing, Truck Trailer Manufacturing, Ethyl Alcohol Manufacturing, Elevator and Moving Stairway Manufacturing, Prefabricated Wood building Manufacturing

Mercer County – Machined Parts Manufacturing, Crop and Animal Production (Farming), Farm Supply Commodities & Farm Support Activities, Paperboard Container Manufacturing, Plate work and Metal Finishing

Scott County – Aluminum Manufacturing, Construction Agricultural & Other Industrial Machinery Manufacturing, Animal-based Food Processing, Steel Foundries, Lime Cement & Concrete Manufacturing

Muscatine County – Office Furniture and Fixtures Manufacturing, Lighting Fixture Manufacturing, Plant- and Animal-based Food Manufacturing, Pesticide and Agricultural Chemical Manufacturing, Iron & Steel Mills Ferro and Non-Ferro alloy Manufacturing

**Illinois Valley Community College, Sauk Valley Community College, Highland Community College:**

These colleges serve the remaining seven counties (Bureau, Carroll, Jo Davies, LaSalle, Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties). Regional priorities were determined by using the following:

- LMI data from the State of Illinois

- Jobs EQ Reports
- EMSI Reports
- Advisory Committee feedback (Truck driver training, Nursing, Manufacturing/Maintenance/Welding, Agriculture)
- Northern Illinois University P-20 Workforce Needs Report
- Northern Illinois University P-20 Emerging Jobs Report
- Advisory committee work, job data, and a regional survey completed by area Economic Development groups
- TCEDA – Tri-County Economic Development Alliance: TCEDA surveyed 225 regional companies in Jo Daviess, Carroll, and Stephenson Counties regarding manufacturing skills and occupational demands in October 2014.

The four community colleges listed above find growth in the educational programs in the fields of:

- Manufacturing, production workers, industrial maintenance
- Healthcare: nursing, ambulatory care, Radiologic technology
- Criminal Justice – Law enforcement and corrections
- Computer occupations and support
- Precision Agriculture and “Value-added Agriculture

Based on the data gathered by **all** partners in the Greater Northwest Region, the Regional Priorities are:

- Manufacturing & Industrial Maintenance
  - Food manufacturing – emerging
  - Chemical manufacturing – maturing/growing
  - Machinery manufacturing – leading/growing
  - Fabricated metal manufacturing – leading/growing
- Healthcare
  - Nursing and Skilled Nursing Facilities - Leading
  - Ambulatory Care - emerging
  - Hospitals – maturing
  - Social assistance - emerging
- Transportation/Logistics
  - Merchant Wholesalers – Durable Goods – Leading
  - Merchant Wholesalers – Nondurable Goods – Leading
  - Truck Transportation – Leading

- Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation – Emerging
- Support Activities for Transportation – Emerging
- Warehousing and Storage – Leading
- IT –as a subfield of Mfg., Healthcare, and Transportation/Logistics

In addition to the key industries listed above, this area has historically had a strong Agriculture and Logistics presence. The agriculture sector includes occupations in farm labor, crop production, animal production, and commercial mushroom production along with postharvest crop activities. With three major interstates running through these counties (I-80, I-39, and I -88) logistics has grown over the years especially in the areas of large scale warehousing. Along with the growth in warehousing, an increase in demand for truck drivers and diesel mechanics was realized. Replacement demand in these two industry sectors will continue to grow.

## 2. What sector-based partnerships exist in the region? If any exist, are they business-led and what is their role in planning?

There are numerous partnerships in the region that exist. The partnerships include the following:

- Healthcare- Illinois Valley Community Hospital, not business led, participate in the Area Planning Council
- Community colleges have active Advisory groups used in planning healthcare offerings and curricula – community college led
- Manufacturing- American Nickeloid, not business led, participate in bridge class as a guest speaker
- The Quad Cities was recently named one of 12 federally-designated manufacturing communities as part of the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Partnership grant.
- Chief Manufacturing Executives meet quarterly at IVCC–business led
- Other Advisory committees meeting annually or biannually(Truck driver training, Nursing, Manufacturing/Maintenance/Welding, Agriculture, Criminal Justice, Fire Science, Rad Tech, and Office and Administrative Service) – community college led
- Northern Illinois Discover Manufacturing Expo – business led
- Public Safety Career Fair – community college led
- Workforce Readiness Coalition (manufacturing) – community college led
- National Manufacturing Day Planning Committee (K-12, College, and Industry)
- Highland Community College has annual advisory meetings, meets monthly with NIDA (Northern Illinois Development Alliance) and TCEDA (Tri-County Economic Development Alliance and with the Workforce Development Coalition
- Pathways to Academic, Career, and Employment (PACE). Eastern Iowa Community Colleges received funds from the Iowa State Legislature for the Pathways to Academic, Career, and Employment (PACE) Program in 2013. PACE strives to create a strong pipeline of individuals entering and completing training in high skill / high demand career areas in ***Advanced Manufacturing, Allied Health, Information Technology and Transportation / Logistics***. To support the process, PACE incorporates the use of sector boards.

