

THREE RIVERS WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

LOCAL PLAN

Program Year 2024 – Program Year 2028

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Acknowledgements

The Three Rivers Workforce Development Board appreciates the participation of its mandatory partners, board members, workforce development staff, economic development professionals, Chamber of Commerce leaders, elected officials, educational institutions, supportive/social service agency partners, and community members in the development of this plan.

Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure

1. **Identification of the Fiscal Agent** – Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official.

The Three Rivers Regional Commission acts as the fiscal agent for the Three Rivers Workforce Development Board (TRWDB). The Three Rivers Regional Commission is responsible for grant management, budgeting, and fiscal compliance.

Three Rivers Regional Commission
120 North Hill Street
Griffin, GA 30224
(678) 692-0510

Executive Director: Mark Butler
Workforce Director: Stephanie Matthews

The Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) is responsible for approving the Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)'s budget and appointing members to the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB), overseeing workforce development activities, and ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations.

The Local Elected Officials (LEO) Board collaborates with the CLEO to develop local workforce strategies, allocate resources, and monitor the performance of workforce programs to meet the needs of the community.

The Workforce Development Board is responsible for identifying local workforce needs, developing policies, and designing programs that provide job training and employment services to job seekers. Additionally, the Board collaborates with employers, educational institutions, and community organizations to ensure the alignment of workforce initiatives with local economic development goals.

2. **Description of Strategic Planning Elements** – Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.
 - a. Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

The 10-county region that encompasses Three Rivers is economically and geographically diverse. The region encompasses three interstates, several population centers, and is adjacent to a large metropolitan area. The area's economy is relatively diverse and includes several major industries including manufacturing, health care, and logistics. Table 1 shows the Three Rivers Region's 5 year industry trends. The largest percentage growth sub clusters are – social service; logistics; business management; production; and nursing.

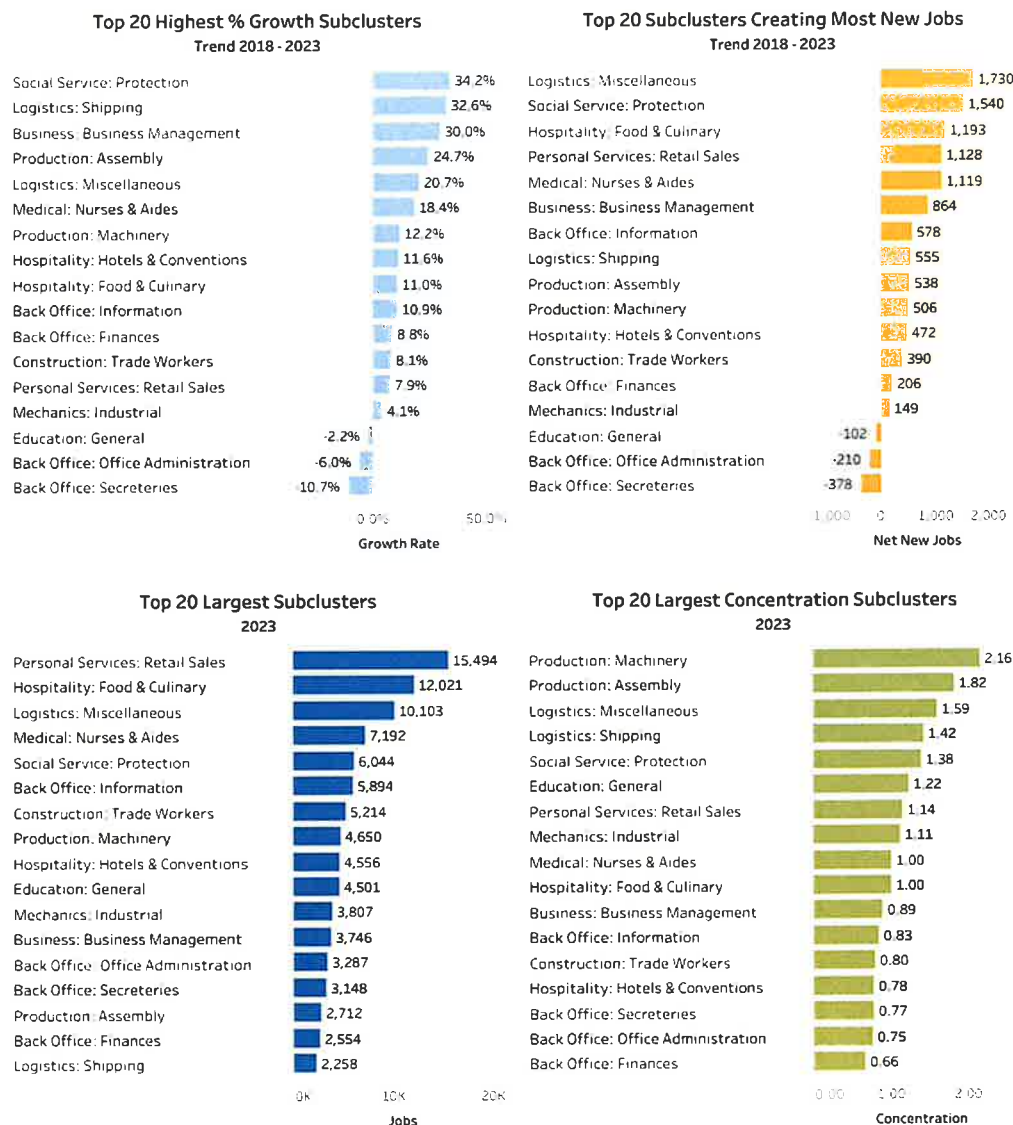
Table 1. Occupation Cluster Employment Trend

Show: 5-Year Trend

Geography: Three Rivers Region

Min. Job Share: 1.5%

Occupation Subcluster Employment Trend
Three Rivers Region



Note: Charts show subclusters with a minimum of 1.5% of the total jobs in the year 2023.
Source: Headlight Data cluster calculations using data from DTG.

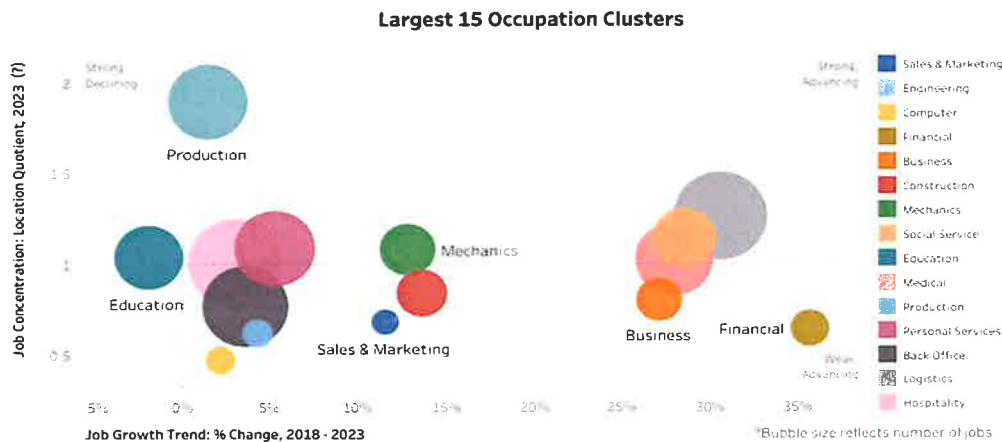
The region has several industries that are seeing significant growth. Table 2 shows net new jobs by industry over the last 5+ years. The logistics industry has consistently had a

growth trend over the years. The region is also seeing large job gains in medical, social services, business, and financial sectors.

Table 2. Net New Jobs, 2018-2023

Show: 5-Year Trend

Geography: Three Rivers Region



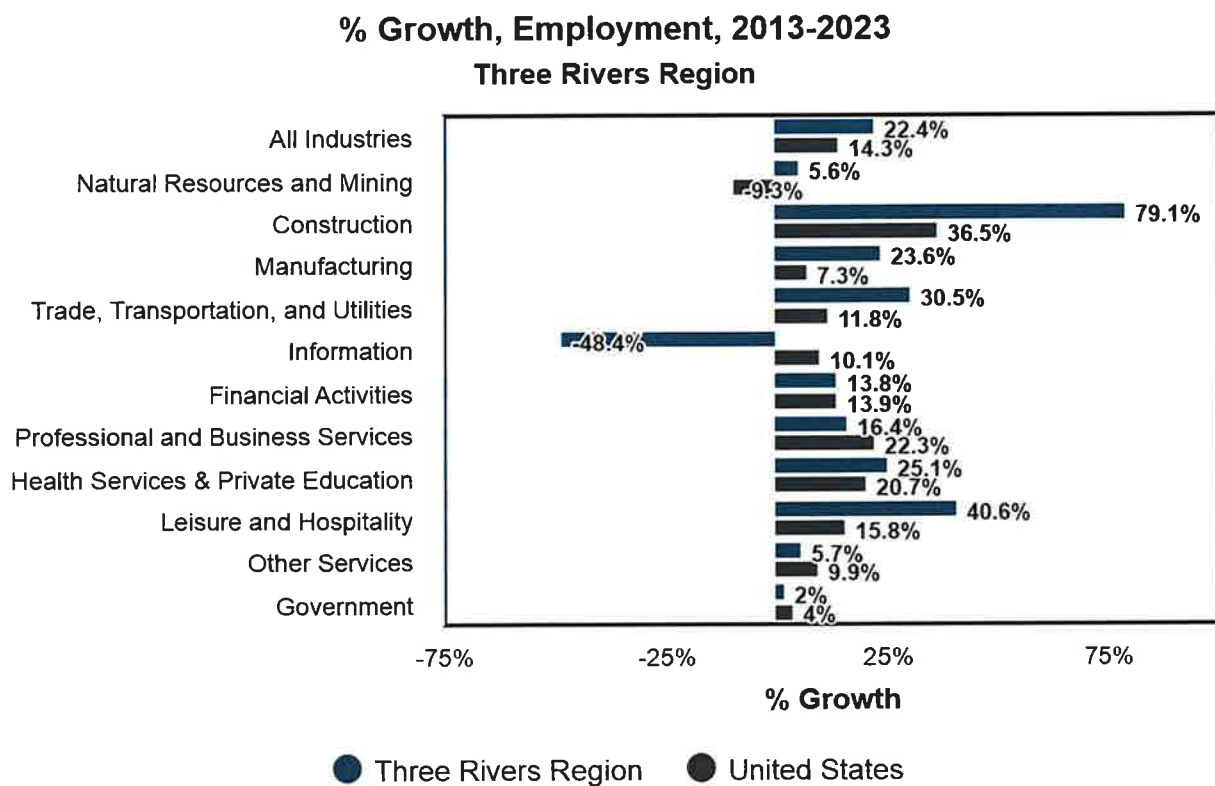
Cluster	Jobs 2023	% Growth 2018 - 2023	New Jobs 2018 - 2023	Location Quotient 2023
Hospitality	23,660	+3.0%	687	1.00
Logistics	23,071	+30.6%	5,404	1.26
Back Office	19,302	+3.6%	675	0.76
Personal Services	16,833	+5.3%	850	1.08
Production	16,831	+1.5%	247	1.89
Medical	15,916	+28.0%	3,478	1.02
Education	12,181	-1.9%	-239	1.03
Social Service	10,454	+28.5%	2,319	1.14
Mechanics	7,883	+12.8%	897	1.07
Construction	6,521	+13.6%	783	0.84
Business	5,491	+27.1%	1,172	0.80
Financial	3,879	+35.7%	1,020	0.64
Computer	2,426	+2.1%	51	0.47
Engineering	2,320	+4.3%	96	0.61
Sales & Marketing	1,903	+11.5%	197	0.68

Source: Headlight Data cluster calculations using data from DTG.

1 = US Average LQ

Another way to understand trends and the needs of regional employers is by analyzing the percent growth of an industry for the region. Table 3 shows the % growth of employment in the region's sectors over the last ten years.

Table 3. % Growth, Employment, 2013-2023



Source: BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW)

The TRWDB's first sector strategy developed was in the manufacturing industry. The strategy that was developed during 2019-2021 is in the healthcare industry, and logistics will followed in 2021-2022. There remains a need in manufacturing and health care, and the region will continue to provide resources toward manufacturing to support development of training programs, and the hiring of individuals in the manufacturing industry.

The top in-demand healthcare occupations according to employment change and projections are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4. In-Demand Healthcare Positions, Industry Projections (Long-term)

Industry Projections (Long-term) for Multiple Industries in West Central Georgia Local Workforce Development Area in 2016-2026

Industry Projections Table

The table below shows the long term industry projections for Multiple Industries in West Central Georgia Local Workforce Development Area for the 2016-2026 projection period.

Industry	Industry Code	2016 Estimated Employment	2026 Projected Employment	Total 2016-2026 Employment Change	Annual Percent Change	Total Percent Change
Ambulatory Health Care Services	621	6,547	8,373	1,826	2.49%	27.89%
Health Care and Social Assistance	62	21,008	25,706	4,698	2.04%	22.36%
Hospitals	622	8,177	9,598	1,421	1.62%	17.38%
Nursing and Residential Care Facilities	623	2,931	3,396	465	1.48%	15.86%
Social Assistance	624	3,353	4,339	986	2.61%	29.41%

Source: Georgia Dept. of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Projections Unit
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Table 5 presents the top in-demand occupations for the local area. The list was developed based on feedback collected from major industries during the plan development process, traditional labor market information, real-time labor market information, feedback from the Business and Industry leaders, and state guidance.

Table 5. Three Rivers Workforce Development Board In-Demand Occupation List

Occupation	
Assembly Supervisor	Maintenance and Repair Worker
Automotive Service Technician and Mechanic	Maintenance Technician
Aviation Mechanic	Network Specialist
CNC Operator	Pharmacy Technician
Customer Service Representative	Registered Nurse
Diesel Mechanic	Software Developer
Forklift Operator/Warehouse Worker	Team Assembler/Manufacturing Associate
Licensed Practical Nurse	Truck Driver
Machinist	Welder

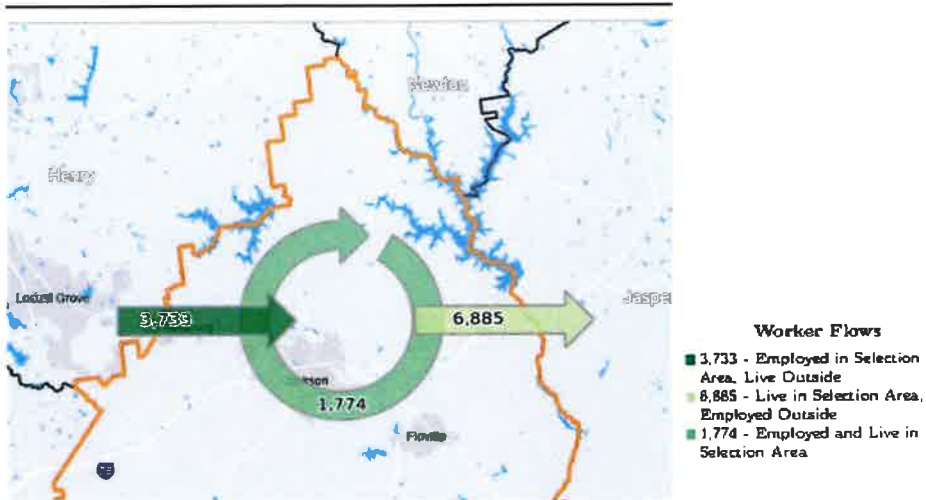
The region has significant commuting activity both within and outside of the region: Commuting data demonstrates the need to work cooperatively throughout the region and with other neighboring regions (e.g., Atlanta, Middle Georgia, River Valley). Figure 2 on the next page shows the inflow and outflow commuting patterns for each county in the region. Using the maps in figure 2 we can see that 1,774 residents in Butts County live and work within the county. We can also see that 6,885 residents live in Butts County, but commute outside of the county to work.

