
STRATEGIC PLAN

REVISED

For the Period

JANUARY 2021 THROUGH JUNE 2022

*FINAL for WDB Approval
February 3, 2021*



CENTRAL REGION

Developed by the Central Region Workforce Development Board's
Strategic Planning Team

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INTRODUCTION

During the latter part of 2020, the Central Region Workforce Development Board began the process of developing this plan, designed to update the current strategy. With the shifting environment due to the pandemic of 2020, the board decided that developing a new set of goals and strategies for the next 3-years would not maintain relevancy. Instead, this plan has a time horizon of eighteen months, through June of 2022. The planning process included a Strategic Planning Committee made up of WDB members of the Executive Committee. The Committee met three times to examine current labor market data that would inform strategic challenges over the next 18 months.

This document is the dynamic blueprint for the sustainability and growth of the region's talent pipeline. It is the product of intensive discussions by the Workforce Development Board's (WDB) Strategic Planning Committee members and feedback from businesses, jobseekers partners, and stakeholders. This revised plan lays the foundation for the organization's business plan, which will outline key actions and resources required to execute the objectives and strategies found in this plan.

Focus groups of businesses, WDB board members, local elected officials, partners, and job seekers were conducted to solicit their perceptions of what the workforce system's challenges might be over the next 15 to 18 months. Many strategic challenges were identified. The most prevalent were:

- Reaching out to the businesses community to ensure training and talent development meets their needs and sustaining the talent pipeline.
- Lack of access to broadband limits educational opportunities, business growth, customer engagement, and workforce mobility.
- Limited or no access to broadband has accelerated the equity gap.
- Building awareness of all the workforce resources available and how to get people to them.
- Increasing coordination among all the providers.
- Adjusting the workforce system to the long-term industry changes COVID has/will impact such as the hospitality industry, business travel etc.

The Committee took time to examine the WDB's vision for impact as the environmental context and needs change. We want to make sure our work remains relevant as the system within which we operate has changed in the short term and may continue to change over the long term. Our discussions included examining how to shift the way programs and services are delivered and what new partnerships need to be forged to extend our reach and impact.

In response to stay-at-home orders across Virginia, our organization had to quickly shift to virtual operations and deal with other challenges to our capacity. We made the shift quickly and staff rapidly adapted and learned. With a fresh perspective on our mission, understanding of what we do well, and the environment in which we operate, the Central Region WDB will pursue the following strategic priorities:

- Increase and strengthen coordination and collaboration among all the organizations involved in the delivery of workforce services.
- Develop initiatives to quickly retrain and retool people who have lost jobs that may not return.
- Create a collective impact strategy to influence access to broadband for learning, work, business growth and customer engagement across the region.
- Create more robust and comprehensive marketing channels to build awareness of all the workforce services available to expand the WDB's reach.

A plan is of little value by itself. The strategic plan is a broad road map and there is still much to be determined relative to implementation. This document is the framework to continue our growth and ensure the sustainability of our high-performance, customer-focused organization that continues to benefit all stakeholders – our customers, our partners, and the community.

DATA SNAPSHOTS

The following data briefly describes the area and is key to setting the context for the strategy contained in this plan. The Central Virginia Region (LWIA VII) is comprised of the following jurisdictions: Amherst County, Appomattox County, Bedford County, Campbell County, Bedford city, and Lynchburg city.

Population and Commuting Patterns

- The population in the Region 2000/Central VA (WDA 7) was 260,668 (*Source: American Community Survey data for 2014-2018*).
- The region has a civilian labor force of 127,845 with a participation rate of 59.4% (*Source: JobsEQ*).
- The population is projected to **increase** over the next 10 years.

	LWIA VII	%Change	Virginia	%Change
2000	228,616		7,079,030	
2010	252,634	10.51 %	8,001,024	13.02 %
2020	266,216	5.38 %	8,744,273	9.29 %
2030	285,073	7.08 %	9,546,958	9.18 %
2040	299,610	5.10 %	10,201,530	6.86 %

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service.

- **More people commute out of the area** to work than live and work in the area.

Central Virginia Region Commuting Patterns

People who live and work in the area	70,498
In-Commuters	29,884
Out-Commuters	39,031
Net In-Commuters (In-Commuters minus Out-Commuters)	-9,147

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2018.