Sector boards are partnerships of employers within one industry who come together to focus on the workforce needs of the industry within the regional labor market. The Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce could see that having the both the Iowa and Illinois community colleges participate would be preferable to establishing duplicative boards. With Chamber encouragement, Black Hawk College representatives were invited to join.

Sector Boards are different from the traditional Advisory Councils that the colleges have had in place for many years and that continue to work with college career programs advising faculty on the types of training students need today in each of those specific career fields. Sector Boards work on a much broader basis and are focused on long-range planning, taking into account new technology and factors expected to impact the industry. They are focused on the future workforce and work to identify resources and solutions to anticipated staffing and competitiveness needs. The four sector boards established are:

1. Advanced Manufacturing
2. Allied Health (includes mental and dental as well as broad range of medical)
3. Information Technology (IT)
4. Transportation and Logistics

### **3. What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning?**

- Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC): Certified Production Technician (CPT) – Curriculum was developed by local manufacturers and includes Certificate endorsed by several CME participants
- Truck Driver Training – provides Truck Driver Training for CDLs, and also works with trucking companies for student placement
- Healthcare Executives Group - IVCC nursing department works with area hospitals and nursing homes
- Starved Rock Advantage – nonprofit collaboration of employers, educators, workforce and economic development professionals in the Starved Rock area to develop a work-ready community and talent pipeline for area businesses.
- Highland Community College (HCC) Workforce Development Coalition – group dedicated to strengthening the local workforce and creating job opportunities for the under and unemployed. Business, education and workforce leaders come together to discuss and solve local workforce issues.
- Chambers of Commerce and Economic Development Corporations or Organizations – promotes business development in local communities, supports economic development initiatives with local workforce and education partners; important role in local talent pipeline management efforts.
- SET – Stronger Economies Together – multi-county regional economic development planning initiative through USDA and University of Illinois Extension – Putnam County (along with Marshall and Stark Counties)

- LEAD – Leader in Economic Alliance Development – Lee, Carroll, and Whiteside Counties (initially – looking to add Jo Daviess and Ogle Counties) – regional economic development planning initiative through USDA and University of Illinois Extension to develop leadership capacity to promote regional economic collaboration.
- Sauk Valley Community College (SVCC) Multicraft Technology Program – Championed by local manufacturing companies to meet their labor shortages. Graduates of the Multicraft Technology program are prepared to enter the work force as engineering technicians, field service engineers, plant maintenance technicians and application engineers or to move into supervisory positions. Graduates may continue their education at many colleges and universities and earn an advanced degree. Multicraft technicians combine knowledge of mechanical engineering technology with knowledge of electrical and electronic circuits to maintain, design, develop, test, and manufacture electronic and computer-controlled mechanical systems, such as robotic assembly machines.
- Illinois Valley Community College (IVCC) Associates in Engineering Science – Developed in response to employer need for engineers in their companies.

4. **What neutral conveners with the capacity to help establish sector partnerships exist in the region and what is their role in planning?**

- Chambers of Commerce – represent needs of local employers, advocate for educational programming and resources to meet those needs
  - Examples: Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, Illinois Valley Area Chamber of Commerce, Sauk Valley Chamber of Commerce, Illinois River Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Economic Development Organizations – NIDA, TCEDA, I-88 West Corridor Association, Greater Sterling Development Corp., Henry County Economic Development Partnership, Kewanee Economic Development Corporation, Economic Development Corporation of North Central IL
- Local Workforce Boards – provide linkages between employers, prospective employees, training providers and fund training programs
- Adult Education Area Planning Councils – assure that those in need of ABE, ASE, ESL, and High School Equivalency educational programming prepares students for the workforce
- Bi-State Regional Commission – Research and assess opportunities and threats and articulate broad economic development strategies for the region
- North Central Illinois Council of Governments - Research and assess opportunities and threats and articulate broad economic development strategies for the region

- Black Hawk Hills Regional Council - Research and assess opportunities and threats and articulate broad economic development strategies for the region
- North Central Regional Betterment Coalition – Local not-for-profit group whose mission it is to improve our region by engaging in innovative ways to partner with other local entities to build a better community
- United Way Education and Income Councils – support agencies offering supportive services needed for workforce development
- Sauk Valley Center for Small Business Development – assist small business start-ups and growth
- Starved Rock Country Small Business Development Center (To be opened soon) – assist small business start-ups and growth
- Starved Rock Country Alliance – LLC formed by a group of local entrepreneurs whose goal is to create jobs by supplying incubator capital and expertise to startup and existing small businesses.
- Area Business Incubators – Local business incubators assist startup and early stage companies; great entrepreneurial opportunities
- Community Colleges: Black Hawk College, Illinois Valley Community College, Highland Community College, Sauk Valley Community College
- Western Illinois University
- Augustana College
- University of Illinois
- University of Illinois Extension – offers educational programs, with a focus on youth development; partners with many of the workforce system partners
- USDA
- BEST, Inc. – Title 1B WIOA Provider
- Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC) – Team of specialist and technicians dedicated to providing Illinois businesses with tools and techniques to plan and implement improvements in areas of Leadership, Strategy, Customer Engagement, Operations and Workforce. Provide an important link to local businesses.