Figure 2. Three Rivers Region Commuting Patterns Inflow/Outflow

Butts County

Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017

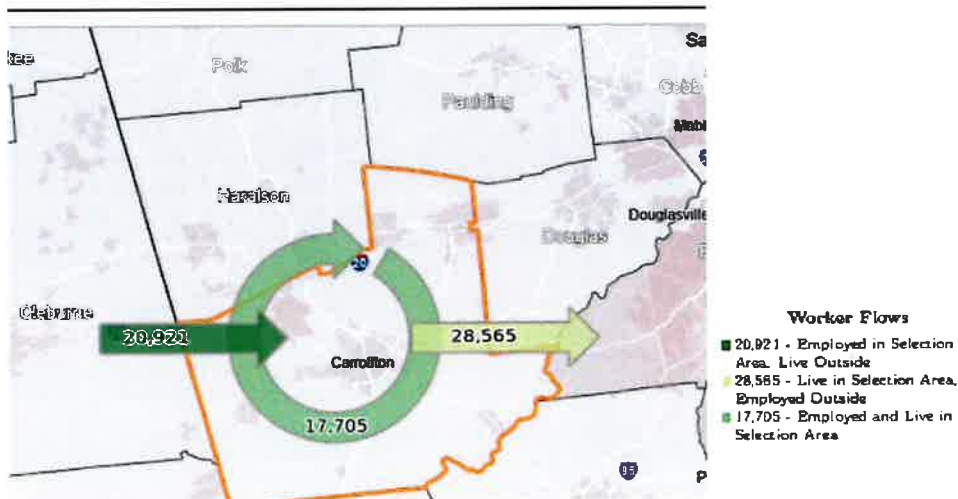
All Workers



Carroll County

Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017

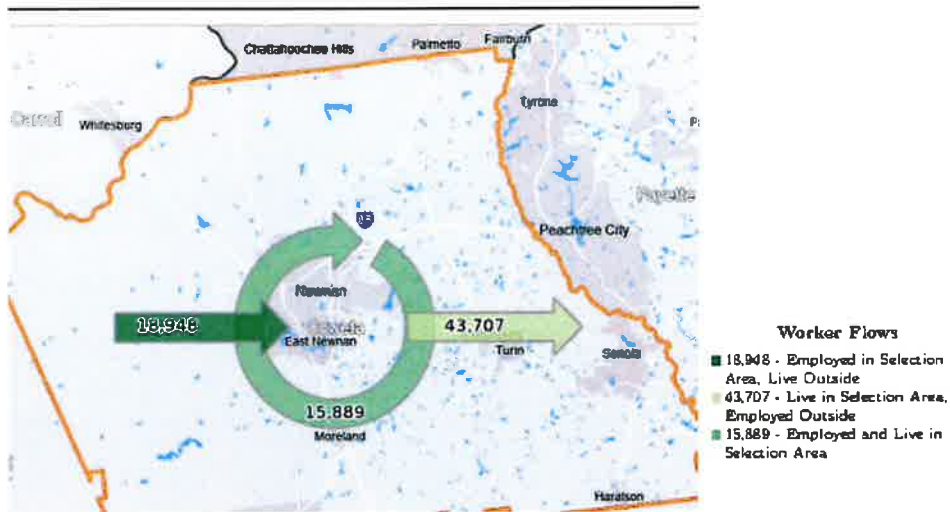
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Coweta County

Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017

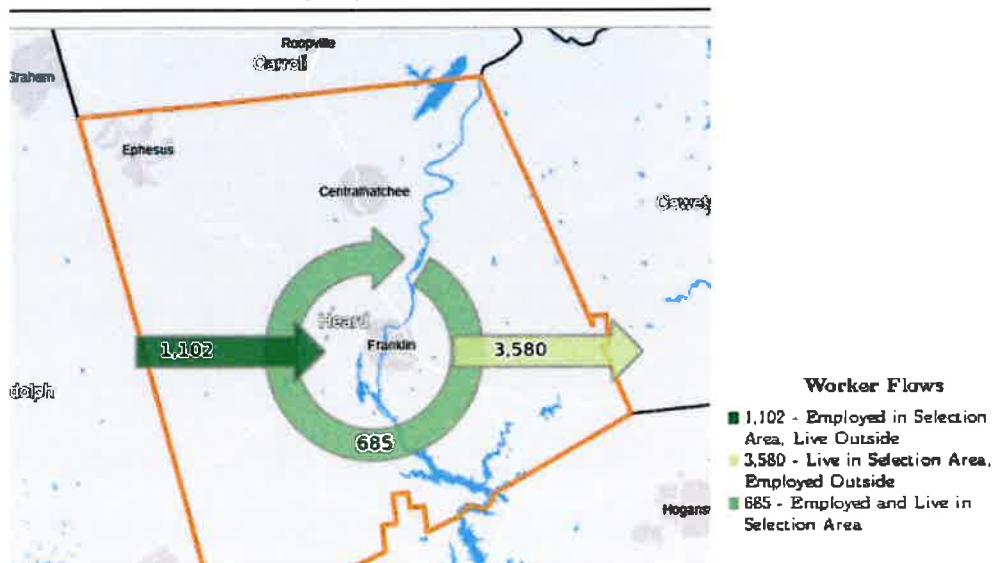
All Workers



Heard County

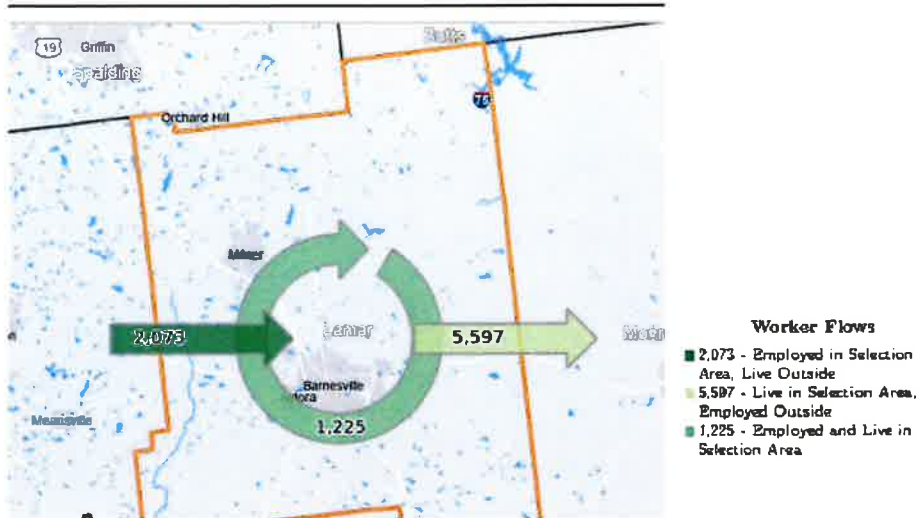
Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017

All Workers



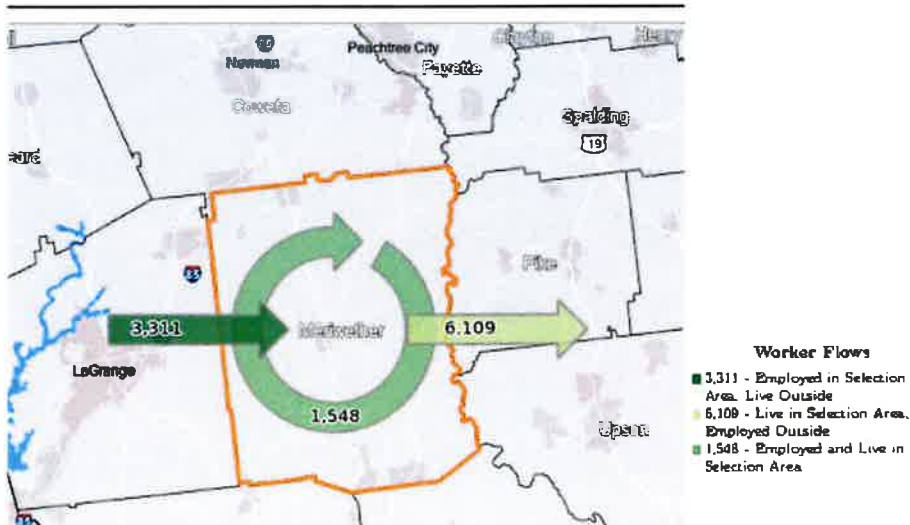
Lamar County

Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017
All Workers



Meriwether County

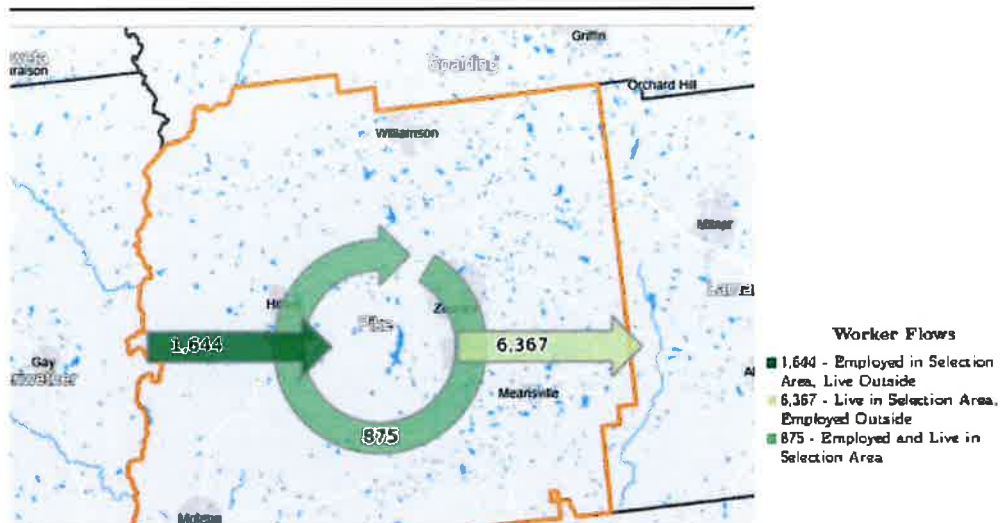
Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017
All Workers



Pike County

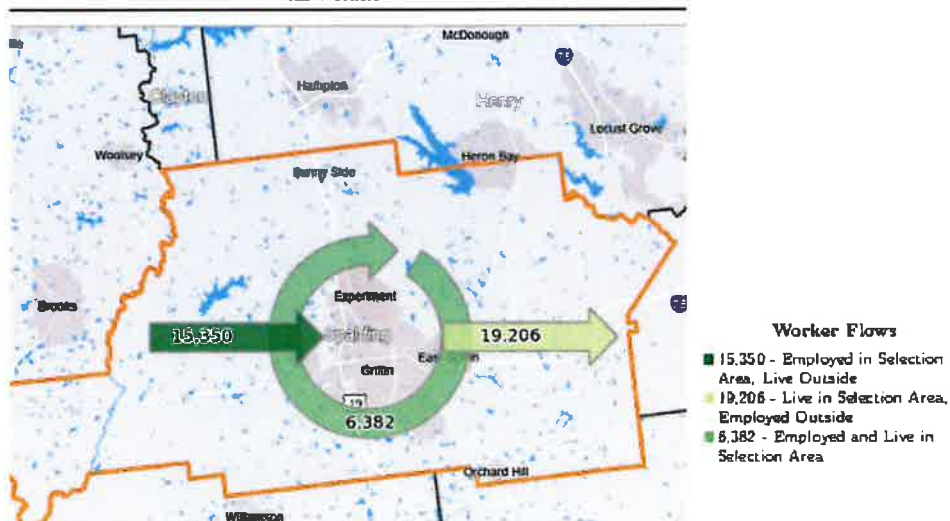
Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017

All Workers

**Spalding County**

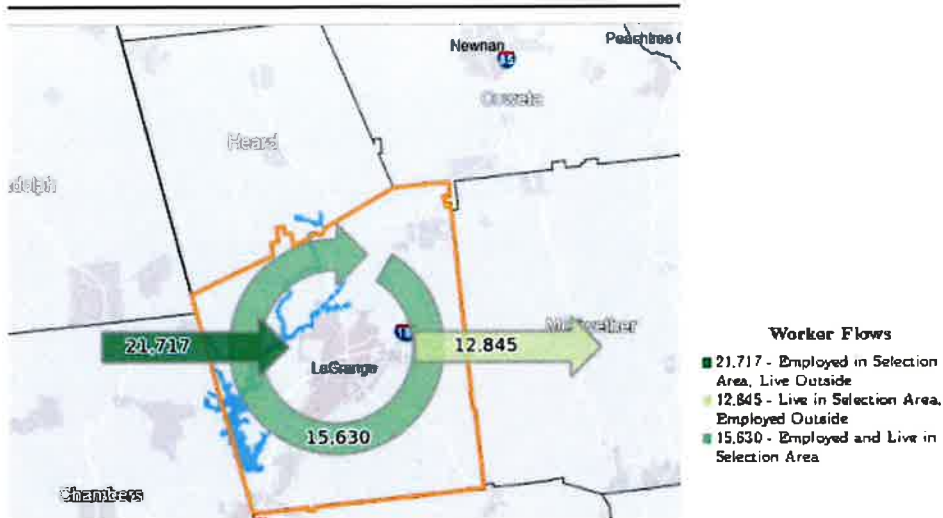
Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017

