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Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

Local Plan

East Cascades



Submitted by

East Cascades Works

July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2024

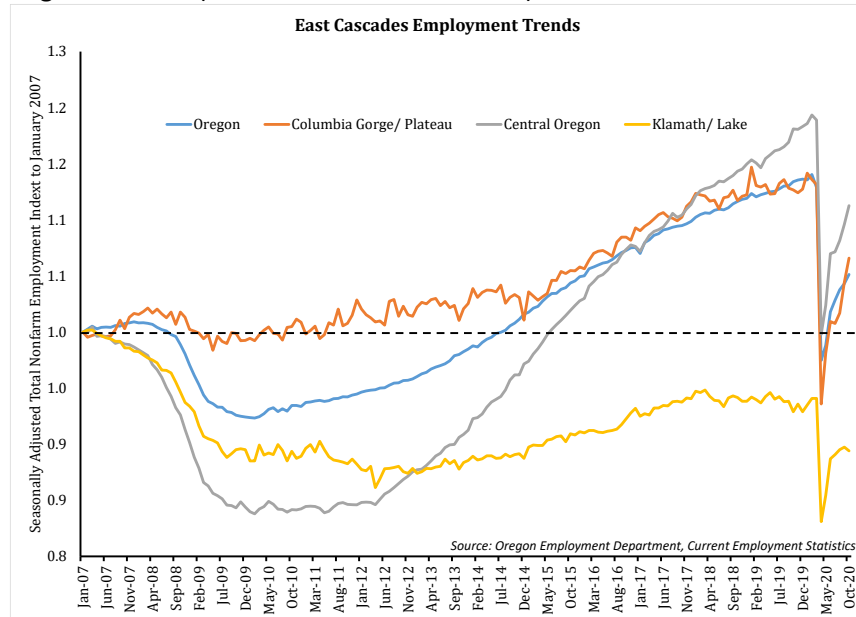
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Section 1: Workforce and Economic Analysis

1.1 An analysis of the economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(A)]

The East Cascades workforce area is comprised of three distinct “labor sheds.” The northern region includes the Columbia River Gorge and much of the Columbia Plateau (Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler counties). Central Oregon, which is centered around the lone metropolitan area in the East Cascades, Bend-Redmond (Jefferson, Crook and Deschutes counties). The southern region encompasses the Klamath basin and the vast Oregon Outback (Klamath and Lake counties).

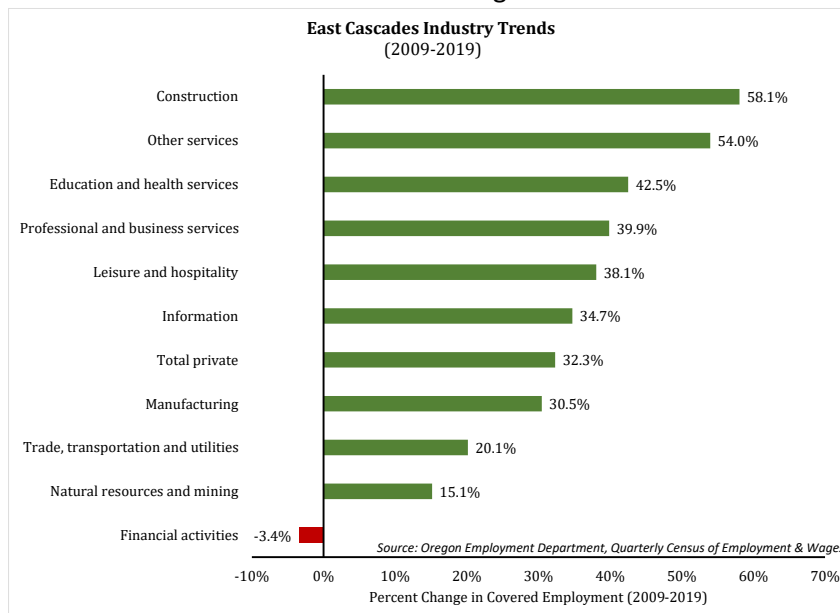


The COVID-19 pandemic tipped the nation and the region into recession with substantial job losses in response to the health restrictions implemented to slow the spread of the virus. Job losses in the COVID-19 shock varied quite dramatically across the East Cascades region with the largest share of job losses along the Columbia Gorge (-17.6% of total nonfarm employment) and Central Oregon (-16.3%). The pace of job losses was unprecedented with the region’s employment levels going from peak to valley in roughly 2 months.