## **5. How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses?**

The area of concern that is expressed most often about the skill level of job seeker is that of “soft skills/essential skills” including: time management, attendance, punctuality, reliability/dependability, customer service, and communication skills. In addition, concern over technical skills that have not kept pace with the changes in manufacturing, transportation/warehousing, and healthcare has also been expressed. In response local workforce areas, the community colleges, and secondary education have developed customized training and curriculums to address these concerns. A review of the top 10 certifications requested by area businesses for current job openings finds that 9 out of those 10 certifications are currently provided by the community college system. These include CDL, CDL-A, LPN, RN, CPR, Basic Life Support, Advanced Cardiac Life Support, CAN, and Pediatric Advanced Life Support. In addition, as a fee for service, soft skills/essential skills is offered by at least one local workforce area within the regional and as a business services through the business training office at Illinois Valley Community College. In addition, many companies have taken advantage of skills upgrading through WIOA incumbent worker training in lean manufacturing, ICD 10, and Certified Medical Assistant. Customized skills upgrading is also provided by the community college system within this region.

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<sup>3</sup> Regional team are encouraged to review Illinois’ Next Generation Sector Strategies Guide that is posted on <https://www2.illinoisworknet.com/partners/sectorstrategies>

## Chapter 2

### Integration of Strategies and Services

- 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. (§ 679.560(a)(4))***

***Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:***

- 1. How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?***
- 2. What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment (ROI)?***
- 3. What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising ROI?***
- 4. What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal ROI?***
- 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 Unified Plan)?***
- 6. What formal and informal cooperative procedures will the core partners and other required partners establish to align services and coordinate delivery?***

Great Northwest Region workforce development activities include classroom training, job search assistance, on-the-job training, essential skills training, customized training, business services, work experience, incumbent worker training, apprenticeship programs, and job shadowing.

Employment and Training (Title I) is provided in two Local Workforce Investment Areas (LWIAs) with Local Workforce Development Boards. There are two Comprehensive One-Stop Centers, as well as Affiliate One-Stop Centers. Training providers include all of the major institutions – public, private, and proprietary – as well as businesses engaged in work-based learning. Other core partners include Adult Education (Title II), Wagner – Peyser (Title III), and Vocational Rehabilitation (Title IV), which are co-located or available through technology.

Great Northwest Region is very large in geographic size, economically diverse, and quite varied in the needs of businesses and individuals. Therefore, the types of workforce development services vary by local area, with each having used different strategies and areas of focus. Many common activities and services, with good return on investment (ROI), will continue.

In beginning of the planning process, the first step was to look at the Greater Northwest Regions Strengths and Weaknesses.

#### **Strengths:**

1. Several local community colleges that offer training in growth occupations



2. Availability of customized training options through the community colleges
3. Frequent enrollment windows in many Adult Education classes
4. Area involvement with multiple partners for client strategies
5. Essential Skills Training
6. Customized labor market information
7. Area business buy-in with Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), and Work Based Learning activities
8. Good collaboration/relationship with Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) for Business Services
9. Advisory boards, at community colleges for manufacturing and logistics, do a good job in providing direction for training programs.
10. There is a long history of engaged workforce board members.
11. Strong existing local partnerships among various core partners and required partners

**Weaknesses:**

1. Semester-rigid classroom structures traditional college credit classes
2. Silo funded activities
3. Aging workforce and also inability to recruit younger generation into entry level
4. The move from entry level RNs from Associate Degree to BSN by area health care providers
5. Business Services representatives from IDES are regional and so far removed from local offices in Area 4 that communication is limited or difficult to coordinate
6. Referral Process needs strengthening with proper follow up and documentation and there is no integrated shared information system for core partners and required partners.
7. In the area of incumbent worker training, DOL-outlined requirements continue to limit the type of training needed and requested by area employers.
8. Economic development regions were established a long time ago and do not represent all current situations and needs.
9. A state system that requires federal funds to flow into the state budget and be appropriated to the local areas.

**1. How well do existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?**

The existing training programs in the Greater Northwest Region are excellent for preparing job seekers to enter and retain employment with businesses. Clients in need of training often commute between the two workforce areas in the region to maximize their training options. Training providers have advisory boards consisting of employers and workforce partners to ensure the programs they are offering training in meet employer expectations.

In addition, workforce development and education partners have Career Pathways to prepare individuals to be successful in post-secondary education and enter or advance within occupations. Community colleges offer credentials in many sectors, many of

which can be stackable. Career advisors/planners provide goal-setting, academic advising, and enrollment assistance.