All Workers



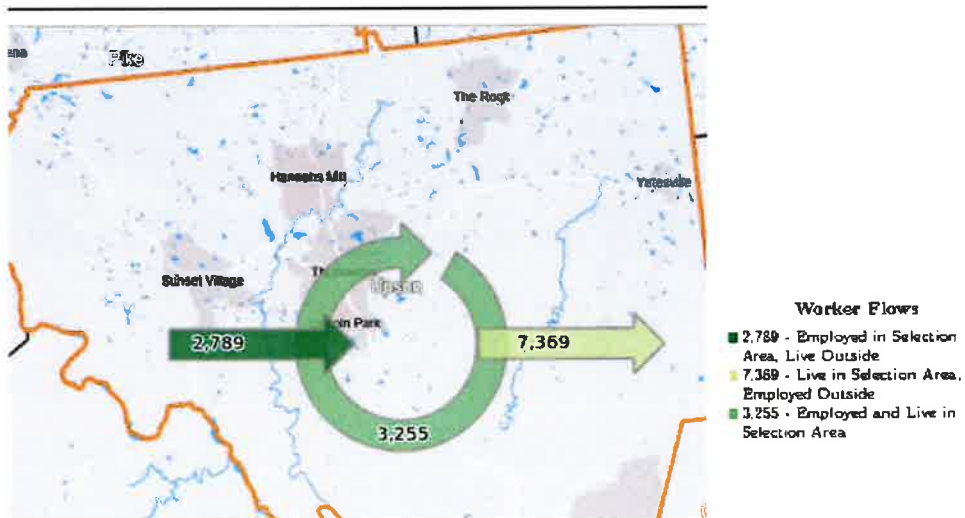
Troup County

Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017
All Workers



Upson County

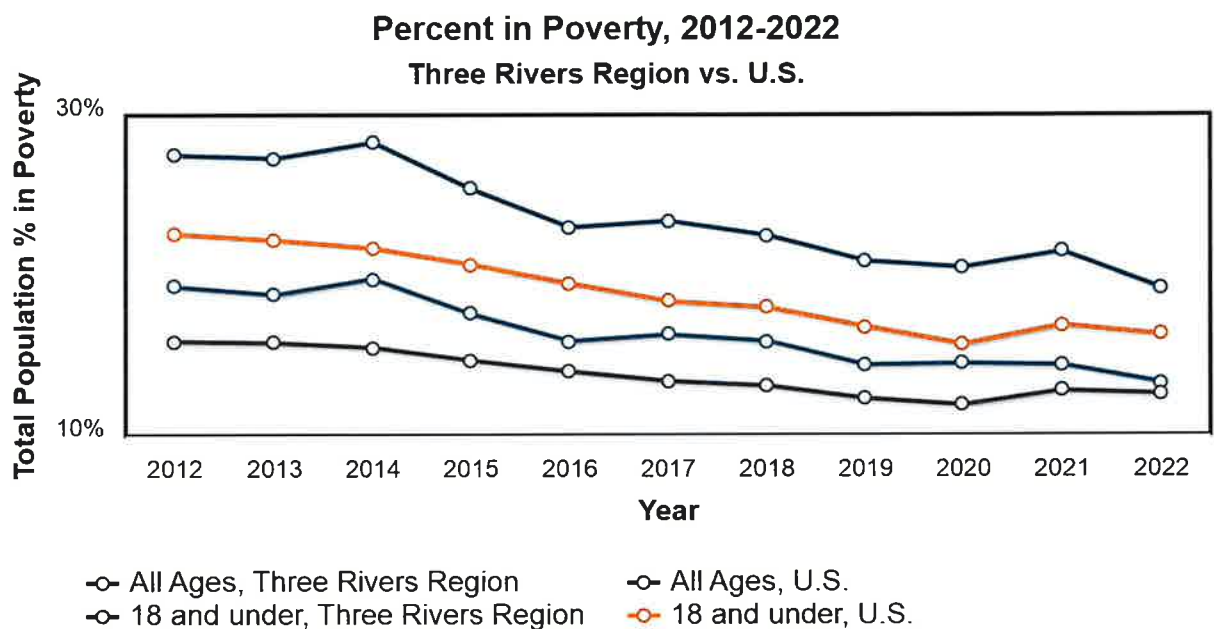
Inflow/Outflow Counts of Primary Jobs for Selection Area in 2017
All Workers



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2017).

As part of analyzing the workforce development needs in the region, it is important to understand the current economic condition of its subparts. Figure 4 shows the poverty levels from 2012 to 2022. The economic condition of the region largely mirrors that of the state. Figure 4 shows that there is some diversity and growing levels of poverty in the region.

Figure 4. Three Rivers Region Poverty Levels, 2012 and 2022



Source: Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)

- b. **Provide an analysis of the 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.**

The TRWDB analyzed the skills and knowledge necessary to meet the employment needs of industries in the region by conducting listening sessions with three key industry sectors, analyzing job postings, and reviewing data provided in the local area's first sector partnership efforts in the area of manufacturing.

The largest knowledge and skill deficit in the region remains to be soft skills, which encompasses behaviors like showing up to work on time, getting along with co-workers, following directions, adhering to company rules, teamwork, critical thinking, time management, ethics, and basic etiquette/respect. Companies also highlighted the difficulty of hiring employees who can pass a drug test; many companies shared that many candidates will either lose interest in the job when a drug test is mentioned or fail to attend the drug test screening. Human resource and plant managers in manufacturing stated that if they could find individuals with basic soft skills they would handle the rest of the hard skills training. The industry sector listening sessions and a review of online job posting data makes it clear that a “one-size fits all” service delivery strategy will not work in this diverse region.

A comprehensive picture of the skills and knowledge desired by local employers can be gained by analyzing core competencies listed in job ads. Most online job ads in the region list the required common skills, specialized skills, and any applicable certifications or licenses. Tables 6, 7 and 8 on the following pages show the top common, specialized skills, and certifications/licenses listed in online job ads posted in the TRWDB region.

Table 6. Job Posting Analytics: Top 10 Common Skills, 2023-2024

Skill	Posting with Skill
Communication	12,283
Customer Service	10,352
Management	7,933
Operations	6,014
Leadership	5,734
Sales	5,670
Detail Oriented	4,040
Lifting Ability	4,026
Problem Solving	3,925
Writing	3,022

Source: Lightcast Q2 2024 Data Set

Table 7. Job Posting Analytics: Top 10 Specialized Skills, 2023-2024

Skill	Posting with Skill
Nursing	3,664
Merchandising	2,832
Warehousing	2,408
Hand Tools	2,363
Housekeeping	1,919
Auditing	1,781
Restaurant Operations	1,746
Forklift Truck	1,474
Marketing	1,472
Cash Register	1,361

Source: Lightcast Q2 2024 Data Set

Table 8. Job Posting Analytics, Top 10 Certifications/Licenses, 2023-2024

Certification	Posting with Skill
Driver's License	4,314
Registered Nurse	3,556
Basic Life Support	2,321
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	1,579
Licensed Practical Nurse	1,023
Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support	818
Commercial Driver's License	604
Certified Nursing Assistant	513
CDL Class A License	485
Board Certified/Eligible	452

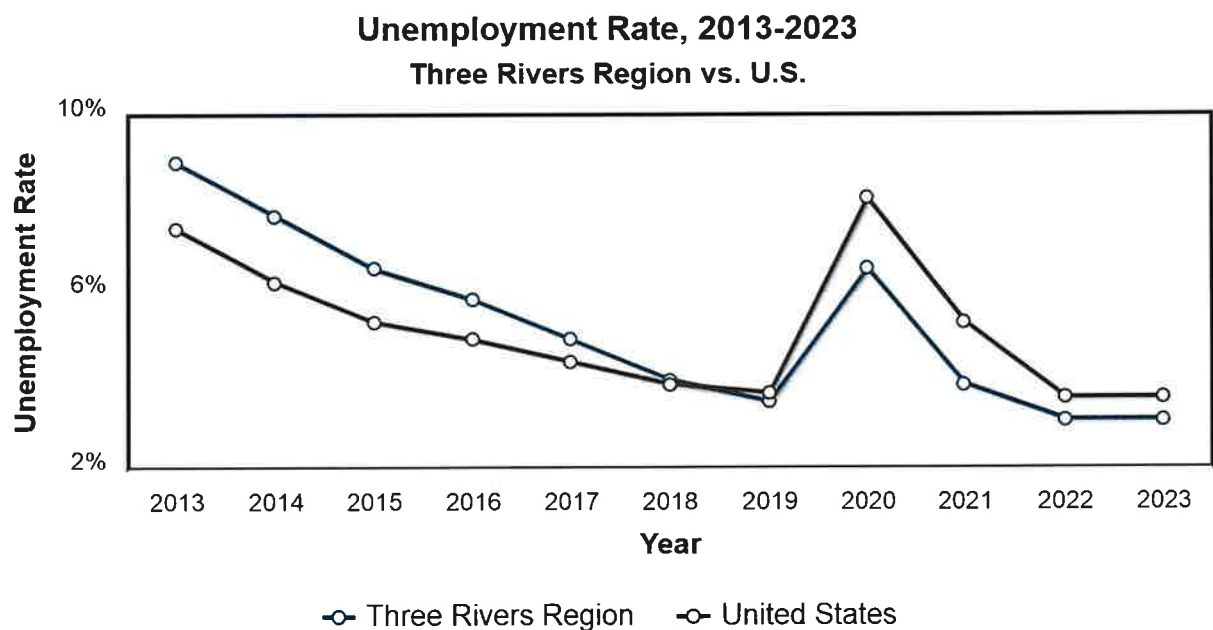
Source: Lightcast Q2 2024 Data Set

- c. Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor-force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.

Labor Market Trends

The labor market in the Three Rivers region mirrored state and national trends over the past decade. Figure 5 on the next page shows the 10-year unemployment rate trend for the region. The low unemployment rate in 2022 (3.1%) indicated that the region had recovered from Covid, but has recovered those in the post-covid period. Employment projections based on trends show that the region will add around 20,000 jobs during the next 10 years. These projections are currently using data that has not factored in the pandemic currently being experienced by United States and countries in the world. The coronavirus has impacted the economy on so many levels, and the realization of what this pandemic will do to the economy in the future is unknown. Currently, the unemployment rate for the state of Georgia is 9.5%. The unemployment rate continues to climb as individuals are unable to work, and lack resources to return to work safely while caring for loved ones and/or children who are learning via virtual classrooms.

Figure 5. Unemployment Rate Trend, 2013-2023



Source: BLS Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

Educational Attainment

The local area has a diverse level of educational attainment. Figure 6 shows the region's educational attainment level for the population age 25+. More than 45% of the region's population age 25+ has a high school diploma or less. The previous plan's data showed that only 6% of the region's population had an associate's degree, but we are up to 9% and 19% had a bachelor's degree or greater, which has increased slightly to 23%. This shows that the region is increasing in higher skilled individuals to support jobs that may require additional skill sets. Job posting analytics and employer engagement demonstrate that more jobs are requiring advanced education. Many local companies indicated that their minimum education requirement is a high school diploma/GED. The data in Figure 7 demonstrates a need to continue up-skilling individuals through adult education and post-secondary education.

Figure 6. Regional Educational Attainment Age 25+

Regional Educational Attainment Age 25+		
	Number	Percent
Less than high school	42,034	12%
High School	121,103	34%
Some College	74,955	21%
Associate's	30,233	9%
Bachelor's degree or higher	81,236	23%
All	354,112	

American Community Survey 2022, 5-year estimates

Degree Completion

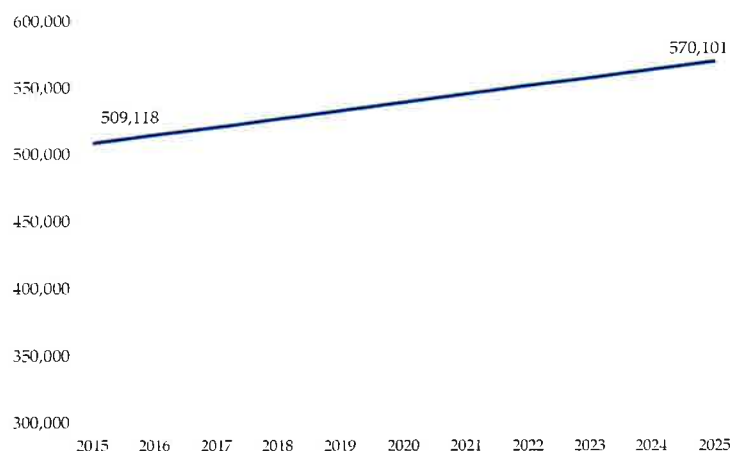


Dept. of Education Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2022

Population Trends

The Three Rivers region is projected to add more than 60,000 residents during the next 10 years. Figure 8 shows the short-term population projections developed by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget for the TRWDB region. The local area is projected to see steady growth, but the pace of the growth varies at the county level. Table 9 on the next page shows the long-term population projections for each county in the region. Seven counties are projected to see an increased population while the population in three counties is expected to decline over the next 30 years. The majority of long-term growth is expected to be in Coweta and Carroll counties.

Figure 8. Three Rivers Region Short-Term Population Projections, 2015-2025



Source: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (2015)

Table 9. County Long-Term Population Projections, 2020-2050

County	2020	2030	2040	2050	% Change 2020-2050
Butts	25,174	29,426	31,968	33,957	8,783
Carroll	120,119	133,363	145,151	156,752	36,633
Coweta	152,001	179,677	198,602	212,357	60,356
Heard	12,370	14,339	15,343	16,048	3,678
Lamar	19,347	21,228	23,110	25,219	5,872
Meriwether	21,020	20,895	20,467	19,983	(1,037)
Pike	18,860	20,147	21,335	22,276	3,416
Spalding	69,110	80,827	87,491	93,135	24,025
Troup	70,414	72,836	74,307	74,975	4,561
Upson	26,277	26,583	26,461	26,023	(254)

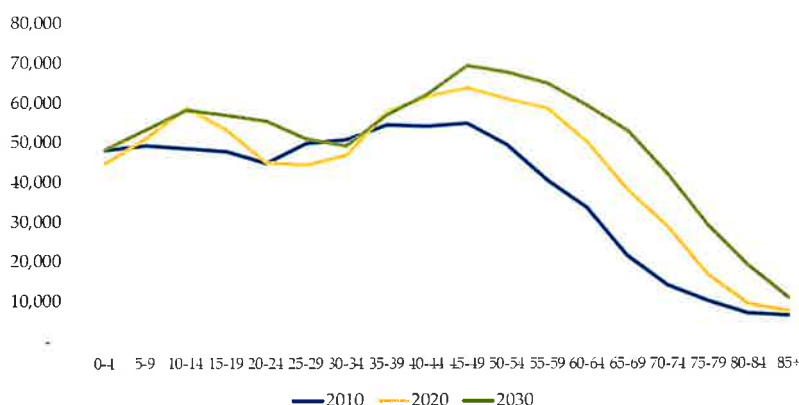
Georgia Office of Planning and Budget (2019 Series)

Regional Age Structure

The age structure (that is, the number of people at various age levels) is expected to shift significantly over the next 20 years. This shift in age structure will have significant implications for workforce development and education in the region. Figure 9 shows the age structure projections developed by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. The TRWDB region will continue to "gray" as the population ages. In 2010 there were 14,000 residents age 70-74, but projections show that in 2030 the region will

have 42,000 residents age 70-74. The region will see some growth in the youth population but will see little growth in middle-age residents.