Employment and Education

- The **top five industries** with the most employees: Health Care and Social Assistance (15,709), Manufacturing (13,834), Retail Trade (11,720), Local Government (9,449), Accommodation and Food Services (6,123)

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2nd Quarter (April, May, June) 2020.

- The **top average weekly wages**: Utilities (\$1,667), Professional, Technical, and Scientific Services (\$1,524), Finance and Insurance (\$1,269), Federal Government (\$1,214), Wholesale Trade (\$1,183), Manufacturing (\$1,181).

- The **lowest average weekly wages**: Accommodation and Food Services (\$335), Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (\$397), Administration and Support and Waste Management (\$518), Retail Trade (\$553).

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 2nd Quarter (April, May 2020).

- Of those 18 and older, 31% have graduated high school or have a GED, 26% have some college, 7% have an Associate's Degree and 15% have a Bachelor's Degree.

	LWIA VII	Virginia	United States
8th Grade or Less	8,385	275,329	12,639,425
Some High School	17,514	464,075	20,093,117
High School Grad/GED	63,586	1,633,105	68,044,371
Some College	53,612	1,457,887	57,431,237
Associate's Degree	15,303	440,219	18,586,866
Bachelor's Degree	29,903	1,258,661	42,027,629
Graduate or Professional Degree	16,001	862,686	24,008,551
	204,304	6,391,962	242,831,196

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau
American Community Survey, 2011-2015.*

• **Largest Employers in the Central Region (in alphabetical order)**

1. Abbott Nutrition	32. Hanwah Azdel
2. Aerofin	33. L3 Harris Corporation
3. Amherst County Schools	34. Horizon Behavioral Health
4. Appomattox County Schools	35. Innovairre
5. Automated Conveyor System	36. Inservice America
6. Banker Steel	37. J. Crew
7. Bedford County Schools	38. KDC
8. Belvac	39. Kroger
9. BGF Industries	40. Liberty University
10. Boxley	41. Lowe's Home Centers
11. Buffalo Air Handling	42. Lynchburg City Schools
12. BWX Technologies	43. Moore's Electrical & Mechanical
13. Campbell County Schools	44. Pacific Life
14. Centra Health	45. Prestige Brands (Fleet)
15. Central Virginia Community College	46. Progress Printing
16. City of Lynchburg	47. Randolph College
17. Concentrix (former Convergys)	48. Runk & Pratt Health Care
18. Cooper Steel	49. Sam Moore Furniture
19. County of Amherst	50. Schrader Sensata
20. County of Bedford	51. Sentry Equipment
21. County of Campbell	52. Simplimatic Automation
22. Delta Star	53. Sodexo
23. Flowserve	54. Southern Air
24. Food Lion	55. Startek
25. Foster Fuel	56. Sweet Briar College
26. Framatome	57. U.S. Pipe
27. Frito Lay	58. University of Lynchburg
28. Genworth	59. Virginia Department of Transportation
29. Georgia-Pacific	60. Walmart
30. Glad Manufacturing	61. Westminster Canterbury
31. Greif Packaging	62. YMCA

Source: Central Region VA Workforce Development Board

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

VISION: A customer-focused workforce system that supports regional prosperity through efficiently developing the talents of individuals to meet the employment needs of our region.

MISSION: We provide the primary connection between our two customers—businesses and jobseekers—ensuring demand is met with a highly-qualified supply of applicants.

CUSTOMERS: Our *primary external customers* are **employers and jobseeker (emerging and transitioning)**

Our primary *internal customer* is our **staff and partners.**

ROLE: The Workforce Development Board will play several roles in furtherance of our vision and mission:

- We **act as a convener** of business and industry with education and training providers.
- We **lead and oversee** the workforce development system.
- We seek to **catalyze change** in the community to build effective partnerships.
- We will **strategically invest** in program innovation.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND GOALS
Strategy 2021

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES for January 2021 through June 2022

- Increase and strengthen coordination and collaboration among all the organizations involved in the delivery of workforce services.
- Develop initiatives to quickly retrain and retool people who have lost jobs that may not return.
- Create a collective impact strategy to influence access to broadband for learning, work, business growth, and customer engagement across the region.
- Create more robust and comprehensive marketing channels to build awareness of all the workforce services available to expand the WDB's reach.

STRATEGIC GOALS and KEY OBJECTIVES

The following goals and objectives support the Central Region WDB in accomplishing the priorities set for the next eighteen months.