The relatively recent introduction of Bridge and Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) programs in Adult Education programs has provided enhanced opportunities for individuals who lack secondary school credentials or are English Language Learners to move more quickly into a broader range of employment options. These initiatives also involve close collaboration with college Career and Technical Education (CTE).

## **2. What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising ROI?**

Based on promising ROI, business services strategies will be expanded in the Greater Northwest Region. Currently business services are strong in 7 counties and developing in 3 counties. With the focus on Work-Based Learning under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), expanding this business-focus strategy will only strengthen our return on investment.

Work-based learning exists through on-the-job training (OJT), apprenticeships, internships, transitional jobs and work experience. These opportunities provide increased economic development for businesses, while providing individuals with skills needed to be successful in the workplace.

Bridge and ICAPS initiatives need to be further developed and expanded to move adults without secondary school credentials or those who are English Language Learners into employment more quickly. Additionally, there needs to be expanded development of stackable credentials clearly aligned with career pathways.

The Greater Northwest Region has begun to focus on Sector partnerships that have served businesses as well. The workforce areas have received two state grants. One grant is a healthcare sector partnership grant. This grant is to train and match Dislocated Workers with openings at hospitals and clinics. The other grant is a Pipeline Grant for Manufacturing that has provided Incumbent Worker Training for 205 individuals to gain more skills helping their company stay competitive.

## **3. What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising ROI?**

A primary new service strategy to address education and training needs will be collaboration of partners for priority populations, such as programs for the agricultural workers, those who have a disability or lack basic skills, returning citizens, youth, or English Language Learners.

When dealing with priority populations, a new staffing approach will be utilized when feasible. This staffing approach will consist of a team of Workforce Professionals from the partnering agencies, meeting, and staffing clients as an Employability Development Plan is developed for a client.

Adult Education programs have staff trained to deliver assessments using the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), the BEST Literacy Skills Test, and the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS). Assessment information will be shared with other partners as appropriate in developing training plans.

Currently Vocational Rehabilitation professionals engage in regular meetings with workforce development people. A stronger emphasis will be placed on cross training of all partner staff for providing services to customers with disabilities. One-Stop Centers provide auxiliary aids and accommodations upon request. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals provide technical assistance to fulfill such requirements. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are serving on committees, integrating disabilities services for businesses and individuals.

**4. What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal ROI?**

No existing service delivery strategy will be eliminated. However, there could be a shifting of the amount of one priority over another based on Economic Conditions, and business led discussions.

**5. What steps will be taken to support the state strategies and goals to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development?**

State strategies and goals are already being aligned and integrated, but will continue to be challenging due to antiquated state technology which is not integrated.

Core partners and many required partners engage in disseminating information and planning from the state level to the region and local levels. Local cross-training and meetings have been in place, and will be enhanced with more regional involvement. Core partners will attend training provided.

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

The Greater Northwest Region has always had outstanding cooperation and collaboration between core and other required partners. The Regional Plan is just a mechanism to formalize what has been in place. Core partners and other required partners will continue to have effective memoranda of understanding (MOU), and progress is being made to co-locate both physically and through the use of technology within Illinois workNet Centers / American Job Centers ®. The new MOU Agreements identify who is providing what Career Services, strengthens the non-duplication of services, and sharing responsibilities for system and infrastructure costs of the center.

Business services professionals have begun to meet on a regional level and there is more engagement of business managers and owners.

By having an active voice in the Regional Planning process, core partners support industry-specific sector strategies, with business partnerships. In addition:

- There is core partner posting of jobs online. Employers are assisted with creating Illinois Job Link registrations, posting job orders, and searching for resumes in IllinoisJobLink.com. Target recruitment is done through emails and customized Phone Notifications (PN) messages are created and disseminated to job seekers.
- Employers are assisted with recruitment events. Core partners' professionals have provided application collection for businesses, conducted applicant screening using business criteria and assessment, organized job fairs and employer events, and provided interview scheduling and facilities.
- Rapid response and facilitating workshops, with state and local agencies, involves core partners providing information on rights, responsibilities, and resources for the workforce.
- Outreach is conducted to community and faith-based organizations.
- Employer seminars and conference are held to inform them about Unemployment Insurance, and other Business/Employment Services

**B. *Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region.***

*Regions should consider the following questions when responding to this requirement:*

- 1. What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?*
- 2. What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?*

Support Services are provided by multiple agencies under each entity's eligibility. A resource mapping of local area and region would be beneficial to meet the needs of referral in this category.

Due to the large rural areas of the region, public transportation can be problematic or not available. Vouchers for eligible individuals to access public transportation including buses operated by LOTS, B-PART, N-CAT, RIM, and Metro link. Concern would be grant funding to support these entities as currently it is through the State of Illinois (IDOT).

To be successful in any of the programs, having the proper support is vital. There are many agencies that currently provide supportive services but the coordination of cataloging those agencies is an immense project. Currently a spreadsheet for those agencies in seven of the ten counties has been compiled. Though searchable, it is the intent that this can somehow become an internet based application. In the future finding funding to do this as well as adding information for the three additional counties would be of a great benefit to all residents in the Greater Northwest Region.