The shape of the recovery has been largely “V” shaped with rapid improvement to the local job market through summer and early fall of 2020. The expectation is for there to be a dramatic slowdown in the recovery through the winter months, but as vaccines become widely available a full and robust recovery can be expected sometime in late 2021 or early 2022.

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic the region had experienced over a decade of job growth, particularly for Central Oregon and portions of the Columbia Gorge. After recovering from the last recession in summer of 2015, total nonfarm employment in Central Oregon grew by a staggering 18.5% over the next 4.5 years. Recovery from The Great Recession was never realized in the southern portion of the region in Klamath and Lake Counties due to structural declines in the regions manufacturing sector. Before the onset of the COVID-19 shock employment in Klamath and Lake Counties remained down roughly 6% from levels in 2007.

Job growth over the past decade, before the onset of the COVID-19 shock, was robust and spread across a variety of industries. All major industry sectors added jobs over the past decade with the exception of financial activities that never completely recovered from the last recession. The fastest growing industry sector was construction. The growth is a bit misleading as the industry was devastated by the 2008 housing crash. Much of the growth over the last decade was recovering from this housing shock. Other fast growing industries include health services, professional and business services, leisure and hospitality, and information. Growth in health care is largely a reflection of the region’s growing and aging population. Leisure and hospitality, often a proxy for the tourism industry, continues to grow rapidly as the region’s outdoor recreation and tourism amenities gain notoriety. Finally, professional and business services growth is a sign of the rapid diversification we are seeing in places like Bend and to a lesser extent Hood River and The Dalles. Growth in this sector is being driven by a variety of smaller professional firms including marketing, engineering, design services, and technology. Despite relatively consistent job growth across most industry sectors for the broad East Cascades area there have been more significant losses at the local level. Construction growth across the East Cascades area was largely



concentrated in Deschutes County, one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Professional and business services declined significantly in the Klamath Basin after a few large layoff events in the past two years. Manufacturing was a strong growth sector in both the Columbia Gorge area and Central Oregon. This growth was spread across a variety of manufacturing types, including advanced materials and parts manufacturing, food and beverage, and wood products. Meanwhile manufacturing was largely unchanged over the past decade in the Klamath Basin.

There are a variety of measures of industry importance in a particular geography. Location quotient, a measure of how specialized an area is in a particular industry relative to the state, is helpful in identifying industries critical to the local economy. The East Cascades area is highly specialized in a variety of industries, including food and beverage manufacturing (e.g. beer, wine, juice and spirits), agriculture (e.g. cattle, cherries, carrots, hay/alfalfa, barley, wheat and apples), tourism (e.g. outdoor recreation), wood product manufacturing, and advanced manufacturing (UAVs, aerospace, pharmaceuticals, etc.). Data processing is another industry where the East Cascades area is seeing an increase in specialization with the large data centers in the Columbia River Gorge and Crook County.

The East Cascades area is projected to continue adding jobs into the foreseeable future. Recent employment projections show that the region will add around 16,500 new jobs between 2019 and 2029, a growth of 10 percent. These projections take into account the initial shock from the COVID-19 pandemic, but do not attempt to forecast any lasting structural changes due to this most recent pandemic recession. Construction and health

care are expected to be the fastest growing industries, both expanding by 18 percent over the next 10-years. Gains in these industries are largely being fueled by continued population gains across the region. Health care stands alone when looking at the industry expected to add the most jobs (+4,000), followed by professional and business services (+1,800 jobs) and construction (+1,700). Central Oregon is expected to account for a disproportionate share of job gains over the next decade accounting for over 76 percent of expected job gains, but only 65 percent of total employment in 2019.