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: Leverage Target Sector-Based Partnerships to Position Career Pathways from K-12 Education through Employment

Key Strategies:

- 1.1 Develop and promote career pathways in targeted industries through the current career pathway platform.
- 1.2 Continue to utilize the Career Guide for Worlds of Opportunity and create additional resources for area high school students and their parents where businesses provide labor market information about jobs and careers available that do not require a 4-year college degree.
- 1.3 Continue to build strong linkages with public and private education and training institutions (e.g., K-12, trade schools, industry association training programs, apprenticeships, and community colleges) to align programming with career pathways and future labor market demand.

Outcome(s):

- Increase the number of individuals obtaining jobs at a self or family sustaining wage by X% (or by X number).
- Increase the number of businesses that report that the workforce system consistently supplies the talent they need by X% (or X number).
- Increase customer satisfaction by X%.

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: Enrich and Expand the Workforce System Through Technologies that Streamline Customer Service Experiences

Key Strategies:

- 2.1 Conduct an analysis of the quality of current virtual service delivery and the platforms used.
- 2.2 Identify what works and expand use.
- 2.3 Support efforts to expand access to broadband and devices by customers.

- 2.4 Develop a coordinated and accessible infrastructure to connect individuals to the training opportunities to develop the essential workplace readiness skills¹ required for work.
- 2.5 Develop and deliver workforce services and supports to individuals who are underemployed², unemployed, and underserved to expand the talent pipeline of youth and adults.
- 2.6 Ensure cultural responsiveness in how services are designed and delivered.

Outcome(s):

- Access to services has increased in all the subregions of the region.
- Increase customer satisfaction by X%.

STRATEGIC GOAL 3: Act as the Organizational Catalyst to the Regional Workforce System

Key Strategies:

- 3.1 Meet regularly with individuals in the region who are responsible for economic development to align the region's economic development efforts with the workforce development system.
- 3.2 Examine current targeted industry sectors³ within the context of labor market changes due to COVID and revise if needed.
- 3.3 Maximize the efforts to collaborate and coordinate across the region.
- 3.4 Continue to engage the libraries across the region to provide access to workforce services.
- 3.5 Continue the initiative with the Life Skills Institute at Parkview Mission and expand throughout the region.

Outcome(s):

- Economic development forecasts have been identified for the region and for the sub-regions and have been prioritized.
- Partners have been convened and 2 new training programs have been developed to meet the forecasted needs.

¹ Workplace readiness skills ensure workers have the basic academic, critical thinking and personal skills necessary to maintain employment.

² For the purposes of this plan, the underemployed are defined as the Virginia 2020 ALICE Report defines them: an acronym for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed. ALICE represents 'the growing number of households in our communities that do not earn enough to afford basic necessities'.

³ WDB's current targeted sectors are Health Care, Manufacturing, and Construction.

STRATEGIC GOAL 4: Develop and Deploy Messaging that Effectively Communicates the Workforce System and Services to Stakeholders— Employers, Job Seekers, and Service Providers

Key Strategies:

- 4.1 Develop a communication plan with simple messages about the benefits of participating in the workforce development system⁴, with a focus on intentional outreach to the underemployed and underserved.
- 4.2 Within the plan, identify key advertising and recruiting channels and advertise the workforce system as a bridge between business, people looking for jobs, training, and jobs.
- 4.3 Ensure consistent messaging across the region about the system’s services and how to access them.

Outcomes

- Awareness of the WDB and the services available through the workforce system has increased by X.
- Increase the number of first-time users of the systems’ services, both jobseekers and businesses by X% (or X number).
- Increase the number of small and medium businesses using workforce system services by X% (or X number).

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

The following principles define the way the organization operates regarding the goals and strategies identified. The core processes employed by the organization to accomplish the goals will operate in the following fashion:

- We collaborate to build strategic alliances around our goals, strategies, and tasks in which we are engaged.
- We align and maximize all resources required to carry out the strategic initiatives and seek to increase resources as required to achieve our mission.
- We deliver equitable service excellence through our products, processes, and services.
- We are leaders and challenge each other to achieve excellence.
- We hold ourselves accountable to each other and our customers.
- We create value by continuously assessing the outcomes and appropriateness of our programs and delivery systems.
- We continuously strengthen organizational effectiveness and build capacity.

⁴ The workforce development **system** is broader than the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funded programs. The system encompasses **all** the organizations, programs, and activities that prepare people for employment, help individuals advance in their careers, and ensure a skilled workforce.

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