Figure 9. Age Structure Projections, 2010-2030



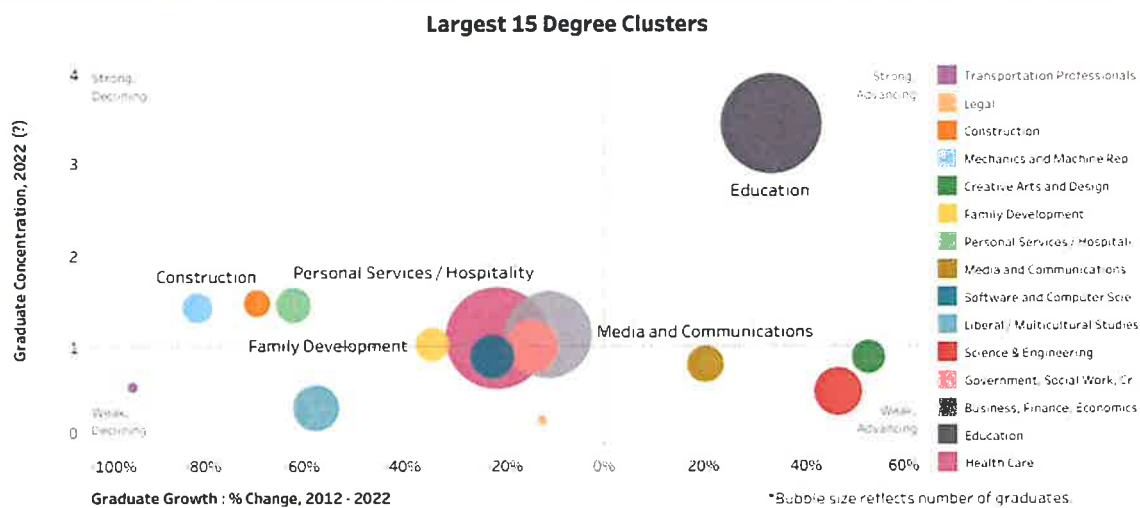
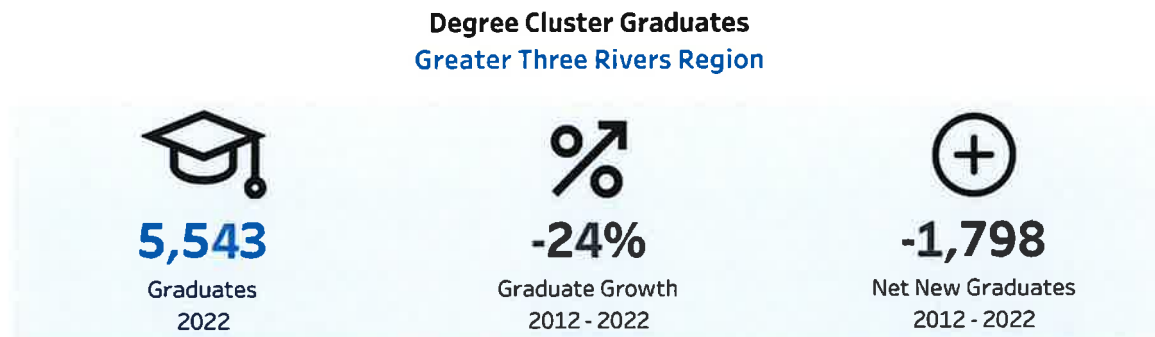
Source: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (2012)

- d. **Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**

The TRWDB region has a strong and diverse workforce development activity network that includes two technical colleges, private training providers, two University System of Georgia institutions, several college and career academies, and career and technical education programs in every school district. Figure 10 shows the regional degree completion trends from 2012 to 2022. We are seeing an uptick in education; science & engineering; media & communications; creative arts and designs, but decreases amongst the other clusters. These trends show that we can help strengthen the education and training network in the Three Rivers region, but also may indicate that degree production does not fully align with the job openings in the region. Most employers engaged with the planning process cited a need for technical skills that are typically taught in certificate programs.

Figure 10. Degree Cluster Graduates

Start Year: 2012 Selection: Greater Three Rivers Region Award Level: All



Degree Cluster	Graduates 2022	% Growth 2012 - 2022	New Graduates 2012 - 2022	Location Quotient 2022
Health Care	1,297	-21.4%	354	1.08
Education	1,250	+33.3%	312	3.41
Business, Finance, Economics	963	-11.0%	119	1.12
Government, Social Work, Crimin.	353	-14.5%	60	1.00
Science & Engineering	289	+46.7%	92	0.49
Liberal / Multicultural Studies	272	-57.2%	363	0.33
Software and Computer Sciences	237	22.3%	68	0.88
Media and Communications	165	+20.4%	28	0.81
Personal Services / Hospitality	163	61.8%	264	1.45
Family Development	149	-34.4%	78	1.01
Creative Arts and Design	142	+52.7%	49	0.88
Mechanics and Machine Repair	120	-81.2%	518	1.41
Construction	91	69.2%	204	1.46
Legal	14	-12.5%	2	0.19
Transportation Professionals	13	94.1%	209	0.56

Sources: US Dept. of Education IPEDS, Avalanche Consulting analysis/cluster taxonomy.

1 = US Average LQ

- e. **Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.**

Vision: Employees with quality jobs and employers with qualified employees

Mission: The Three Rivers Workforce Development Board exists to support and promote workforce development and job development to meet the needs of employers and employees in the region.

Key Strategic Elements

- 1) Incorporate Soft Skills Development in all Programs
- 2) Explore Innovation and Flexibility
- 3) Partnership Building
- 4) Serving Existing Employers

The TRWDB aims to align its service offerings with economic development and key regional industries to ensure that employers have the talent they need and that individuals have the training and support they need to find employment with sustaining wages. The board will invest its program dollars into high-yield programs that prepare adult and youth clients with the essential skills, technical skills, and experience they need to succeed in the 21st-century workplace. The board will also leverage its role as a convener and connecting entity in the region to align programs, services, and resources among the many governmental and non-governmental entities involved in workforce development, education, and economic development. For example, TRWDB will use its convening capacity to bring together regional partners (e.g., community service board, law enforcement, education, health providers) in 2020 to discuss economic recovery during and post the COVID-19 pandemic. Many small businesses have presented concerns with retaining employees, and with continuing to

remain open to the public. Businesses have had to lay individuals off, and individuals have received unemployment plus a federal stipend of an additional \$600 a week with their unemployment. Majority of the businesses that are opening their doors have stated that some employees are not willing to come back for less pay, or they are unable to come back due to childcare issues.

The key factor to continued success and strong performance is building and strengthening relationships with employers throughout the region. The TRWDB needs to have a clear understanding of employers' workforce needs (e.g., soft skills, technical skills, work experience, the number of openings) so that it can link the services provided to gainful employment opportunities. The business services team, along with sector strategies and business services program, will serve as the "front door" connection to employers.

The board will also ensure that program offerings and service delivery strategies are in place to serve individuals with barriers to employment. This will be done through staff training, building stronger relationships with partner organizations (e.g., Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency [GVRA], Family Connections, the Re-entry Coalition, Goodwill), and building stronger employer relationships. Case Managers (CMs) will work with the appropriate partner organizations and board resources to develop customized employment strategies and provide wraparound support services, as necessary.

Youth clients will be served with a similar strategy to individuals with barriers to employment. The TRWDB aims to prepare youth to enter the workforce, post-secondary education, or the military with the skills and experience necessary to be self-sufficient and on a career path rather than just simply getting a job. The board will serve youth clients with redesigned out-of-school youth contracts and programs that focus on teaching essential skills and technical skills related to the employment opportunities that exist in the region.

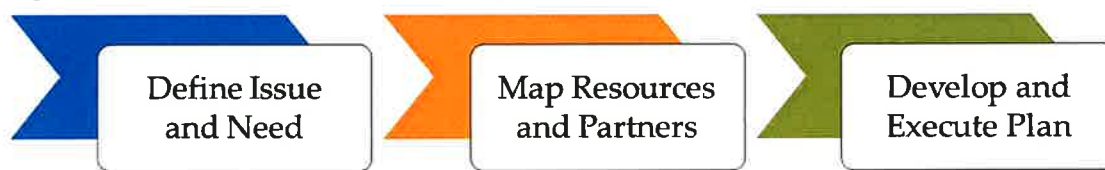
- f. **Taking into account the analyses described in sections “2. a-e” (above), provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.**

The TRWDB will coordinate core programs and resources using a three-step process to achieve the vision and mission articulated above. The board strongly believes that it can only accomplish its work by building effective partnerships with employers, governments, chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and nonprofit partners.

The key strategy to addressing workforce and talent needs in the region is detailed in Figure 11. The first step will be to define the issue and identify the needs. Once a clear problem statement has been identified, board members and staff will identify Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and partner resources that can be used to address the issue. Finally, once the resources and partners have been mapped, the TRWDB will develop and execute a plan to resolve the need.

This three-step process can be applied to workforce needs and issues identified in the above questions or any issues that arise during the plan period. The strategies and plans that come out of this process will enable the local area to achieve its vision, goals, performance metrics, and ultimately better serve employees and employers.

Figure 11. Three Rivers Three-Step Coordinated Strategy Process



3. **Description of Strategies and Services** – Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below.

a. **How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?**

The key to engaging and serving employers in the Three Rivers region will be a reinvigorated business services strategy. The focus for the strategy includes: listening to employers; utilizing needs assessments and data to guide efforts; promoting and marketing business services (e.g., Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), On-the-Job Training (OJT), Registered Apprenticeships (RA), and other training services); and using sector strategies to provide a high-level of customized service to key industries.

The TRWDB's Business Operations Manager, Business Operations Coordinators, and Management Team will engage with the chambers of commerce and economic development organizations in the region to ensure that businesses, especially small businesses, are aware of business services and training programs. Partners throughout the local area work closely with businesses and can assist with providing referrals. The local area will work to educate partners about the services and abilities of the TRWDB. The local area will hold joint training events between partner organization staff and TRWDB staff to ensure strong and ongoing referrals and partnerships.

TRWDB will also work cooperatively with its partners in the local area to engage and meet the needs of employers. These partners include state government organizations such as GDOL, TCSG, GVRA, local economic development organizations, chambers of commerce, and elected officials. These organizations are on the front lines of serving employers in competitive industries and are most knowledgeable about the talent needs for these industries. TRWDB will partner with growing and in-demand industry sectors to serve as their talent source.

The TRWDB staff will also take advantage of opportunities to promote WIOA Services at local Employer Committee Meetings, Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) meetings, as well as Rotary Club, Kiwanis, Unions, and any other opportunities as they become available.

According to the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center, small businesses constitute 98% of all employers in Georgia. This significant presence underscores the vital role that small businesses play in the state's economy, providing essential jobs and services across various sectors. As the region's leading workforce development and human resources support organization, the local area will utilize its resources, personnel, network, and services to support small businesses. The business services and program delivery staff will partner with chambers, local governments, economic development organizations, and downtown development authorities to identify small businesses that can benefit from TRWDB services. Additionally, the local area will develop materials to explain the benefits of available services to small businesses and train staff to develop appropriate solutions for these employers.

- b. How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area's workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees.**

Alignment to the needs of the business community in the local area will be achieved through a robust business services strategy. (See the discussion in 2(b) that discusses the reinvested business service strategy that TRWDB has adopted.)

Business and organized labor representatives are involved in the planning and development of the business services strategy through participation on the TRWDB, workforce development committees, and through their involvement in the local plan development process. Ultimately, the business services unit is charged with developing, overseeing, and evaluating the board's business services strategy.

The local area offers a robust suite of business services including:

- On-the-Job-Training (OJT): OJT allows companies to teach new employees the skills necessary to perform the job fully while reimbursing them for the lost

productivity during the training period. TRWDB can help pay a portion of wages for qualified participants during an OJT period. OJT in the Three Rivers Region is provided on a sliding scale, which allows opportunities for small businesses to benefit from a higher wage reimbursement. The LWDB understands the needs of small businesses, and implemented this sliding scale to ensure that small businesses are able to benefit from this service;

- Incumbent Worker Training (IWT): TRWDB helps qualified companies with providing skills training or enhancement to existing employees. The goal of this program is to help local employers remain competitive in a rapidly changing environment. TRWDB can help defray the cost of classroom or on-the-job training. IWT can also be used as a strategy to help retain existing jobs or avert layoffs. One of the main in-demand industries within the local area includes Advanced Automotive Manufacturing. This industry continues to grow and develop in training needs for existing employees. This growth includes additional machinery being implemented in plants to produce more advance transmissions and various other parts. Incumbent Worker Training is a service that the LWDB is and plans to use to assist with meeting the demand to up-skill the existing workforce in the area of manufacturing and the automotive industry;
- Employer Workshops: The business services team will partner with local technical colleges to provide information on programs which offer a combined curriculum of soft skills training, OSHA Certification, Forklift Certificate, and an Introduction to Manufacturing Certification. We will also utilize our partnership with our local representatives from the International Union of Operating Engineers and the North Georgia Building Trades Academy to ensure employers are aware of the various options available to them;
- Customized Training: WorkSource Three Rivers helps meet the specialized training requirements for potential new hire candidates. Customized training reimburses the employer a portion of the cost for training programs for employment candidates who do not necessarily have the technical training, education, or experience required for the position;
- Assessments and Screenings: Potential employees are required to complete a career assessment (Prove-It, Career Scope, or MyNextMove), a drug screen and basic skills tests (if required) to ensure their compatibility with employer job descriptions and requirements. TRWDB's mobile units will also administer

assessments onsite at the employers' location, including those required by the employer, as well as those required by WIOA;

- Rapid Response: Providing guidance to employers and re-employment support through local area services to employees who are laid off;
- Job Fair Partnerships: Partner with the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG), Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), Goodwill Industries, and other employment partners to host regular job fairs to provide key industries with recruitment channels;
- Sector Strategy Development: Workforce development and education leaders partner with key industries in the region to ensure that they have the talent they need to succeed. Sector partnerships bring together industry leaders in a specific industry cluster with educational institutions and workforce partners around a common vision and program of work.;
- Registered Apprenticeship: TRWDB will assist employers with creating and sustaining registered apprenticeships programs. RA programs combine on-the-job training with classroom training.
- Partnership Building: The business services team will aid in referrals for service by developing and sustaining relationships with the business community, educational institutions, other government programs, and nonprofits in the region.

- c. **How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies. How will the area strengthen linkages between the one stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?**

The TRWDB has prioritized relationship building with the region's economic development team by visiting with economic development professionals, development authorities, and other economic development organizations across the region.

Economic development professionals were identified as a key stakeholder to assist us with workforce development activities. A focus group was held with economic development professionals to gather feedback during the development of the 2016-2019 plan. Since then, the TRWDB staff has consistently participated in more events and meetings with economic development leaders in the region to explain the purpose and services of the board, and to learn the best ways to continue supporting and engaging with them.

The local area is focused on supporting economic development professionals across the region, including the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) Existing Industry Representative, development authority staff members, economic development organization leaders, and other economic development professionals. The business services team will work with local development authorities to ensure potential new employers to the region and existing employers are aware of WIOA business services. This will be accomplished via email, conference call, and face-to-face meetings.

The board staff will continue to educate economic development partners about the services through outreach visits, attending development authority board meetings, periodic group meetings, and invitations to board meetings and functions. Through our partnerships with Region 4 Economic Development and local development authorities, (City of West Point, Newnan, and Upson-Thomaston) we have provided information and hiring solutions to companies through Incumbent Worker and OJT opportunities. Continued utilization of our economic development authorities in creating career pathways for local industries will assist us in ensuring that we are meeting the needs of our community through better utilization of WIOA funds.