The demand for labor is expected to far exceed the 16,500 new jobs created. Due to an acceleration of retirements and normal occupational churn the region is projected to have an additional 206,225 replacement job openings over the next 10 years. Even the slowest growing regions of the East Cascades are expected to have a significant number of openings as we see an acceleration of baby boomers aging out of the labor force. There is likely to be a notable labor shortage across the East Cascades over the next 10-years regardless of where we are in the business cycle.

1.2 An analysis of the knowledge and skills required to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment requirements for in-demand industry sectors and occupations. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(B)]

There are 217 high wage/ high demand occupations spread across the East Cascades area. Those occupations account for more than 64,000 jobs openings in the next decade. Over half (60%) of all high wage/ high demand occupations in the East Cascades do not require education beyond an Associate's degree.

The top 10 high wage/ high demand occupations ranked by total job openings over the next decade include:

1. Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks (3,115 total openings)
2. General and Operations Managers (2,904 total openings)
3. Carpenters (2,562 total openings)
4. Construction Laborers (2,518 total openings)
5. First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (2,354 total openings)
6. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (2,338 total openings)
7. Medical Secretaries (2,033 total openings)
8. Medical Assistants (1,740 total openings)
9. Real Estate Sales Agents (1,641 total openings)
10. Maintenance and Repair Workers, General (1,458 total openings)

There are a few common skills that translate across all of these top high wage/ high demand occupations. Many require basic to intermediate computer skills, particularly for the technical and medical occupations. In the case of the medical professions, they require more specific medical training that must be gained in accredited programs, such as an Associate's degree or postsecondary license or certification. Many of these high wage/ high demand occupations possess a supervisory function, which requires candidates to have good communication and leadership skills.

The demand for labor slipped dramatically in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even after the economy began to reopen the level of hiring demand only rebounded to levels seen in 2019. In order for the region to continue the current "V"-shaped recovery levels of hiring demand will need to dramatically exceed pre-recession levels to regain the 8 percent of total jobs still missing from the economy as of October 2020.

1.3 An analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment (and unemployment) data, and information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(C)]

Over the past several years the labor force had been growing rapidly in the East Cascades. However, that trend

reversed and the labor force shrank dramatically during the early part of the COVID-19 shock as many workers were asked to stay home preventing them from working or seeking work. By late summer 2020 the labor force began to rebound with few workers still sitting on the sidelines. Much of this growth in the labor force over the past decade is a reflection of the strong economy. When jobs become available, people who may have been sitting on the sidelines during recession reenter the labor force. Additionally, the region tends to have strong population growth during economic expansions, particularly from working age cohorts.

The expectation is that growth in the labor force will slow dramatically over the next several years. Nearly all communities in the East Cascades are dealing with an aging workforce, however it is exaggerated in the region's rural communities. Rural communities have a higher share of their workforce that is 55 and older. Additionally, most rural communities in the region are not experiencing sufficient population growth from younger cohorts to balance these retirees.

There were around 183,000 workers in the East Cascades labor force as of October 2020. The vast majority of these workers were employed (~170,000), however the unemployment rate (7%) remains elevated from before the COVID-19 pandemic shock. Unemployment was at historically low levels (below 4%) before the region plunged into recession due to the pandemic.

In fact, before the pandemic the region was experiencing a distinct labor shortage with a large number of vacancies being identified as difficult-to-fill primarily due to a lack of applicants or a lack of qualified applicants. This was a warm body issue. High demand for labor and very few workers unemployed or sitting on the sidelines. There is no longer a labor shortage with the elevated levels of unemployment due to the COVID-19 restrictions. Typically during periods of high unemployment there is a concern of a skills mismatch between the workforce and types of jobs available. That is not the case in this recession as high unemployment is not due to a skills gap, but due to forced closures and decreases in demand. When the health crisis is resolved a full and robust recovery is expected. There remains some long-term concern of labor shortages as baby boomers continue to age out of the workforce. Replacing these retiring workers is particularly troublesome as those retiring from the workforce often have decades or more of experience and institutional knowledge. It will become increasingly common for employers to provide additional training or education to skill up their incumbent workforce.

The labor force in the East Cascades area is well educated; 35 percent of the population over 25 years of age possesses a Bachelor's degree or higher. Current educational attainment in the area exceeds the competitive needs of projected openings in 2029. Around one-third of all jobs are expected to require a Bachelor's degree or higher in the East Cascades area by 2029, today's workforce already exceeds those levels of education. Any labor shortages in the near future will not be due to lack of education.