**1. What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?**

Organizations providing supportive services include but are not limited to  
Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. (BEST, Inc.)  
Rock Island Tri-County Consortium (Partners in Job Training & Placement)  
Illinois Department of Human Services, both Rehabilitation and TANF  
Tri County Opportunities Council  
Northwestern Illinois Community Action Agency  
Project Now  
The Illinois Migrant Council  
Community Colleges  
Township Offices  
Child Care Resource and Referral  
Salvation Army  
Family Resources

**2. What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?**

Policies and procedures will be coordinated through the MOU process, but will continue to be challenging due to antiquated state technology which is not integrated. As previously stated, it is hopeful that funding will become available to be able to design and maintain an Internet based application to make searching for supportive services in the Greater Northwest Region a reality.

**C. *Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers.***

**1. What economic development organizations or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?**

We have been very fortunate that many Economic Development organizations and businesses have contributed to the Greater Northwest Regional Plan. This includes:

Tri-County Economic Development Alliance (TCEDA): TCEDA's aim is to unite its businesses, counties, communities and organizations in an effort to create an environment for business attraction and expansion. The Executive Director is an active member of NCI Works, the LWDB for LWA #4, which ensures that the workforce, education and training activities and services will align with its economic development goals. Examples of coordinated activities: strong emphasis on manufacturing pipelines with local high schools and businesses, and its Build-It-Grow-It program to help its local businesses.

North Central Illinois Council of Governments (NCICG): NCICG is a local planning agency that administers the North Central Illinois Economic Development District (EDD), which includes maintaining and implementing a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that identifies the economic strengths, weaknesses,

opportunities, and threats to the region and identifies actions that will spur economic growth. The EDD Director is a member of NCI Works, the LWDB for LWA #4, which ensures that the CEDS and the LWDB's local and regional plans align services and programs. To further enhance the partnership, the NCI Works' staff to the board serves as the Chair of the CEDS Planning Committee.

**Blackhawk Hills Regional Council (BHRC):** BHRC is a regional planning commission that provides resources for communities, governments and not-for-profits on issues relating to economic development, among other things. As the designated EDD, it is responsible for updating and maintaining the area's CEDS, which includes workforce and economic development trends and strategies. To facilitate coordination and alignment of goals and strategies, the staff to NCI Works is a member of the CEDS Strategy Committee.

**University of Illinois Extension:** Like other U of I Extension Services, the ones in EDR #6 provide programs in agriculture and youth development, two areas of focus in the regional plan. To help promote coordination of programs and services, the Executive Director of the U of I Extension Service that covers 3 counties in LWA #4 is a member of NCI Works.

**Bi-State Regional Commission:** Bi-State Regional Commission serves as a forum for intergovernmental cooperation and delivery of regional programs and assists member local governments in planning and project development.

It is a local, voluntary organization of five counties and 44 municipalities. It is the convening body coordinating the *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)*, with participation by economic development practitioners and workforce development professionals.

Some of the region's economic strengths, challenges, opportunities and threats are

- Available greenspace for development, but lack of existing building inventory that meet demands to businesses
- Need for spec buildings
- QC Chamber intended to begin a study of the building inventory in their 6-county region which will also involve a plan to resolve gaps and needs
- Proximity to infrastructure needed for business development including water, sewer, roads, and rails.
- Illinois Business Climate brings uncertainty to businesses, governments and residents.
- Rock Island has been amended in to IL QC's enterprise zone which gives them a year of use.
- 2 enterprise zones applications will be submitted to IL end of December. Both are fantastic examples of intergovernmental cooperation.
- The loss of the Illinois SBDC is a threat to small business development in Illinois.

- Exelon nuclear power plant will remain open for next 10 years
- The IL Youth Center in Kewanee is being converted into an adult corrections facility. Not only does this save the jobs that were going to be lost with the closure, but additional jobs are anticipated in the near future.
- The current disrepair of the Henepin Canal is a threat to tourism in Henry County. There are two areas that are close to total washout which then threats to flood communities where the washouts occur.
- The new Kraft plant is scheduled to open in July
- Kraft plant will result in a net job loss large enough that it shows economic distress in the region. That means that the region is eligible for EDA grants that require a level of economic distress for eligibility.

U. S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation Center for Education and Workforce has been engaged in the northwestern part of the region, using “Building the Talent Pipeline: An Implementation Guide,” which will bring together education, postsecondary education, and workforce training.

This implementation guide builds on the foundation set forth in the 2014 white paper, “Managing the Talent Pipeline: A New Approach to Closing the Skills Gap,” which identified how employers could leverage lessons learned from supply chain management and apply them to their education and workforce partnerships. The strategies identified in the current guide expands on this work and shows how key practices in supply chain management can inform employer action in organizing and managing the talent pipeline.