Additionally, the Three Rivers area plans to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs by coordinating services to provide comprehensive support to job seekers. This involves integrating unemployment insurance information and assistance into the one-stop centers, enhancing accessibility and streamlining the process for individuals seeking both employment services and unemployment benefits. Additionally, the area will focus on improving communication and data sharing between the systems to ensure efficient

service delivery and avoid duplication of efforts. The integration of the DOL's system into the Worksource portal should positively benefit both parties.

- d. **Per TEGL 4-23, “strengthening economic self-sufficiency hinges on the ability to obtain good jobs that provide family-sustaining wages and advancement opportunities.” Provide a description of how the area considers and incorporates job quality principles in local service delivery (Further guidance will be received from OWD).**

In the Three Rivers region, job quality principles are integral to the local workforce development plan under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). These principles, essential for fostering economic self-sufficiency, are woven into every aspect of local service delivery. The region defines job quality by focusing on family-sustaining wages, comprehensive benefits, job security, safe working conditions, career advancement opportunities, and work-life balance. Local employers are engaged in a collaborative effort to understand their needs and encourage the adoption of these job quality standards. Partnerships are developed with businesses committed to high job quality, and these exemplary employers are promoted as models for others.

Workforce training programs are aligned with high-demand, high-quality jobs, incorporating both technical and soft skills to enhance employability and opportunities for advancement. Continuous learning opportunities are provided to ensure workers can adapt to changing job requirements and progress in their careers. Comprehensive support services, such as childcare, transportation, and financial counseling, are offered to help workers maintain employment and achieve self-sufficiency. Additionally, mentorship and career coaching guide job seekers through career pathways leading to high-quality jobs.

Job matching and placement services use data-driven approaches to align job seekers with quality job opportunities that fit their skills and career goals. The focus is on creating a good fit between employers and employees, going beyond merely filling vacancies. Policy advocacy plays a crucial role, with efforts directed towards promoting higher wages, better working conditions, and comprehensive benefits at the local and

state levels. Local governments are engaged to create incentives for businesses that maintain high job quality standards.

Regular evaluation and continuous improvement of workforce programs ensure their effectiveness in promoting job quality. Feedback from workers and employers will be collected to refine service delivery, and strategies are adjusted based on labor market trends and the evolving needs of the workforce. Collaboration with educational institutions ensures that curricula align with the skills required for high-quality jobs, and apprenticeship and internship programs provide hands-on experience leading to full-time employment.

Community outreach campaigns inform the public about the importance of job quality and the resources available through workforce development programs. These efforts engage underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, ensuring equitable access to high-quality jobs. Technology platforms are utilized for job matching, skills assessment, and tracking career progress, while online training modules offer flexible learning options for job seekers. Through these comprehensive strategies, the Three Rivers region aims to create an environment where individuals can secure high-quality jobs, contributing to long-term economic self-sufficiency and community prosperity.

- e. **How will the area/region leverage the historic infrastructure investments through the following pieces of legislation (IIJA/BIL, CHIPS, and IRA)? While most of the work will be conducted at the State-level to create partnerships and identify connections with the public workforce system, local awareness and involvement in these projects is crucial for their success.**

The Three Rivers region in Georgia plans to leverage the historic infrastructure investments made through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA/BIL), the CHIPS and Science Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) by fostering local awareness and involvement, which are crucial for the success of these initiatives. While much of the coordination will occur at the state level, the local workforce development

board will play a significant role in ensuring that these investments benefit the region's workforce and communities.

To begin with, the region will collaborate closely with state-level entities to understand the specific projects and opportunities that these legislative acts bring. This involves participating in state-led meetings, workshops, and training sessions to stay informed about funding allocations, project timelines, and partnership opportunities. The local workforce board will disseminate this information through regular communications with local stakeholders, including businesses, educational institutions, community organizations, and local government agencies.

A key strategy will be to align workforce development programs with the skills and occupations needed for these infrastructure projects. This includes updating training curricula and expanding apprenticeship and internship programs to cover areas such as advanced manufacturing, semiconductor production, renewable energy, and broadband expansion. By working with local educational institutions and training providers, the region will ensure that the workforce is prepared to meet the demands of these projects. This will not only provide immediate employment opportunities but also equip workers with skills that are valuable for long-term career growth.

Furthermore, the region will actively promote these infrastructure projects to local employers and job seekers. This involves organizing job fairs, information sessions, and outreach campaigns to raise awareness about the job opportunities and benefits associated with these investments. The local workforce board will collaborate with employers to identify their workforce needs and facilitate connections with qualified job seekers. Special attention will be given to engaging underrepresented and disadvantaged groups, ensuring that the benefits of these investments are equitably distributed across the community.

To maximize the impact of the IIJA/BIL, CHIPS, and IRA, the region will also focus on building partnerships with local governments, non-profit organizations, and industry associations. These partnerships will help in leveraging additional resources, sharing best practices, and coordinating efforts to address any challenges that may arise during

project implementation. By creating a network of stakeholders committed to the success of these initiatives, the region can foster a collaborative environment that supports economic growth and workforce development.

Moreover, the local workforce board will implement robust monitoring and evaluation processes to track the progress of these initiatives and their impact on the local economy and workforce. This involves collecting data on job placements, training outcomes, and employer satisfaction, and using this information to continuously improve service delivery. Regular reports and updates will be provided to stakeholders to maintain transparency and accountability.

In summary, the Three Rivers region will leverage the historic infrastructure investments from the IIJA/BIL, CHIPS, and IRA by aligning workforce development programs with the needs of these projects, promoting opportunities to local employers and job seekers, building strategic partnerships, and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation processes. By doing so, the region aims to ensure that these investments lead to sustainable economic growth and a skilled, resilient workforce.

4. **Regional Service Delivery** – (Only applies to regions that encompass two or more local areas) Describe how the region will address the items listed below.
 - a. Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements (if applicable).
 - b. Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs (if applicable).

The TRWDB is the only local area in the region.

5. Sector Strategy Development – Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.

a. Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.

The Three Rivers region is focusing on developing sector strategies for in-demand industries, including advanced manufacturing, healthcare, transportation/logistics, and information technology. Potential partners in this development include local employers, educational institutions such as technical colleges and universities, workforce development agencies, economic development organizations, and community-based organizations. These partners collaborate to align training programs with industry needs, ensuring a skilled workforce that meets the demands of local employers and supports regional economic growth. The TRWDB staff plans to seek out partnerships with additional training and education providers to include the university system and private providers of healthcare training programs in the region. The TRWDB plans to recruit additional partners, industry leaders, local chambers of commerce, and K-12 Career, Technical and Agricultural Education representatives.

b. Describe the meetings that have taken place and the strategy by which partners will continue to be engaged.

The healthcare sector partnership has had one in person meeting and a virtual meeting during PY23. We have also hosted an in person and virtual meeting with the technology focus group. TRWDB program staff have maintained communication with the partners and recently identified a staff member to lead the sector strategy effort. Staff and key partners are currently planning the next phase of sector strategy development.

c. Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.

The research and data used to identify sectors for strategy training in the Three Rivers region included labor market analysis, employer surveys, and economic trend reports. Key sources of data were the Georgia Department of Labor, the U.S. Bureau of Labor

Statistics, and local economic development reports. These analyses highlighted growth trends, skill gaps, and employment projections, leading to the selection of advanced manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, logistics, and information technology as focus areas for workforce development initiatives.

In the Three Rivers region, traditional labor market information (LMI) data indicates increases in demand for several job positions. Notably, there is a growing need for healthcare professionals, especially registered nurses and medical assistants, due to the region's aging population. Additionally, the logistics and manufacturing sectors are expanding, leading to increased demand for truck drivers, production workers, and industrial machinery mechanics.

d. Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:

- i. **Participating employers:** The TRWDB staff are working to develop and bring on board participating employers in the healthcare, technology, and manufacturing industry to support this initiative.
- ii. **Target occupations:** Patient Care Technicians, Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses, Ambulatory Services staff, Medical Office staff, Medical Records, Information Technicians, Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Workers, Clinical staff, Maintenance Mechanics, Machine Operators, etc.
- iii. **Training programs:** Programs will be identified during Sector Partnership meetings and group sessions.
- iv. **Target Populations:** Adults, dislocated workers, disengaged youth, ex-offenders, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Utilizing our strong partnerships and referral networks, TRWDB is able to locate and engage the above individuals in trainings and job placement assistance, customized to their unique needs.

- e. **Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.**

The current focus is the successful launch and sustainability of the healthcare, technology sector partnership. We will continue to work with the manufacturing and logistics sector. Through community engagement with local healthcare providers, including WellStar, Tanner, and the healthcare industry has been identified as an in-demand industry in our region. Employers have expressed difficulty in locating qualified talent in the areas of Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Registered Nurse (RN), and Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). We will focus on creating a career pathway for individuals through ITAs, OJTs, and IWT opportunities.

The local area was approved for additional sector partnership grant funds, and will leverage the funding to expand their manufacturing, logistics, technology, and healthcare sector partnerships. Figure 12 illustrates the process that the TRWDB will utilize to launch future sector partnerships.

Figure 12. Sector Strategy Implementation



6. **Description of the One-Stop Delivery System** – Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.
 - a. **Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.**

TRWDB staff ensure the quality performance of service providers on a quarterly basis by reviewing exits, related employment, and job seekers' comments during follow-up interviews. Performance of all training institutions with WIOA-enrolled participants is

monitored annually, and institutions may be removed from the approved provider list if monitoring reveals poor performance or non-compliance. Staff also review LMI and present it to the TRWDB to ensure the training offered continues to meet the economic conditions and workforce needs of businesses in the region.

In partnership with the regional technical colleges, the TRWDB works to ensure its training programs meet the needs of local employers. Additionally, one-stop operators communicate TRWDB strategic objectives to partners and providers to ensure services are focused on these priorities.

- b. Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.**

The one-stop delivery system will serve as the nexus for service delivery in the Three Rivers region. The one-stop centers will ensure that clients from across the region have access to the services they need to prepare for and find employment with a sustaining wage. The local area will continue to utilize its mobile units to provide services in areas of the region that do not have access to one-stop locations. The mobile units have computer labs with capabilities for testing, completion applications for services with workforce development and/or partner agencies, and completion of applications for employment opportunities within the region. The mobile unit goes to each of the communities in the region that do not have access to a comprehensive or affiliate one stop career center. We plan to reestablish a schedule to share with community partners. Additionally, the mobile unit schedule will be shared via social media outlets managed by the LWDA. The TRWDB will utilize technology to provide access to internet and online platforms in rural communities in the region. The mobile units' internet access has been tested in multiple areas in the region's rural communities. The mobile units are equip and able to give opportunities in rural communities that struggle with access to broadband access.

- c. Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with**

WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and partners, ensure compliance with WIOA § 188 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by implementing several key measures to maintain physical and programmatic accessibility for individuals with disabilities.

1. **Physical Accessibility:** One-stop centers are designed and modified to be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities. This includes barrier-free access to buildings, appropriate signage, accessible restrooms, and workstations designed to accommodate wheelchairs. Regular audits and assessments are conducted to ensure facilities meet ADA standards and any necessary improvements are promptly addressed.
2. **Programmatic Accessibility:** Programs and services are tailored to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities. This includes providing accessible formats for all program materials, such as large print, Braille, and electronic formats compatible with screen readers. Services are designed to be inclusive, ensuring that individuals with disabilities have equal opportunities to participate in all programs.
3. **Technology and Materials:** Assistive technologies are available at one-stop centers to support individuals with disabilities. This includes screen readers, magnification software, and adaptive keyboards. Training materials and program content are provided in accessible formats, ensuring that all individuals can benefit from the services offered.
4. **Staff Training and Support:** Comprehensive training programs for staff are implemented to raise awareness and enhance their ability to serve individuals with disabilities. This includes training on ADA compliance, effective communication

strategies, and the use of assistive technologies. Staff are equipped to provide individualized support and accommodations as needed.

5. Addressing Needs of Individuals with Disabilities: One-stop centers actively engage with community organizations and disability advocacy groups to identify and address the unique needs of individuals with disabilities. This collaboration ensures that services are continuously improved and aligned with best practices for accessibility.

6. Continuous Improvement: Feedback mechanisms are established to allow individuals with disabilities to provide input on their experiences and suggest improvements. This feedback is used to make ongoing enhancements to facilities, programs, and services to better serve all customers.

These measures ensure that the one-stop delivery system provides an inclusive environment where individuals with disabilities can access the resources and support they need to achieve their employment goals.

Additionally, the TRWDB partners with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) to provide assistive technology for one-stop centers. GVRA also provides technical assistance and information to partners and providers on accessibility requirements. Having GVRA as a mandatory partner; and partner that actively participates in the One-Stop delivery system and TRWDB leverages the local area's ability to be at the forefront of conversations surrounding accessibility.

d. Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.

One-stop partners play crucial roles in the operation and success of a One-Stop Career Center, which is designed to provide a comprehensive array of employment and training services to job seekers and employers alike. These partners typically include various agencies, organizations, and entities that collaborate to offer a wide range of resources. Here's a comprehensive description of their roles and resource contributions:

1. Government Agencies:

- State Workforce Agencies (SWAs): SWAs administer unemployment insurance and job placement services, ensuring compliance with federal and state regulations.
- Department of Labor (DOL): Provides funding, oversight, and policy guidance to ensure consistent service delivery across One-Stop Career Centers nationwide.
- Social Services Agencies: Offer support services like food assistance, housing support, and childcare subsidies to eligible job seekers.

2. Educational Institutions:

- Community Colleges and Universities: Provide vocational training, certification programs, and degree courses aligned with local labor market needs.
- Adult Education Providers: Offer basic literacy, GED preparation, and English language instruction to enhance job seekers' employability.

3. Workforce Development Boards (WDBs):

- Coordinate local workforce development efforts, oversee One-Stop operations, and allocate federal and state funding to partner agencies.
- Ensure that services are tailored to meet the needs of employers and job seekers in the region.

4. Employment Services:

- Job Corps Centers: Provide comprehensive career development services to disadvantaged youth, including job training, education, and supportive services.
- Vocational Rehabilitation Agencies: Assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining and maintaining employment through counseling, training, and job placement services.

5. Nonprofit Organizations and Community-Based Agencies:

- Job Training Programs: Offer specialized training in industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, IT, and hospitality.
- Career Counseling Services: Provide personalized guidance on career exploration, resume writing, interview preparation, and job search strategies.
- Job Placement Services: Facilitate connections between job seekers and employers through job fairs, networking events, and online job boards.

6. Businesses and Employers:

- Industry Associations: Partner to identify skill gaps, develop training programs, and connect job seekers with employment opportunities.
- Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs): Offer entrepreneurial training, business counseling, and access to financing for aspiring business owners.

7. Technology and Infrastructure Providers:

- Information Technology (IT) Support: Maintain and upgrade the One-Stop Career Center's technological infrastructure, including computer labs, internet access, and job search databases.
- Data Management Services: Collect, analyze, and report performance metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of workforce development programs and improve service delivery.

In summary, One-Stop partners collaborate to create a seamless network of resources that address the diverse needs of job seekers and employers. By leveraging their unique expertise and resources, these partners enhance the effectiveness of workforce development initiatives and contribute to economic growth and prosperity in their communities.