The long-term tightening of the labor supply is an area that needs to be addressed if the East Cascades area expects to move back into expansion mode after recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. In our rural communities this means working with young people to find good work opportunities that will persuade them to stay in rural Oregon. In our more urban communities we need to continue to attract labor from outside the area in order to back fill those workers who are retiring and to account for economic expansion.

1.4 An analysis and description of adult and dislocated worker workforce development activities, including type and availability of education, training and employment activities. Include analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of such services, and the capacity to provide such services, in order to address the needs identified in 1.2. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(D) & 108 (b)(7)]

The East Cascades workforce area boasts three community colleges, two universities and the only college accredited UA Local 290 Training Center in Oregon. Through these post-secondary institutions, whose combined offerings include certificates through graduate programs and journey level expertise, the talent needs for local

industry can be met. All the post-secondary education providers offer relevant and high-quality training, Adult Basic Skill (GED services), certificates, and degrees relevant to our key industries. As per the analysis in section 1.3, the labor force in East Cascades area is well educated, our challenge lies in retaining talent in rural areas and attracting talent to urban areas in the region. In addition to post-secondary education and training, work-based learning is supported through On-the-Job training investments through WorkSource partners creating a multitude of ways to prepare talent for opportunity.

Further diversification of certificates and other short term skill building will be an area of growth in the coming years as well as implementation of registered apprenticeship programs when appropriate in industries beyond only the building trades.

1.5 An analysis and description of youth workforce activities, including activities for youth with disabilities. Identify successful models and best practices, for youth workforce activities relevant to the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(9)]
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WIOA Youth services are delivered through Columbia Gorge Community College, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council and Klamath Community College, offering a suite of education re-engagement, skill building and work-based learning opportunities predominately to out of school youth. These Youth Programs are convened on a regular basis to share best/promising practices, problem solve and continuously improve service delivery strategies that launch youth on a career pathway. They each offer all 14 required elements under WIOA.

In addition to the network of WIOA contracted providers, the board also coordinates, partners, and/or leverages other youth serving initiatives and programs to ensure a homegrown talent pipeline by retaining the emergent workforce (a challenge identified in section 1.3, particularly in more rural areas). Youth Career Connect is one such example wherein the board invests in and supports coordination of these youth internship placement programs that utilize Economic Development or Chambers of Commerce to employ Internship Coordinators who cultivate paid internships for the emergent workforce from local school districts, post-secondary providers, and the community.

Further, we partner closely with Regional Career and Technical Education (CTE), housed at High Desert Education Service District (HESD). The Regional CTE Director is responsible for the same geographic area as the East Cascades workforce area creating a ripe opportunity for synergy and alignment. In addition, Columbia Gorge and Central Oregon both have state recognized STEM Hubs. Both CTE and STEM offer programming that supports all or most of our Target Industries. The most impactful and direct example of the benefit of these efforts is the launch of a Registered Construction Pre-Apprenticeship CTE career pathway. High School students who complete a CTE program of Study in Construction in East Cascades will earn direct entry into a myriad of Registered Apprenticeship programs, no small feat when the average age of a Registered Apprenticeship in the building trades in their late 20's. Equally as exciting is that Heart of Oregon's Youth Build program also launched a Registered Construction Pre-Apprenticeship, creating a pathway for youth not attending high school therefore unable to access CTE programs of Study.

Section 2: Strategic Vision and Goals

2.1 Provide the board’s vision and goals for its local workforce system in preparing an educated and skilled workforce in the local area, including goals for youth and individuals with barriers to employment. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

Vision: We envision an East Cascades region with thriving communities where residents have access to education and training which leads to living-wage jobs, and businesses find the qualified talent they need to succeed.

Mission: East Cascades Works supports the talent needs of employers and maximizes and aligns investments in the career goals of individuals to fuel a thriving economy.

Our **priority goals** to support EC Work’s mission include:

- Ensure high quality workforce services to local job seekers and business customers.
- Diversify and increase funding to maximize impact in support of the mission.
- Establish a strategic framework for private and public partnerships that supports collaborative service delivery to both businesses and job seekers.