Illinois Department of Commerce (Commerce): As the grantor agency for EDR #6, both LWAs have an extensive partnership with Commerce, utilizing and coordinating with the workforce and economic development divisions of the Department.

Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES): Because IDES is one of the Core Partners under WIOA, a representative of the Department sits on each of the LWDBs. These members are very active and engaged members, and help ensure the coordination and alignment of programs, services and initiatives.

BEST, Inc.: BEST, Inc. is the Title IB provider for LWA #4, and is therefore also one of the Core Partners. Its mission is providing workforce development programs and services that “fuel the prosperity and productivity of business by delivering a well-trained and adaptable workforce.” One of BEST, Inc.’s strategic goals is to “provide ongoing needs assessment of area businesses through participation in the Business Services Team and act as a liaison between business and NCI Works and the one stop system”. BEST, Inc. is proud of the extensive involvement its staff engage in with area businesses and other workforce, education, economic development and community agencies organizations and institutions. This certainly facilitates linkages and coordination throughout its 8-county area.

Rock Island Tri-County Consortium (RITCC): Title IB core partner for Local Workforce Area 13 that operates the **American Job Center®**, an **Illinois workNet Center**. It is an agency member of ILLINOIS DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, also

known as ILLINOIS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION (IEDA), a statewide professional economic development association that supports advocacy, education, and collaboration to enhance Illinois' global competitiveness. It represents the interests of economic developers.

Iowa Health System, Unity Point Trinity hospitals and clinics: Director of nursing has served as an active member of the local workforce development board.

Genesis Health System hospitals and clinics: These facilities are endorsing businesses of the national emergency grant sector partnership for healthcare.

Hope Creek Nursing Home: Is a business directly involved with the national emergency grant sector partnership for healthcare.

**2. What economic development organizations or businesses were invited to participate but declined?**

No economic development organizations and businesses have declined.

**3. What input was provided by regional economic development organizations and businesses?**

Input was provided by all of these organizations and businesses, including studies that have been conducted, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Labor Market Information (LMI), survey preparation, and compiling and writing the regional plan. As noted above, members of the various organizations sit on both LWDBs and appropriate committees, and provide input not just for this regional plan, but throughout the year for initiatives and projects undertaken in EDR #6. Business Service Teams, for example, came into existence as a result of business members on the local boards identifying the need to coordinate programs, services and visits directed towards employers. Local workforce and economic development agencies have partnered with businesses to sponsor employer forums and local hiring events, including the first ever in the State virtual job fair co-sponsored by IDES, BEST, Inc. and TCEDA.

**4. What input provided by economic development and businesses was incorporated into the regional plan?**

Input from these organizations was very valuable and has been incorporated throughout the plan in Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

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

The strategies and goals identified for Economic Development Region (EDR) 6 do not require coordination of administrative cost arrangements at this time. Pooling of funds for administrative costs will be addressed among partners if projects evolve requiring additional administrative support. If this is necessary the local areas will have the arrangement approved by their appropriate workforce boards and identify who will administer the joint funds.

In the case that a regional grant is obtained, prior to submission an agreed upon decision will be made as to which local area or partner will become the grant administrator for the



project. The other partners/area will submit invoices to the grant administrator for payment.

## COMPONENT

*This section will outline how the Local Board(s) will coordinate the regional workforce, education and economic development activities with regional activities that are carried out in the local areas. The responses must illustrate that business, education and workforce development stakeholders have provided input and are in agreement with the plan. (Governor's Guidelines, Section 1 and MOU, Section 3)*

**A. Describe the strategic vision to support state and regional economic growth. (§ 679.560(a)(5))**

Great Northwest Region, also known as Economic Development Region 6, core partners and required partners will 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 of Illinois economy.

Core partners and required partners professionals will create a coordinated workforce pipeline that responds to business needs, for key sectors, while increasing opportunity for individuals.

Achieving this vision will use these principles as guideposts for policy development and program service delivery. Each core partner and required partner will use its resources to support the following principles:

- Business demand-driven orientation through a sector strategy framework
- Strong partnerships with business at all levels
- Career pathways to jobs of today and tomorrow
- Integrated service delivery
- Access and opportunity for all populations
- Cross-agency collaboration and alignment for developing and / or promoting career pathways and industry recognized stackable credentials
- Clear metrics for progress and success
- Focus on continuous improvement and innovations
- Make the manufacturing sector a priority.
- Make the healthcare sector a priority.
- Make the transportation sector a priority.
- Make information technology, across these three sectors, a priority.
- Further analyze the agri-business / farm sector as a future priority.
- Integrate workforce, education, and economic development.
- Increase collaboration, communication, and shared resources.
- Engage business owners and managers as solutions-forming partners.
- Increase skill levels of individuals through career pathways.
- Focus on eliminating or minimizing barriers to education and employment.
- Create user-friendly processes and systems, intake through exit.
- Improve outreach, branding, and identity.