The LWDA has a memorandum of understanding (MOU)/resource sharing agreement (RSA) that is shared with the partner agencies. All mandatory and additional one-stop partners are parties to the MOU/RSA. The exact contributions and roles of the one-stop partners are detailed in the MOU/RSA between the one-stop partners and the TRWDB.

- e. Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.**

GDOL served as the previous one-stop operator for the region. The local area has 1 comprehensive one-stop career center (Griffin GDOL), and 3 affiliate one-stop career centers. of the career centers (Carrollton, LaGrange, and WorkSource Three Rivers Mobile Unit). In accordance with WIOA and state policy, the TRWDB plans to conduct a competitive process to procure one-stop operators in Fiscal Year 2025.

Local area staff members are currently preparing for the upcoming competitive one-stop operator procurement by conducting market research, talking with local areas that have completed successful procurements, collecting request-for-proposal (RFP) documents, and refining the requirements and scope of work. The local area will develop cost and price analyses by identifying similar areas (e.g., population, geography, economic conditions), analyzing their service delivery costs, and developing reasonable cost estimates. The TRWDB will also leverage technical assistance provided by the state to ensure a quality one-stop operator selection process.

7. Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts – Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.

The Three Rivers Workforce Development Board (TRWDB) follows the Three Rivers Regional Commission (TRRC) procurement policies. Before procuring a good or service, TRWDB administrative staff determines the appropriate procurement method based on the definitions for the types of procurement outlined in the TRRC procurement policies. The TRWDB commonly uses the Request for Proposal (RFP) and Sealed Bid procurement methods for awarding contracts.

When awarding sub-grants to Adult, Dislocated Worker, or Youth service providers, admin staff seeks the approval from the appropriate committee(s) (Executive Committee—or Youth Committee—Youth Services) to procure services. TRWDB staff develops a RFP outlining the desired services based on the WIOA law and Federal and State policies and regulations. After the RFP is drafted, it is sent to the TRRC's program and administrative personnel for review, and made available to the public through the TRRC's website for a minimum of two weeks. The TRRC also utilizes the Georgia Local Government Access Marketplace (GLGA.org), Items for Bid section, to solicit bidders for services.

Each committee forms an ad-hoc Review Committee made up of committee members and/or community representatives who are responsible for reading and scoring each proposal for merit using an evaluation tool that determines how well each question was answered. The ad-hoc committee also includes members of the TRWDB Leadership Team (Finance Coordinator, Workforce Director, and the appropriate Program Manager). Once the RFP closes, admin staff conducts a technical review and forwards the proposals to the appropriate Review Committee members for individual evaluation. After the proposals are individually reviewed and scored the Review Committee meets to deliberate and determine what recommendation will be made to the full committee. The Executive or Youth committee votes on the recommendation, as necessary, that is presented to the full Board for discussion and approval.

The criteria for selecting the winning proposal is not based solely on price; it also includes factors such as a vendor's financial capacity, technical expertise, experience in the service or commodity being requested, facilities and support, ongoing training, and many other factors. The award criteria are listed in the RFP and may be evaluated by a committee of several individuals instrumental in developing the RFP. An RFP allows for a process of negotiating the conditions of an offer prior to contract execution.

Admin staff places the TRWDB's final approval of the service provider selection on the TRRC Council agenda for ratification and approval pursuant to the Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEO) Consortium and Joint Working Agreement.

After TRRC Council approval, the Bidder/Service Provider is issued a letter of intent, after which the Service Provider enters into contract negotiations with designated admin staff, if applicable/needed.

When an equitable agreement has been reached between both parties, a contract between the service provider and the TRWDB is developed, and signed by the service provider, TRWDB Chair, TRRC Executive Director, TRRC Council Chair and the TRWDB Workforce Director, if applicable, for full execution as the final phase of the competitive process.

8. EEO and Grievance Procedures – Briefly describe local procedures and staffing to address grievances and complaint resolution.

When a complaint is received, regardless of topic, the complaint is forwarded to the Equal Opportunity Officer for documentation and resolution. The Equal Opportunity

Officer will work with the complainant and other parties to resolve the complaint. The TRWDB's Grievance and Complaints Procedure is included as Attachment 6. The Equal Opportunity Officer for the local area is Mandy Nicholson.

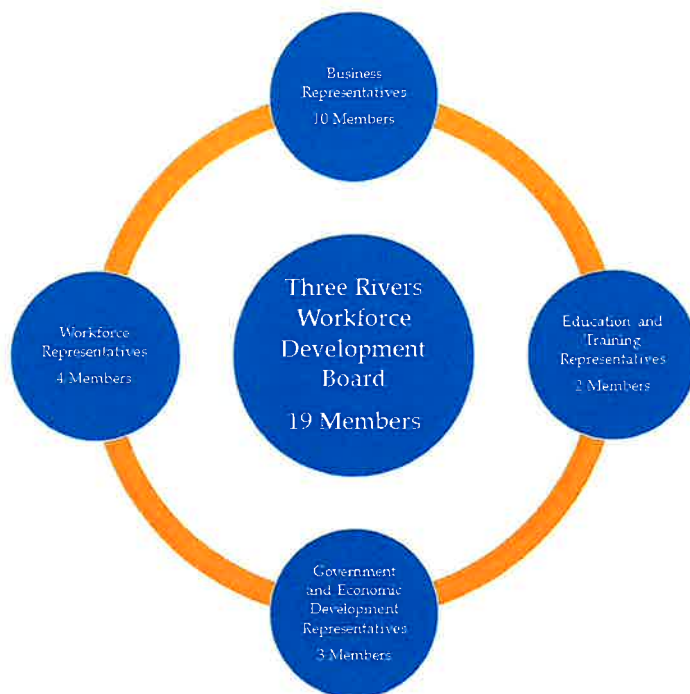
Each one-stop center has an agreed-upon complaint procedure and has identified a staff person to receive and resolve complaints.

Local Boards and Plan Development

1. **Local Boards** – Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below.
 - a. Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g))

Local board members are identified and selected in accordance with the TRWDB's Chief Elected Officials Organization By-Laws. Figure 13 illustrates the current board membership structure. Attachment 1 includes the current board roster.

Figure 13. Board Membership Structure



One Business Representative is selected from each of the 10 counties in the region. The county commission chair and one of the county's mayors are responsible for identifying a local employer representative to serve on the TRWDB when there is a vacancy in the seat. The remaining board members are appointed by the Chief Local Elected Official. The Adult Education Representative is selected from the two adult education providers in the local area. The Labor Representatives are appointed in consultation with the Georgia AFL-CIO.

b. Describe the area's new member orientation process for board members.

Each new board member is provided a two-page job description that details the roles, expectations, and guidelines for board members. The Workforce Director schedules a meeting with each new board member to review the job description and answer any questions about serving on the workforce board. Formal training is scheduled if more

than one new board member joins at the same time. TRWDB staff is continuously reviewing the member orientation booklet.

- c. **Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).**

The TRWDB aims to forge a stronger relationship with economic development activities in the region. The board will coordinate and align workforce development investments with economic development by establishing clear lines of communication, ensuring that economic development professionals understand the TRWDB service offerings, and engaging regularly with development authorities and other economic development organizations. The local area will also engage economic development professionals in current and future sector partnership activities.

Economic development professionals were identified as a key stakeholder group for engaging in the plan development process. The Workforce Director, Program Services Manager, and Business Operations Manager all attend and participate in economic development meetings in the local region on a regular basis.

- d. **Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed.**

Members of the TRWDB are engaged through several mediums throughout the year. The TRWDB aims to have engaged board members who fulfill the strategic, leadership, and oversight roles established by WIOA. First, each board member is provided meeting packets in advance of meetings to allow for informed action. Second, the board has a robust committee structure to engage members between the bi-monthly meetings. Committees typically meet in non-board meeting months to keep members engaged. Third, TRWDB is planning a half-day planning workshop/retreat to engage board members in shaping the future strategic direction of the organization.

2. Local Board Committees – Provide a description of board committees and their functions.

Committees serve a crucial role in engaging board members and accomplishing the strategic vision of the workforce board. Table 10 describes the current TRWDB committees.

Table 10. Three Rivers Workforce Development Board Committee Structure

Committee	Function
Executive Committee	This committee has the authority to conduct business on behalf of the TRWDB. This committee also performs the function of reviewing the budget.
Governance	This committee is responsible for overseeing and reviewing the governance structures and practices of the TRWDB.
One-Stop	The One-Stop Committee is responsible for the oversight and leadership of the local area's comprehensive one-stop program. It reviews each center's operations, oversees the resource sharing agreement, tracks performance, and manages the certification process.
Youth	The Youth Committee is responsible for the leadership and oversight of the youth program. It oversees the youth program contracts and youth program delivery and reviews and makes recommendations on the youth program budget.

3. **Plan Development** – Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30 day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representatives of education and input into the development of the local plan.

The local plan development process was designed to maximize stakeholder input, ensure that the plan represents the interests and needs of the region, and ultimately produce a strategic action plan that will impact human capital needs in the region and improve the lives of individuals and families through jobs. Figure 15 displays the key elements that comprised the local plan development process.

Figure 15. Local Plan Development Process Elements



The key stakeholders in the plan development process were: local employers, board members, GDOL, GVRA, adult education leaders, local elected officials, labor organizations, chambers of commerce, local economic development organizations, social/supportive service agencies, and K-12 and post-secondary education. The staff was critical in hosting meeting and discussions around workforce development needs and this information was updated to reflect the region's current workforce state.

The plan development process involved: interviews with staff, a review of prior planning efforts; a review of LMI, and a public comment period. The local area plans to have a summit and to gain more input from stakeholders in the Fall to support and add additional details to the plan prior to final submission.

Public comments and feedback will be solicited through multiple mediums. The draft plan will be posted on the TRWDB website for review. Notification of the comment period will be pushed out through outreach to mandatory partners, social media, and email to key stakeholders.

Service Delivery and Training

- 1. Equity in Service Delivery and Educational Programming- Provide a description of how the area will develop education, training, and career service strategies that better address and promote equity in recruitment, service design, implementation, and support services to improve access and outcomes for individuals in such communities.**

To develop education, training, and career service strategies that better address and promote equity in the Three Rivers region, a multifaceted approach is necessary. Our approach will focus on recruitment, service design, implementation, and support services to improve access and outcomes for individuals from underserved and marginalized communities. Here is a comprehensive description of how the area plans to achieve this:

Recruitment Strategies: The region will implement targeted recruitment strategies to reach underrepresented groups, including racial and ethnic minorities, women, individuals with disabilities, veterans, and those from low-income backgrounds. Outreach efforts will include partnerships with community organizations, faith-based groups, and local nonprofits that serve these populations. Additionally, the use of social media, local media outlets, and community events will help disseminate information about available programs and opportunities.

Service Design: The design of education, training, and career services will be inclusive and responsive to the needs of diverse populations. This involves conducting needs assessments and gathering input from community stakeholders to identify barriers to access and participation. Programs will be tailored to address these barriers, such as providing flexible scheduling for working adults, offering training in multiple languages, and ensuring that facilities are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Implementation: Equity in service delivery will be ensured through the implementation of culturally competent practices. Staff will receive ongoing training in cultural competence, implicit bias, and inclusive practices to better serve diverse populations. Programs will also incorporate mentorship and peer support components to provide additional guidance and encouragement for participants from underrepresented groups. Moreover, collaborations with local employers will help create pathways for individuals to gain meaningful employment upon completion of their training.

Support Services: Comprehensive support services are critical to promoting equity and improving outcomes. The region will provide a range of support services, including childcare, transportation assistance, financial counseling, and access to mental health resources, etc. These services help address the socio-economic barriers that often hinder participation and completion of education and training programs. Additionally, career counseling and job placement services will be tailored to meet the unique needs of each individual, helping them navigate their career paths and secure sustainable employment.

Monitoring and Evaluation: To ensure that equity goals are being met, the region will implement monitoring and evaluation processes. This includes collecting and analyzing data on program participation, completion rates, and employment outcomes disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, disability status, and other relevant factors. Regular feedback from participants will be solicited to identify areas for improvement and to make necessary adjustments to programs and services. Continuous improvement efforts will be guided by this data to ensure that the strategies remain effective and responsive to the needs of the community.

Community Engagement: Engaging the community in the planning and decision-making process is vital for promoting equity. The region will establish advisory groups and working groups that include representatives from diverse communities to provide input and guidance on program development and implementation. Public forums and listening sessions will also be conducted to gather broader community feedback and ensure transparency in the process.

Collaboration with Educational Institutions: Partnerships with local schools, colleges, and universities will be strengthened to create seamless pathways from education to employment. These institutions will work together to develop curricula that align with the needs of the local labor market and provide students with the skills required for high-demand jobs. Special initiatives, such as dual enrollment programs and career and technical education (CTE) pathways, will be expanded to provide more opportunities for underrepresented students.

Leveraging Technology: The use of technology will play a crucial role in promoting equity. Hopefully online and hybrid learning options will be expanded to increase access to education and training programs for individuals who may face geographical or time constraints. Additionally, technology will be used to enhance service delivery through virtual career counseling, online job fairs, and digital literacy training.

By implementing these strategies, the Three Rivers region aims to create a more equitable workforce development system that provides all individuals with the opportunities and support they need to succeed. This comprehensive approach ensures

that education, training, and career services are accessible, inclusive, and effective in improving outcomes for everyone in the community.

2. **Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals** – Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co- enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry-recognized.

Outreach is one of the most important ways the TRWDB staff is working to expand access to employment, training, education, and social/supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

The TRWDB has been working with training providers/technical colleges who has a strong background in assisting ex-offenders. These providers have been able to assist the board in finding employment for ex-offenders in welding, an occupation that has not typically been open to them in the past. The board is also planning to work with several local organizations to help employers better understand the benefits of hiring returning citizens, how to insure or bond these individuals, the skills they may bring to the position, and how to better understand the information in a background check.

The board is exploring partnership opportunities to promote targeted job fairs for individuals with barriers to employment. Based on feedback, the TRWDB is also working on ways to incorporate targeted information sessions for other stakeholders, such as economic developers and business and industry, to educate them about the important and vital work that the TRWDB does.

Case Managers are working with youth who have gone through career pathways in school. Once these youth have graduated, the TRWDB is working to help them attain employment more quickly.

As a result of employer feedback, the board will continue to expand and emphasize training on soft skills. Soft skills have been identified by employers as a significant issue in both recruiting and employee retention.

3. Description of Service to Adults and Dislocated Workers – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

For Adult and Dislocated Workers, the TRWDB provides three tiers of service:

1. Self-Service
2. Basic Career Services
3. Individualized Training Services

The first level of service provided to Adult and Dislocated Workers within the local area is Self-Service. Self-Service is available to any citizen in the community. WIOA staff are available at the One-Stop Career Centers — Carrollton, Griffin, or LaGrange. Basic Services include LMI, assistance with resources provided by GDOL (e.g., computers, copier, fax machines), orientation to the one-stop system and other services available through WIOA, and referrals to other agencies for public assistance or other services. The TRWDB also has mobile units that are deployed to remote or more rural areas and counties. These mobile units only provide WIOA services, whereas an individual may receive GDOL services at the One-Stop Career Centers.