Values:

- We embrace equity and inclusion.
- We are trusted experts in workforce development and rigorous stewards of public funds.
- We are collaborative neutral conveners.
- We inspire a call to action.
- We are results-driven.
- We are innovative problem solvers.

2.2 Describe how the board’s vision and goals align with and/or supports the vision of the Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB):

The WTDB approved their [2020-2021 Strategic Plan](#) in September 2019.

Vision: Equitable Prosperity for All Oregonians

Mission: Advance Oregon through meaningful work, training, and education by empowering people and employers

ECW’s mission, goals and values align well with the state board’s vision, mission and values in their 2020-21 Strategic Plan. Both plans center on both business and individual users of the workforce system as well as continuous improvement of the system itself through alignment, strategic investments and mutually reinforcing goals. Collaboration and delivering the highest quality services that are accessible, relevant, and effective are the hallmarks of the alignment between the plans. No single state agency or partner is capable of achieving this vision alone, therefore these values, goals and aligned missions are essential to actualize our collective vision for the public workforce system in Oregon and the East Cascades workforce area.

2.3 Describe how the board’s goals, strategies, programs, and projects align with and will contribute to achieving the WTDB’s Imperatives, Objectives, and Initiatives summarized below:

- Advancing equity and inclusion and connecting all of Oregon’s communities (tribal, rural, urban, and others);
- Working collaboratively and expanding workforce system partnerships, especially public-private partnerships;
- Acting on bold and innovative strategies that are focused on results;
- Aligning workforce system programs and services and investments;
- Increasing awareness, access, and utilization of workforce system programs and services;

- Understanding the true wages required for self-sufficiency and advocating solutions that address gaps;
- Increasing problem-solving and critical thinking skills in students, youth, and adults;
- Creating and recognizing industry-driven credentials of value including essential employability skills; and
- Increasing progress toward achieving Oregon’s Adult Attainment Goal.

The WTDB workforce system goals, strategies and values are entwined with those of ECW. With an eye to continuous improvement and building on successful local and regional partnerships and programs, ECW will continue to strive to be an example of best practice, create a culture of equitable prosperity, identify, and align investments, and increase utilization of the system. The work of the WTDB in supporting the workforce system is essential to expanding the reach of services, ensuring key system partners are aligned. Below are examples of that program alignment with the state plan in the East Cascades area.

Advancing equity and inclusion and connecting all of Oregon’s communities (tribal, rural, urban, and others).

ECW embraces equity and inclusion as a value and embeds that in all aspects of the work, investments and strategies implemented in this region. Staff, board and system partners have embraced additional reflection, training and goals that support inclusion and equity.

- In 2020, Board members participated in a comparative assessment of the diversity represented on the board through membership. Using data on current demographics for the region and juxtaposing that to the demographics of the current board membership, they strategically identified key attributes for recruitment of new board members to ensure a representative and inclusive body. Factors included but were not limited to ensuring representation based on gender; race/ethnicity; target industry; geographic representation – rural, urban, frontier; and age.
- Through Governor Brown’s Future Ready initiative launched in 2018, ECW has developed a strong partnership with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Warm Springs Community Action Team to support economic development, entrepreneurship, and workforce training for tribal members. The partnership continues with additional initiatives launching in 2020 in support of Tribal Youth via the North Cascades Youth Reengagement Network including partners from Columbia Gorge Community College, Celilo Village, Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council and Heart of Oregon Corps (see Section 3.10).
- ECW partners closely with both [Shift Bias](#) and [Oregon State University – Cascades’ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Lab](#) (OSU-C DEI lab). Shift Bias is a female-founded and led private company that utilizes research and technology to help people and organizations on their journey to embrace equal justice and belonging. OSU-C DEI lab is a key resource dedicated to social equity and inclusion by providing business owners and managers the tools to foster diversity and inclusivity in the workplace.
- A partnership is burgeoning with the Klamath Tribes in the Basin through an initiative to support the training of tribal members to fight wildfires.

Working collaboratively and expanding workforce system partnerships, especially public-private partnerships.