**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. (§ 677.155(a)(1))***

Great Northwest Region core partners and required partners will collectively use the following goals to support Illinois' vision to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development strategies at the state, regional and local levels to improve the economic growth and competitiveness of the state's employers and their workforce.

- Foster 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.
- Expand 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.
- Expand 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.
- Expand 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.

**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:***

- *To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations (§ 679.560(b)(3)(i));*
- *To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area (§ 679.560(b)(3)(ii));*
- *To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iii));*
- *To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs (§ 679.560(b)(3)(iv));*
- *To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§ 679.560(b)(4)); and*
- *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. (§ 679.560(b)(3)(v))*

Great Northwest Region professionals will use a variety of strategies for the implementation of these goals with a focus on improving community prosperity through more competitive businesses and workers.

A certain area of the region has provided more incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and customized training than the remaining area of the region, however; that is changing as those services will continue to increase under WIOA and be made available to area businesses. In addition, over the years the partners of the workforce system, along with local economic development entities, have worked together as a business services team to share workforce intelligence and organize hiring events to meet local need. A new partnership being developed with IMEC (Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center) shows promise of providing more businesses with the services they need.

Employer forums, focusing on manufacturing, which involved all core partners in the presentation of partner services, an assessment of business needs, and the identification of critical skills for new hires have recently been held in various parts of the region. These events include a dialogue between workforce partners, area manufacturing representatives, and local educators. It is the intent is that this dialogue will be continued after the forums to insure that workforce partners and educators are responding to the needs of area manufacturers. The offering of additional sector forums will also be considered.

The Illinois Workforce Opportunity Readiness Coalition is an outgrowth of the one of the manufacturing forums. The coalition is comprised of area high school superintendents, 2 workforce representatives, and 2 community college representatives and, for right now, a current and past member of manufacturing. It is expected that industry representative will expand as outreach to additional sectors takes place. The goal of the coalition is two-fold. First, the coalition will serve as the entity to continue the dialogue that was started at the forum between businesses and secondary education. Second, the coalition hopes to give superintendents an opportunity to share strategies on how they are designing curriculum to meet the needs of their area businesses. Some of these needs were identified at the forum and others are expected to be identified by including industry representatives on the coalition. The members plan to meet at least twice a year going forward. In the future it is anticipated that this strategy will be expanded to the entire Greater Northwest Region.

EDR #6 recognizes the importance of providing a wide range of employment opportunities to its job seekers. Some, especially dislocated workers, may have marketable skills and talents and simply need some assistance in developing a plan to establish themselves in any number of niche industries/businesses. In order to meet the needs of this group, both LWIAs will explore existing entrepreneurial models such as TCEDA's Build-It-Grow-It program, and Etsy, the online marketplace that would allow our entrepreneurs to reach a global community of shoppers. Furthermore, connections with local SBDCs will be enhanced for the purpose of providing the information and resources that will help ensure success. Where no SBDCs are located

in an area, BSTs will become knowledgeable in these opportunities and will serve as the “go to” resource for assistance.

Some strategies that will be instrumental small businesses, including those with entrepreneurial interests already exist in some areas of EDR #6 and will be replicated throughout the regions 10-county area. For example, **American Job Center®** Rock Island, is a member of QUAD CITIES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, INC., with workforce development professionals engaging in activities and events with entrepreneurs and business leaders. Examples of promoting and connecting entrepreneurs to resources to create, collaborate, pitch, and grow ideas in our Great Northwest Region include:

- Entrepreneurial meetups are free gatherings to exchange ideas and learn from seasoned entrepreneurs.
- Quad Cities co-working space includes workshops, gatherings and partnerships.
- Immigrants of all backgrounds are provided professional resources and collaboration opportunities.
- TechBrew is a free monthly networking event for entrepreneurs, educators, technologists, economic developers, and business leaders.
- Henry Stark Counties Fast Pitch contest to test ideas in front of a panel of judges, with the chance to win prizes and resources to develop a thriving business.

Another successful business model that will be used and replicated where beneficial is the Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE) program, the nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and helping small businesses start, grow, and succeed.

A member of one of the **Local Workforce Development Boards** is a sponsor of SCORE in EDR #6. The Quad Cities SCORE Chapter territory includes Rock Island, Henry, Bureau, Mercer, Lee, Henderson, and Whiteside Counties, as well as Iowa Quad Cities region counties. Among the many services provided by this program, which is a resource partner with the U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA), are:

- Volunteer mentors share their expertise across 62 industries.
- Free confidential business counseling is provided in-person or by email.
- Free business tools, templates and tips are online.
- Inexpensive or free business workshops, such as “Getting Your Facebook Business Page Up and Running!” are provided locally in-person and webinars are online.

***To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations***

- Pursue data-driven collection activities that strive for as close to real-time, detailed demand data regarding positions and the individual tasks involved

in the positions.

- Pursue data-driven activities that strive for detailed demand data regarding immediate available positions and projected positions for 3 and 5 years forward.