WIOA services are intended to be more extensive when customers cannot get a job through Self-Service. Participants who remain unemployed or are determined to lack self-sufficiency can access Basic Career Services. Basic Career Services may include a comprehensive assessment, development of an Individual Employment Plan (IEP), intensive job development, career counseling, soft skills development, and more. Customers with unique needs, such as veterans or ex-offenders, are identified and offered specialized resources during case management with a Case Manager. During case management, an IEP is developed for program or training services.

Under WIOA, it is no longer necessary for a participant to fail to secure employment prior to receiving training services. Individuals who lack marketable skills may be referred to Individualized Training Services. Individualized Training Services are funded by WIOA and include Occupational Skills Training, OJT, Skill Upgrading/Re-Training, and others. Options for training are determined on an individual basis and are implemented based on need, prior experience, and marketable skills.

4. Description of Rapid Response Services – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The TRWDB has a standard method of handling Rapid Response services in response to plant closings and downsizing. The Business Services division staff handles coordination of all Rapid Response activities with TCSG. TCSG staff ensure that all mandatory partners are aware of a Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notice. If the staff finds out that a business is closing without having issued a WARN notice, TCSG will contact both the closing business to offer Rapid Response services as well as notifying workforce staff.

If the company accepts the Rapid Response services for its employees, TCSG develops potential information sessions for individuals affected by the layoffs or closures. Even if the company does not accept the services, all efforts are exhausted to make the company aware that the services are free and how they benefit the workers. All coordination efforts are disclosed with state Rapid Response coordinators and partners. Follow-up is conducted to ensure that services are provided to all companies for which a WARN notice is issued.

The TRWDB may approve use of Rapid Response funds to assist with transition for affected workers. This can include professional services, in addition to WIOA services, for job search, resume preparation, financial counseling, counseling to deal with a layoff, and other services.

5. Description of Youth Services – Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

The Three Rivers Region serves only out-of-school youth (OSY). Out-of-school youth eligible for WIOA services are 16-24 years old, have dropped out of high school, do not have a GED or high school diploma, and are not currently employed or enrolled in post-secondary education.

All Youth Services have been moved in-house, and the staff providing services are staff of the fiscal agent. The TRWDB contracted out youth services in previous years, and have experienced a lack of performance in the local area by the contractors providing services in the region. The activities provided to youth include mentoring; tutoring; referral to other services, such as counseling; work experience; internships; job shadowing; employability skill training, including resume writing, computer research skills, and others; and financial literacy. The goal is for the youth to explore different careers and to help them figure out what they want to do after they have gained employability skills. All activities are available to individuals with disabilities.

Once basic eligibility is determined, the youth are assessed for the types of services they need and an IEP is created. After creating an IEP, the youth looking for employment are taught soft skills. Based on feedback from local employers and other partners, the TRWDB is looking to expand and improve soft skills training offerings. Soft skills have been identified as one of the biggest barriers to employment. Youth must successfully complete this training before moving on to work experience.

To encourage more youth to take advantage of work experience, the TRWDB extended the amount of time out-of-school youth could participate in work experience from 240 to 480 hours. Additionally, the board increased the hourly wage from \$8.50 to \$10.00, with an opportunity for a raise upon successfully completing the first 240 hours. The timing of their incentive program was also adjusted to better align with WIOA and the

needs of out-of-school youth. The TRWDB staff are continuously reviewing policies to ensure that we have a successful work experience program.

During the youth's work experience, the TRWDB receives evaluations from the employers. If the youth need improvement, the TRWDB will work to get them mentoring or counseling. The TRWDB works to ensure a youth receives adequate counseling before termination. Upon completion of the work experiences, the youth receives a final evaluation to see if they showed growth from the midpoint to the end of their work experience. The TRWDB has found this model to be successful, in that many youth have been offered unsubsidized employment by the sponsor company upon completion of the work experience.

For those seeking post-secondary education, the TRWDB uses assessments that help the youth explore their interests and the types of education they need or might want, and then works with the youth to schedule tours of post-secondary institutions, helps them fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and any college applications, obtain transcripts, and provide any other necessary tools and tips. The TRWDB provides financial assistance for youth as they apply for admission.

The TRWDB staff also bring in guest speakers to put on workshops on teen pregnancy, parenting/family health, entrepreneurship, and other subjects. Upon completion of each workshop, the youth receive a certificate.

Once youth obtain unsubsidized employment on their own or enter post-secondary education, they are exited from the program and the TRWDB conducts a 12-month follow-up. The TRWDB will not exit out-of-school youth from the program until they have successfully gained employment, earned their GED, or entered post-secondary education. This ensures that the youth are self-sufficient prior to exiting the program.

The Three Rivers region offers a comprehensive range of youth workforce development activities, including job readiness training, career exploration programs, internships, apprenticeships, and support services tailored for youth with disabilities. Successful models include inclusive training programs and partnerships with local businesses,

educational institutions, and organizations such as Job Corps and Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab), which provide hands-on experience, mentorship opportunities, and specialized support. These initiatives equip young individuals with the skills and resources needed for successful career pathways.

6. **Implementation of Work-Based Learning Initiatives – Provide a description of how the area will 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 employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.**

The TRWDB has recently undertaken a number of steps to implement and improve work-based learning initiatives. One of these initiatives is to create a sliding pay scale for OJT so that smaller employers in the local area receive a larger wage reimbursement. Employers with 50 or fewer employees may receive up to 75% wage reimbursement; employers with 51-250 employees may receive up to 65%; and employers with 251 or more employees, up to 50%. The board determined that this sliding scale was appropriate for their area.

For Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), the board has utilized IWT training as an opportunity to support existing industry in the region. Since the last regional plan, the LWDA has applied for additional funding for IWT projects through TCSG. Projects have included Vernay, 1888 Mills, American Woodmark, and US Beverage. The local area is working to develop additional IWT projects, and continues to promote these projects.

In the area of Customized Training, each training is developed around employer needs, such as the manufacturing certificate. The board has taken the view that customized training and continuing education programs are not just about receiving credit for training but also about economic development and improving the whole community.

The board plans to continue to implement customized training programs through agreements and/or contracts with training providers in partnership with local employers.

7. Provision of ITAs – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA § 134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are provided to individuals seeking and recommended for training assistance through review and evaluation by the Case Managers (CMs). ITAs are utilized if a CM identifies that an individual needs training services to obtain employment, or to increase skill sets to obtain a higher wage. The TRWDB has established a \$10,000 annual funding limit per customer for ITAs.

A customer determined eligible to receive WIOA-funded training may, after consultation with a CM, select a provider from the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Currently, ITAs are provided under two technical college contracts. These contracts allow staff to review and create ITAs under policies established by the TRWDB.

Customers receive labor market information during orientation, and additional information is provided during review of assessments and during individual appointments with the CMs at each of the one-stops in the region. Information and counseling focus on in-demand occupations in the region, allowing customers to make informed decisions on training opportunities that will result in quality employment opportunities.

CMs assist youth in choosing appropriate service providers and programs through a comprehensive assessment process. During this process, youth customers are required to complete a training readiness program. The program includes, but is not limited to,

time management skills, financial management, decision-making skills, and study skills. These activities prepare youth for success in post-secondary occupational training.

8. Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services.

Currently, entrepreneurial skills and microenterprise services training are primarily provided through Youth Services as the demand is noted in these customers. Youth Services contractors typically bring in speakers to talk about entrepreneurship. TRWDB will assess additional opportunities for supporting and developing entrepreneurial skills and microenterprise skills.

For Adult and Dislocated Workers, staff refer clients to local resources that provide entrepreneurship and microenterprise services. Referral partners include the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center, local small business development courses sponsored by the Small Business Administration, SCORE Atlanta, local chamber small business administration, and downtown development authority finance programs. Staff will identify and share free and low-cost training courses (in-person and webinars) offered by partner organizations with interested participants. TRWDB will also support developing entrepreneurship skills through skills development programs ITAs from the ETPL.

9. Coordination with Education Programs – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services.

The Three Rivers Workforce Development Board will serve as the region's convener around workforce development. This important role will involve close partnership and coordinated with secondary and post-secondary education. These partners include 11

school districts, two Technical College System of Georgia institutions, and two University System of Georgia institutions.

The TRWDB works closely with local technical colleges to provide training opportunities to meet the demands of employers in the region. The area's technical colleges serve as a key training partner for TRWDB and serve the largest number of ITA participants. The local area collaborates with TCSG institution leaders, including academic affairs, economic development, deans, and instructors, to ensure that credit and non-credit courses meet the region's needs. The relationship ensures that the institutions have in-demand programs that include the hard skills and soft skills required by key employers. TRWDB has productive and long-standing relationships with the area's two technical colleges.

The Three Rivers region is home to 11 school districts and several college and career academies. The local area works cooperatively with these K-12 workforce development programs to align curriculum, share resources, and work cooperatively to build a talent pipeline. For example, TRWDB staff members have participated in manufacturing days hosted by K-12 education and the college and career academies in the region. As a result of the information provided at these events, there have been discussions about ways the TRWDB can partner with youth in secondary education — either through apprenticeship, or by providing access to continued training after completion of studies at a college and career academy.

The local area can use its convening role to bring the region's educational providers to the table to work cooperatively to meet the region's workforce needs. No single educational institution can meet the workforce development needs. TRWDB continue to involve educational institution leaders in regional strategic planning efforts related to workforce development.

10. **Description of Supportive Services** – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

Payments for supportive services are available for qualified registrants in Individualized Training Services and/or classroom training and to out-of-school youth who are attending classroom-type training. Registrants must be making satisfactory progress in their training course to receive the payments.

Transportation

The TRWDB recognizes that transportation is an essential component of workforce development and that transportation in west central Georgia is a significant barrier to successfully completing training and obtaining employment. The board may directly fund and/or purchase transportation resources for individuals or an identified group of trainees. Such circumstances typically include occasions where a number of participants are attending the same training institution, program, or class; occasions when a training provider is making special arrangements to provide training for a particular group; individuals with disabilities requiring special transportation arrangements; and others. Funding transportation in these or other circumstances may be provided if the TRWDB determines that the services/activities are needed and will improve participants' opportunities to successfully complete training and obtain employment.

Contractors who provide Youth Services can purchase vouchers from the Three Rivers Regional Commission in certain counties so that youth can get back and forth to their meetings/work/testing. The TRWDB is investigating the expansion of these services to counties that do not have transportation. Transportation and meals are funded at \$12 per day.

Childcare

The TRWDB funds a variety of other supportive services, primarily childcare. For one child, age 13 or younger who resides in the home of the registrant, reimbursement is limited to \$20 per day. Reimbursement of \$30 per day is available for two or more

children. If both parents are in training, only one parent may receive the childcare reimbursement.

Emergency Auto Repair

Participants may receive a one-time Emergency Auto repair assistance if the repair is deemed as necessary in order for the participant to attend training. The repair must be the most economical option for the participant's transportation needs.

The repair must not exceed a maximum of **\$500.00**. Three (3) repair cost quotes from licensed Auto Repair shops must be provided along with proof of insurance and registration in the participant's name. Copies must be maintained in the participant's file and the WorkSource portal. WIOA funding will be used to pay for the least expensive quote. Payments will be made directly to the Auto Repair shop.

Emergency Utility Assistance

Emergency Utility Assistance payment is available one-time per program enrollment. The assistance must be determined as necessary. Participant must provide the original utility bill the assistance is being requested for. The bill must be in the participant's name or legal spouse's name (listed on Family Composition) for the address listed on the WIOA case. Payments will be submitted directly to the utility company for the amount of the bill not exceeding a maximum of **\$350.00**.

Emergency Health Care & Medical Services

Emergency Eye glasses or protective eyewear (healthcare) may be provided if there are no other resources available to provide the eyewear, and the customer cannot see.

Broken eyeglasses may be replaced if the customer cannot afford to replace them and cannot attend classes. Payment will be submitted directly to vendor or reimbursed to the participant upon receipt of paid invoice not exceeding a maximum of **\$200.00**.

Payment will only be reimbursed for basic single vision or bifocals, no add-ons such as transition lens, etc.

Other Supportive Services

Other supportive services available for youth clients include teen pregnancy counseling by the health department; medical needs, approved on a case-by-case basis (e.g.,

glasses, dental work, medical exams, shots); training supplies, such as the purchase of books, tools, shoes, uniforms, other occupation-specific equipment, or interview attire; and referral to other services such as counseling and mentoring.

Should funding be limited, the LWDB Director may issue limits and/or priorities for issuance of supportive services to the extent deemed necessary.

10. Coordination with Social Service Programs – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate with social service providers, including SNAP and TANF. The description should include the utilizations of both programs as a referral source.

The LWDA will continue to participate in community meetings that involve social service providers in the region. These meetings include but are not limited to the local area community collaborative groups, community partnership meetings that involve specific community initiatives, drug court/probation working groups, etc.

Currently, the local area works with the local justice involved organizations in some of the counties in the region. In the past, the drug courts have mandated that individuals must job search. These individuals are subject to routine drug screenings, and are required to actively engage in job search efforts provided by the TRWDB staff and One-Stop Operator. Additionally, the local area actively engages with community collaborative groups by speaking on the agenda often, and providing access to our staff for referrals to services.

Local Department of Family and Children Services representatives are provided with the LWDA's information and website for services. The LWDA frequently reaches out for referrals and partnership opportunities. These efforts will continue, as the LWDA works to strengthen this partnership for greater outcomes for both agencies.

Coordination with Core Partners

1. **Description of the Workforce System** – Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

Local Vision and Goals: The mission of the parties within the Workforce Development and the One-Stop System is to design, implement, and manage a seamless system of service delivery focused on the needs and interests of job seekers and employers. A primary goal is to coordinate resources from partner agencies, eliminating duplication, and streamlining services.

The workforce system in the Three Rivers region is made up of core partners and other workforce development programs. Collectively, the core partners represented in the system are the Georgia Department of Labor (unemployment), Technical College System of Georgia (adult education, Wagner-Peyser), and the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency. Additional workforce development programs that comprise the one-stop system in the local area include the Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging (senior employment programs), and Job Corp.

The TRWDB will serve as a regional convener for workforce development activities. This convening role will include the workforce system partners listed above and other organizations that have a role in training the region's talent pool. Other partners include the Carl Perkins-supported programs in the region (Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education programs in local school districts and occupational training programs at West Georgia Technical College and Southern Crescent Technical College). The TRWDB will help bring workforce development stakeholders to the table to develop a coordinated strategic direction, ensure the seamless delivery of services,

reduce duplication, and ultimately better serve the employees and employers in the region. The convener role will also help the board implement and coordinate the implementation of the strategic priorities identified in the state plan (e.g., ex-offenders, veterans, career pathways, sector partnerships).

2. Coordination with Wagner-Peyser – Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

Wagner-Peyser services are delivered by TSCG. They are key partners in the workforce system and in delivering services to clients. The TRWDB works with each GDOL Career Center manager and staff to: coordinate service delivery; ensure that a strong referral network exists; and reduce duplication of services. The key to ensuring seamless service delivery and avoiding duplication over the next four years will be ongoing communication and the implementation of the memorandum of understanding/resource sharing agreement. The Wagner-Peyser program provides job seekers with assessment tools, access to job search assistance, referrals to additional services (including WIOA Title I services), and provides services to businesses (e.g., referrals, job orders, specialized recruitment).