Collaboration and partnership are core to all efforts ECW engages in across the ten-county region as its part of the culture as well as a necessity due to the vast geographic size of the region as well as the scope of the mission of the organization. Please see myriad examples in Section 3.

Acting on bold and innovative strategies that are focused on results.

ECW Values (Section 2.1) surrounding innovation, action, collaboration and being results-driven create a culture of bold action. In close partnership with WorkSource, community partners and industry, ECW has implemented innovative and new programs to pilot new ways of connecting talent to opportunity. There have been mixed results but every investment, initiative and/or strategy attempted has yielded important learning in support of continuous improvement.

An example of bold action was when ECW, with direction from Tech Industry employers, partnered with Central

Oregon Community College, Apprenti, Technology Association of Oregon, Lane Workforce Partnership, and local tech companies to implement a first of its kind Oregon Labor and Industry Registered Tech Apprenticeship in Oregon. Specially, to address the lack of Software Developers needed to fill openings in local tech ECW secured funds and coordinated the implementation of this 40 hr/week classroom training delivered over 22 weeks followed by a one-year paid work-based learning component as employees of local tech companies.

Aligning workforce system programs and services and investments.

A priority goal of ECW is to “Establish a strategic framework for private and public partnerships that supports collaborative service delivery to both businesses and job seekers” which is directly aligned to the WTDB’s imperatives. Below are a few innovative examples of these alignment efforts underway in East Cascades.

- The Central Oregon Health Care Workforce Sector Partnership identified the allied health programs at Central Oregon Community College (COCC) to meet their needs for talent but unfortunately the college was not at capacity in many of their programs. To increase enrollments in these programs, ECW partnered with Central Oregon Health Council (COHC) to co-fund a part-time Health Careers Recruiter at COCC for 3 years whose sole focus is recruiting diverse talent to pursue careers in Health Care. The program is in its second year with promising results.
- To ensure that businesses across the East Cascades receive relevant and high-quality talent recruitment services through WorkSource, ECW partnered with WorkSource partners to implement a Regional Business Services model. In this model, all WorkSource partners are engaged but ECW’s core partner is Oregon Employment Department through the deployment of their Business Services Team. These specialists are assigned to serve Target Industries, engage in Sector Partnerships, and utilize key performance indicators to evaluate their effectiveness as well as have access to additional tools like LinkedIn to support their recruitment efforts.
- To be most effective in serving the ECW target population of individuals with criminal justice involvement, services are aligned and delivered through the WorkSource partnership. A dedicated team of WorkSource specialists work inside and adjacent to the two state prisons in the region, Warner Creek Correctional Facility in Lake County and Deer Ridge Correctional Facility in Jefferson County. ECW looks forward to deepening these partnerships and services to help reduce recidivism while meeting industry need for talent.

Increasing awareness, access, and utilization of workforce system programs and services.

WorkSource East Cascades is the primary delivery system for workforce services in the region therefore connectivity to WorkSource Services is foundational to any investments or programs implemented by ECW. This allows ECW to leverage the significant state, federal and local investments in the public workforce system. To this end, ECW invested in the development of a video specifically highlighting WorkSource Services and targeting business customers to increase market penetration. Further, ECW is co-investing with Oregon Employment Department to purchase professional outreach materials to be used at community events, job fairs and other business facing engagements.

Understanding the true wages required for self-sufficiency and advocating solutions that address gaps.

ECW’s board focused on Target Industries that offer living-wage work and/or career ladders/lattices for upward mobility. In addition, ECW is focused on the associated living costs that can increase financial instability for residents in the East Cascades area. Some examples include support and participation in sub-regional efforts to address the **lack of quality affordable childcare, increasing affordable workforce housing availability, and increasing access to high-speed internet services** throughout the region to ensure access to opportunities for a living wage. In addition, one of the priority goals of the Health Care Sector Partnership is to reduce the cost of attaining post-secondary credentials for entry-level and/or low-wage occupations in Health Care.

Increasing problem-solving and critical thinking skills in students, youth, and adults

Embedded in activities and services through the WIOA Title I Youth providers, young people are continuously

given opportunities to develop and demonstrate their command of critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Further, ECW partners closely and supports the various STEM Hub initiatives to support the development of these skills in high school students and work-based opportunities to develop these skills through Youth Career Connect internship program.