***To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area***

- Form a committee of the partners to visit the local businesses together to listen to needs and tour. Revisit business with suggested strategies.
- Conduct employer outreach, explaining benefits of hiring military veterans, including but not limited to Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC).
- Organize recruiting and hiring events with employers on-site and off-site.

***To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development***

- Align and integrate business and job-seeker services among the core education/training partners along with regional economic development partners.
- Continue, and increase, coordination between workforce development and economic development practitioners and organizations.
- Provide data and tools to support regional planning for aligning education, workforce and economic development strategies in support of demand data.

***To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs***

- The unemployment insurance customer will become a customer of most if not all partners. Journey mapping will determine how partner services can address the needs of all customers.
- Provide Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits on-line application assistance and explain Benefit Rights Information.
- Each partner will determine how its services can best address the needs of unemployment insurance recipients and get them back into the workforce

***To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services (§ 679.560(b)(4))***

Examples of promoting and connecting entrepreneurs to resources to create, collaborate, pitch, and grow ideas in our Great Northwest Region include:

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- Immigrants of all backgrounds are provided professional resources and collaboration opportunities.
- TechBrew is a free monthly networking event for entrepreneurs, educators, technologists, economic developers, and business leaders.

- Henry Stark Counties Fast Pitch contest to test ideas in front of a panel of judges, with the chance to win prizes and resources to develop a thriving business.

***Implementation of initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiative utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of the regional employer,***

These strategies have been developed for four different areas. Those areas include Data, Workforce Partners, Business Services, and Workforce Boards. Best practice models will be identified and utilized whenever possible

#### Data

- Develop a regional cross-agency benchmark report for stakeholders and the public.
- Execute state-level data sharing agreements.

#### Workforce Partners

- Identify and eliminate duplicated services to leverage resources with partners.
- Create new pathways for success by preparing very low-skill adults to take advantage of sector-based bridge programs.
- Attend Rapid Response and WARN meetings.
- Participate in partner employment service-related events and activities, including but not limited to Department of Corrections Re-entry Summits and Summits of Hope.
- Promote partner re-training programs and events using Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) outreach notices.
- Continue successful out-of-school youth programs.
- Conduct effective Trade-related programs.

#### Business Services

- Continue the long history of providing incumbent worker training, on-the-job training, and work experience/internships while developing customized training
- Implement and expand work-based learning programs and strategies for all eligible customers.
- Schedule employer interview appointments for job seekers, following the job development process.
- Continue to share workforce intelligence and organize hiring events, through partners, local economic development entities, and businesses.
- Continue expanded shared business services through combining local areas' team meetings.

## Workforce Boards

- Support awareness and adoption of innovative private sector models, such as the United States Chamber of Commerce Talent Pipeline Management Initiative.
- Implement National Emergency Grant (NEG) Sector Partnership (SP) strategies for the health care sector while exploring options to apply for grants for the regions other identified sectors.
- Utilize business intermediaries, including but not limited to United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation.
- Pursue development of a new partnership with Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC).
- Expand recently begun series of employer forums, focusing on manufacturing, involving all core partners.
- Create a pilot event in Jo Daviess County or Carroll County to feature The Digital Manufacturing and Design Innovation Institute (Chicago), along with the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center and NIU EIGERlab (Rockford).
- Apply for Regional Grant opportunities to assist in the implementation of Sector Strategies
- Continue Targeted Populations Standing Committee, as used by one local area, and integrating targeted population's representatives into all committees, as used by the other local area.

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

- ***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.***

A committee of interested sector employers, beginning with manufacturing will be formed, to gather specific employment data (confidentially) that would be shared among the partners. The participating businesses would need to pay for the data supplied to be compiled.

- ***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.***

We will work with existing employer sector groups, beginning with health and medical, and community colleges, to expand career pathway opportunities through more accelerated training and work-based learning, leading to industry-recognized credentials, resulting in improved employment and earnings.



- ***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.***

Expand career services and opportunities for special populations of all types, facing barriers to educational attainment and economic advancement will be achieved by:

- Working closely with local community college partners in bridge programs.
  - Provide work-based training for those who qualify for Title V services.
  - Co-enroll individuals with local partner programs, as needed to assist those with multiple barriers to become successful.
- ***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.***

This state goal will be supported by:

- Participate in the region's several workforce development initiatives of Chambers of Commerce and United Way organizations.
- Support Illinois Economic Development Association (IEDA) through membership.
- Create public – private partnerships or alignments with businesses and not-for-profit agencies that serve special populations.
- Improve public / private data infrastructure by collecting regional data and investigating methods to make the data accessible.
- Request opportunities to make presentations to economic development practitioners and professionals, through chambers of commerce and economic development association.
- Host workshops for economic development practitioners and professionals.
- Connect with entrepreneurs and those starting businesses, to assist with workforce needs.
- Participate in the region's several Area Planning Council (APC) Area Plan development processes with education professionals and community college administrators.
- Participate in the region's several Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) planning processes with economic development professionals.
- Assist communities and chambers with requests for information from businesses that may relocate or expand.