The local workforce area currently partners with Employment Services (ES) in providing workshops within each career center to ensure that all individuals receiving Wagner-Peyser services are provided information regarding WIOA services. Career Centers in our region are a true access point for job seekers to opportunities in addition to Wagner-Peyser. For example, the LWDB staff members in each center are a referral source for training opportunities for individuals receiving Unemployment Compensation. Staff in each center are able to create and develop ITAs. GDOL referrals for training opportunities through the LWDB are routinely done, and often lead to successful performance outcomes for Dislocated Workers seeking assistance, prior to the end of Unemployment Compensation, in the local workforce region. The LWDB

plans to continue a coordinated effort in partnership with GDOL to provide referrals at a specific point in time for someone nearing the end of UI benefits.

The job seeker portal remains a major component for job seekers receiving Wagner-Peyser services. TCSG staff and LWDB staff work together to ensure job seekers are able to navigate the site and create resumes for job search that are professional and marketable to employers in the region. This coordinated effort between TCSG and WIOA provides job seekers with access to assistance within a career center with a guided job search, and this effort provides the job seeker with an opportunity to engage in WIOA basic services – which could potentially lead to more individualized or training services.

Wagner-Peyser services include Business Services. The LWDB Business Services Specialists works in partnership with TCSG Business Services and Veteran Services representatives to provide coordinated services to meet employer recruiting needs in the region.

3. Coordination with Adult Education – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of the WIOA Law, the review of local applications submitted under title II.

The local area has strong partnerships with its adult education and literacy providers in the region. West Georgia Technical College and Southern Crescent Technical College provide adult education services to individuals in the region. The TRWDB has a two-way referral system between WIOA Title I services coordinated by the TRWDB, and Title II services coordinated by the technical colleges. The board refers clients to adult education activities if they need assistance with completing a GED to further their career. Adult education refers clients to the TRWDB if they need additional training or support to find a career in the region. Workforce development activities are coordinated

with Title II programs by involving adult education leadership staff in strategic planning and having a Title II representative on the TRWDB. Additionally, the MOU/RSA will govern program/service delivery in the one-stop system.

The LWDB continues to partner with the Adult Education programs in the region to develop and implement career pathways for individuals enrolled in Adult Education.

4. Coordination with Vocational Rehabilitation – Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

The Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency (GVRA) operates programs that “help people with disabilities to become fully productive members of society by achieving independence and meaningful employment.”¹ GVRA is a natural partner to the workforce development mission of the TRWDB. The TRWDB and GVRA will work together as partners to serve their clients in ways that promote successful employment outcomes.

The TRWDB and GVRA will work together to serve individuals with disabilities through referrals, use of applicable programs (e.g., ITAs, work experience, OJT, supportive services, GVRA accommodation assistance), and shared case management. TRWDB will work to develop shared and seamless intake, referral, and processes procedures to enhance outcomes for eligible job seekers. TRWDB and GVRA will achieve these outcomes stronger partnerships and mutual understanding. For example local area program managers recently conducted a presentation for GVRA staff on the Title I services and training programs available in the region. GVRA and the TRWDB

¹ <https://gvra.georgia.gov/about-us>

will continue to strengthen their relationship by hosting information sessions, joint training, process reviews, and other collaborative functions.

The partners will also work together to assist employers in the region with employing individuals with barriers to employment by providing social/supportive services, technical assistance, and OJT. The business services team will work with GVRA local and state staff to deliver business solutions to employers that included individuals with barriers to employment. GVRA will also actively participate in sector partnership development and execution efforts.

Performance, ETPL and Use of Technology

1. **Description of Performance Measures** – (WFD will issue instructions for the completion of local area performance negotiations upon receipt of federal guidance.) Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

*To be inserted upon receipt from TCSG OWD

2. **One-Stop System Performance and Assessment** – Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

The workforce board will receive quarterly reports from the one-stop operator on the array of services provided to customers accessing services at the comprehensive one-stop site as well as the number of customers receiving services from which partner via the comprehensive one stop site. The previous

one stop operator work with the one stop partners in PY19 – PY20 to develop a referral process for the partners to use which lead to an MOU with UniteUs. This platform creates an opportunity for all regional partners to create an account to refer customers to all available resources. The platform follows up with the different agencies to ensure contact is made with the participants. Reports will be provided to the workforce development on the information gathered from this process. Also, the one-stop operator will have partners meetings on a bi-weekly basis, and will provide training to the one-stop staff and external partners on the referral process.

3. ETPL System – Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

a. Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

The TRWDB solicits for new training providers through announcements and by posting via social media. The board's website announces information regarding the opportunity for providers to submit proposals and provides a link to the application package. A record of all inquiries is maintained and providers who express interest are added to the bidders' list for future notices.

The LWDB solicits for new providers on a routine basis. The request for new providers can be driven by an immediate need for training in the region that is not being provided by any provider at the time the training is identified as a need. However, the LWDB staff members continue efforts to search for providers in line with the LWDB schedule to ensure that all new provider recommendations are reviewed and prepared for LWDB review.

b. Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

With WIOA's focus on quality customer outcomes, the TRWDB has developed a standard application, a set of evaluation criteria, and a provider/program responsiveness checklist to evaluate prospective training providers. In the application providers must describe a set of conditions to which they will adhere and activities they will provide for WIOA customers, if approved as eligible providers.

For initial provider determination, the TRWDB staff and advisory group reviews each applicant's past performance in the state-established categories, their accreditation status, evidence of training programs in growth occupations, and whether or not the provider is within reasonable commuting distance of the region's participants. Staff also evaluate training success, compare costs, length of training, and anticipated wage at placement among similar providers. The board then conducts an on-site pre-operational review of new or unknown training institutions.

For those prospective providers deemed responsive, staff conduct employer and program graduate reference checks to ensure customers will receive quality training. Those providers recommended by the reviewers are forwarded to the Office of Workforce Development for review, acceptance, and inclusion on the ETPL.

c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

Any complaint by an individual, group, or organization is first addressed informally before a grievance is filed. Grievances are filed in accordance with the written procedures established by the TRWDB.

Once a grievance has exhausted the local procedures, the board follows the guidelines established by the state. If a complainant receives an unfavorable decision by the local hearing officer, the complainant has a right to request a review by the state, using the WIOA Complaint Information Form. The completed form is forwarded to the Compliance Director, Office of Workforce Development.

The Grievance and Complaint Procedure is included in the WIOA Service Manual and made available to customers and providers.

- d. **Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).**

The performance of all training institutions with participants enrolled in WIOA is monitored on at least an annual basis. Institutions may be removed from the ETPL if monitoring reveals non-compliance with the Act or poor performance. The TRWDB uses state data along with participant data collected from all training institutions using the participants' grades, attendance, and progress reports. Data indicating the number of participants entering employment is also evaluated. If performance falls below the region's standards (as set by Office of Workforce Development), the provider is notified that corrective action is needed and additional enrollments are curtailed.

Additionally, the LWDB is provided with monthly spending for each provider. A review is done monthly to ensure that participants have completed training and certifications prior to receiving the final payment from the LWDB. The Program Services Manager is made aware of any outstanding invoices due to performance by a provider, and provides the follow-up within a 30 day timeframe.

- e. **Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.**

There are currently no policies associated with training providers. The LWDB has adopted the state ETPL parameters and performance requirements identified in the state policy and procedure manual as a measure for the region.

- f. **Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.**

Case Managers provide recommendations for customers to receive ITAs. These recommendations are evaluated and approved by the TRWDB staff. Once an ITA is

approved, the funds are tracked by Three Rivers Regional Commission accounting staff to ensure that invoices reflect only what has been approved in the ITA, and that costs do not exceed the cap. Any request for additional funds or to add time to the ITA requires approval by management. These processes are tracked internally with the voucher form, edit request, and ITA document. The local area uses an internal excel tracking document to track and manage a portion of the ITA activity; additional tracking is done in the WorkSource Portal.

- g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).**

Continued inclusion on the ETPL is contingent upon successful placement of enrollees, as evaluated by TRWDB staff on a quarterly basis.

The TRWDB has established a \$10,000 annual funding limit for each customer's ITA. Training must be in occupations identified by the TRWDB or through approval of exceptions, as stated in the area's ETPL application package. Training must be provided for at least 12 hours per week and the maximum length of training is 104 weeks.

Training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the TRWDB region, which may include in-state and out-of-state programs/institutions. Out-of-area training programs that are not within commuting distance and/or out of state may be approved on a case-by-case basis. All approved training must be located within the contiguous United States. Training programs must be on the state-approved list.

Priority for training services is given to Three Rivers area Adults, Youth, and Dislocated Worker applicants. Services for Dislocated Workers are also available to employees of companies located in the region's service area. Self Service is universally available to all customers, regardless of residence. Residents of other service areas wishing Basic Services and/or Individualized Training Services — other than Dislocated Workers, as stated above — are referred to their LWDB.

- h. **Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.**

As required by WIOA, Regional Apprenticeship programs will be automatically eligible to be included on the ETPL, in accordance with the statewide process; however, the LWDA will have to approve the apprenticeship based on the needs in the workforce area and funding availability.

4. **Implementation of Technology – Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.**

The TRWDB is currently undertaking a variety of technology-related initiatives to enhance customer experience. For example, the board uses TCSG's online applicant tracking system, Worksource portal, to assist with employment placement. By incorporating Employ Georgia into the Worksource portal, it affords the staff with opportunities to search for and recruit candidates. The portal also allows applicants to upload resumes which is easier reviewed and it help employers fill positions. This system allows the TRWDB to search all available applicants by keyword, rather than contacting CMs individually, thereby allowing employers faster access to the most qualified applicant pool. The TRWDB is working to keep mobile units up-to-date with technology, as staff are able to do assessments on mobile units by appointment.

To improve outreach, the TRWDB is engaging in more social media, particularly Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Social media is used both to target youth and to advertise workforce services to businesses. In addition, the board plans to update the assessments used to identify customers' occupational strengths and weaknesses. Assessments that are more interactive and user-friendly are being researched and we will recommend assessments for purchase (if necessary) and use across the region. Files for Adults and Dislocated Workers are kept electronically. As of July 2016, the board anticipates that all files will be cloud-based.

Finally, the board is actively pursuing the use of data analytics to better understand their customers — both employers and applicants — as well as what works in serving both and measuring outcomes.

State Initiatives and Vision

1. **State Branding** – Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

After receiving the state brand document in mid-August 2016, the local area has adopted the branding criteria to include the appropriate WorkSource logo and other elements with signage and other materials. All information produced by the local area includes the state brand WorkSource Georgia, Connecting Talent with Opportunity.

The local area plans to continue to fully adopt the state brand. The name, color scheme, tagline, logo, and other brand elements will be phased in over time as web, print, social media, and consumable materials are updated or replaced.

2. **Priority of Service** – Describe how the area/region will identify and administer the state's priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to those specified by state and federal policy

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA) requires Priority of Service be given to “public benefits recipients, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient” when providing career and training services using WIOA Title I adult funds. WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E)

Priority of Service Must be Provided in the Following Order:

1. Veterans and Eligible Spouses WIOA § 3 (63)(A), TEGL 3-15, TEGL 10-09
2. Low Income Individuals
 - ⊙ SNAP or TANF recipient (current or within last six months)

- ⊗ Supplemental Social Security (SSI) recipient
- ⊗ Homeless individual
- ⊗ Receives free or reduced-price lunch
- ⊗ Is a foster youth
- ⊗ Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets WIOA's income requirements, even if the individual's family income does not
- ⊗ Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family size, is at or below 150% of the current Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) and Dept.of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines (whichever is higher)

3. Basic skills deficient

Additional Restrictions

1. Individuals applying for training services and who already have one of the following will be considered for retraining on a case by case basis.

- ⊗ an attainment of a recognized public technical college or private proprietary school certificate/credential
- ⊗ an attainment of a recognized public technical college diploma
- ⊗ an attainment of a recognized public technical college associate degree
- ⊗ bachelor's degree

2. Individuals who currently have a master's degree or any higher advanced degree will not be eligible for retraining.

3. An individual who has had WIOA funded training but did not complete the training will not be considered for additional training unless information provided to the WIOA office can substantiate the extenuating circumstances on why the individual did not complete training.

4. Training assistance for individuals seeking a four-year college and advanced degrees will only be approved for funding in areas that are occupational specific, and are in current demand areas, and can be completed within the time limits set by WIOA.

When Services or WIOA Resources are Limited:

In accordance with 20 CFR Section 663.600, and WIOA Section 134(d)(4)(E), if limited funding has been declared in the local area, priority of service must be provided in the following order: WIOA § 3 (63)(A), TEGL 3-15, TEGL 10-09

1. Veterans and Eligible Spouses WIOA § 3 (63)(A), TEGL 3-15, TEGL 10-09

2. Low Income Individuals

- ⊗ SNAP or TANF recipient (current or within last six months) ⊗ Supplemental Social Security (SSI) recipient ⊗ Homeless individual ⊗ Receives free or reduced-price lunch
- ⊗ Is a foster youth
- ⊗ Is an individual with a disability whose own income meets WIOA's income requirements, even if the individual's family income does not ⊗ Receives an income or is a member of a family receiving an income that, in relation to family
- ⊗ size, is not in excess of the current Lower Living Standard Income Level (LLSIL) and Dept. of Health and Human Services (HHS) Poverty Guidelines (whichever is higher)

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4. Training assistance for individuals seeking a four-year college and advanced degrees will only be approved for funding in areas that are occupational specific, and are in current demand areas, and can be completed within the time limits set by WIOA.

The TRWDB will continue to actively participate in and support state workforce development initiatives. The staff will continue to identify opportunities to align programs, policies, and investments to meet the vision and goals of the state initiatives.

3. Alignment with State Goals – Describe how the area/region will align with each of the goals listed in the State Unified Plan. (The LWDA will update this information once the state plan has been released.)

- a. Utilize sector partnerships to inform and guide strategic workforce development strategies and enhance partnership coordination.
- b. Develop a streamlined and regional integrated workforce system that delivers efficient services to both businesses and individuals.
- c. Capitalize on the workforce system's strengths to create opportunities for all Georgia communities to prosper.
- d. Continuously align workforce and education system objectives to current and future occupational skill requirements.
- e. Expand the pool of available employees by increasing the participation of WIOA Strategic Populations in the workforce system.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Local Workforce Development Board Member Listing *will be updated and included following the June board meeting

Attachment 2: Local Negotiated Performance *will be included following negotiations with TCSG

Attachment 3: Public Comments on the Local Plan and Express Disagreement *will be added after the comment period



LMI	Labor Market Information
LWDB	Local Workforce Development Board
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
OJT	On-the-Job Training
OSHA	Occupational Health and Safety Administration
PY	Program Year
RFP	Request for Proposal
RSA	Resource Sharing Agreement
SIWDG	Strategic Industry Workforce Development Grant
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
TANF	Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
TRWDB	Three Rivers Workforce Development Board
UI	Unemployment Insurance
WARN	Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification
WFD	Workforce Division
WIOA	Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act