In workshops delivered through WorkSource across the region, adults have access to multiple skill-building opportunities that incorporate these skills including but not limited to Workshops on Soft Skills, National Career Readiness Certificate, Basic Computer Skills, and Networking/Social Media.

Creating and recognizing industry-driven credentials of value including essential employability skills

As described in the Career Pathways Section 4.2 and the Sector Partnerships Section 3.1, industry drive the needs and the strong post-secondary institutions in the region deploy relevant and high-quality programming to meet their needs.

An example of an industry-driven credential that includes essential employability skills is the career pathway development driven by the Construction Sector Partnership. Based on Construction employer's identification of common skill priorities, education partners and ECW collaborated to identify a certification through National Center for Construction Education & Research (NCCER) that encompassed those skills. Further, ECW pre-apprenticeship partners now offer Oregon Labor and Industry approved Registered Pre-Apprenticeships programs through Heart of Oregon's Youth Build program as well as through Construction Career Technical Education programs administered by High Desert Education Service District. Both Klamath CC and Central Oregon CC base their non-credit Construction Careers courses on the NCCER, creating an unprecedented level of alignment between secondary and post-secondary training programs. Further, this creates direct entry opportunities for young people who successfully complete the Registered Pre-Apprenticeship program to many of the twenty-two craft trade's Registered Apprenticeship programs in the area. Of note, the average age of an apprentice in the building trades in Oregon is 28 years, therefore this innovation is incredibly powerful in creating more opportunity for matriculating youth.

Increasing progress toward achieving Oregon's Adult Attainment

East Cascades area is fortunate to have innovative and collaborative community college partners who currently and historically have received WIOA Title II funding to partially support their Adult Basic Skills programs that help adults achieve their secondary education credentials. In both the Columbia Gorge area (CGCC) and Klamath Basin (KCC) our community college partners hold contracts to deliver both WIOA Title I and Title II services creating a natural alignment in the delivery of both workforce (via WorkSource) and GED services. In Central Oregon, our community college partner (COCC) has invested in a Navigator, embedded in both WorkSource Bend and WorkSource Redmond, who assists job seekers to access GED services as a launching point to further education and training to achieve their career goals.

A major component of the Future Ready initiative mentioned above is support for Tribal members to achieve their secondary credential. The initiative funded the modernization of the Computer Lab in Warm Springs ensuring adult learners had access to online curriculum and testing, incentives to enable Tribal members to engage in education programming, the purchase of a van to remove the transportation barrier, and the funding of delivery and attainment of the GED. These foundational infrastructure investments support sustainability of both the Tribal WIOA and Education programs and have created stronger relationships with Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council and Central Oregon Community College.

Finally, ECW secured a GED Wrap-Around grant from the Oregon Department of Education to support students up to age 21 years to attain their secondary credential. After the initial award in 2017, ECW has successfully competed for this funding annually and the program delivered through Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council Youth Program has been identified as a best practice model in Oregon.

2.4 Describe board actions to become and/or remain a high-performing board. These include, but are not limited to, four categories with accompanying indicators, based on national best practices and characteristics of high performing local boards. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(18)]

- Data-driven Decision-making
 - The Board is positioned as the “go to” source for labor market information among community partners.
 - The Board utilizes the labor market intelligence provided by regional economists for decision making.
- Strategy
 - The Board monitors and updates a strategic plan.
 - The Board frames board meetings around strategic initiatives and utilizes a consent agenda.
- Partnerships and Investments
 - The Board collaborates regularly with core partners and organizations beyond the core partners.
 - The Board is business-driven and uses a sector-based approach to engaging local employers.
- Programs
 - The Board promotes efforts to enhance provision of services to individuals with barriers to employment.
 - The Board has established policies, processes, criteria for issuing individual training accounts that aligns with its identified goals, strategies, and targeted industries.

In 2017, only two years after being designated by Oregon’s Governor as a Local Workforce Development Board, ECW was assessed by the Workforce and Talent Development Board to help identify best practices and areas of need for technical assistance across the nine local workforce regions in Oregon. Through extensive interviews with staff, board members, elected officials, and myriad state and community partners across the ten counties, ECW was found to “meet expectations” in every category and was identified as “outstanding” in many areas including Data-driven decision-making, Strategy, Partnerships and Investments, and Programs.

Since 2017, ECW has made further progress in all above the above-mentioned indicators of a high-performing board. Throughout 2020 ECW board of directors used data to determine both Target Industries and Target Populations to focus strategic investments, programs and initiatives, see Section 3.11. Some examples of ECW high performance are outlined below:

- Dept of Human Services (DHS) recognized ECW (via COIC) as a statewide Best Practice model in effectively delivering DHS–TANF Youth Employment Program, a youth internship program targeting children of TANF recipients or Teen Parents in 2019. This resulted in an additional award of funding and an expansion to year-round opportunities for youth, from a strictly summer model.
- ECW and partners quickly adjusted their program delivery methodology when COVID related closures were necessary for public health and safety in early 2020. Some examples of these high-performing practices include:
 - In March of 2020, WIOA Title I providers at Columbia Gorge CC, Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council and Klamath CC pivoted to virtual delivery of Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Services (See Section 4.9) ensuring impacted workers and employers had access to essential resources. This was identified by the Oregon’s Dislocated Worker Unit as a best practice.
 - To further ensure local businesses had access to the full array of supports available to them through WorkSource, and because the Rapid Response Teams had the most current and relevant information on individual local business impacts, ECW utilized them to deploy Lay-Off Aversion grants that supported **more than 80 small businesses, +650 employees with a total investment of +\$300,000 across the region.** The ECW team implemented a streamlined internal approval process that ensured both compliance and rapid payment. Within 36 hours of application, businesses had funds deposited into their bank account thanks to the efficiency of this process. Further, ECW was one of the first organizations to deploy grants directly to

- impacted businesses in East Cascades area, as early as March 2020.
- ECW area, thanks to the dedication and innovation of the WIOA Title I providers (CGCC, COIC, KCC) in proactively reaching out to job seeker/impacted customers, has experienced an increase in the number of customers served over last program year this time. This is an anomaly in Oregon as some other areas in the state are experiencing reductions in customers served due to the closure of WorkSource Centers to in-person appointments.

2.5 Describe how the board's goals relate to the achievement of federal performance accountability measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(E)]

Exit and Common Exit- ECW convenes three unique sub-regional LLTs which has been recognized as a **state-wide best practice** by our One-Stop-Operator. In addition, ECW convenes regularly scheduled Super LLT meetings, where each of the sub-regional LLTs come together to problem solve issues regarding the quality of services being delivered to customers. Serving our **"common customer"** is a regular topic of conversation. Ensuring that services are a complementary and that warm hand-offs are happening, that funds are appropriately leveraged, support and training services are best tailored to **meet the customer's needs**, including a full transition out of programs is extremely important and is an area of **continuous improvement**.

Competitive Integrated Employment and Unsubsidized Employment - for Employer Training Funds (Incumbent Worker) ECW requires employers attest to paying greater than median family wage for the county, based on labor market information available through www.qualityinfo.org. In addition, all employers, regardless of who they are employing **must pay above minimum wage** and must follow all state and federal fair and equal employment wage and work standards. It is always the goal of ECW through program initiatives to build pathways to get individuals out of poverty, which means building avenues to **unsubsidized employment**.

Employment- ECW engagement with employers in the community **focuses on stabilizing our economy for long-term viability** of both individuals and for the greater population. The board is focused on skilling-up the workforce into positions that are more **recession proof, offer family wage earning and meaningful work, and offer opportunities for individual and community growth**. For these reasons, ECW board has chosen to focus on industries that have occupations that can be **cross-sector trained and are in high-demand** throughout the region as well as those that are projected to grow including: Healthcare, Manufacturing, Construction and Technology.

Customized Training- ECW implemented various Customized Training opportunities to meet the emerging needs of employers and the economy in our region. We have responded to mass layoffs by re-employing many individuals through a customized training opportunity aimed at upskilling individuals for a new opportunity within the manufacturing sector. On multiple occasions we have also worked with employers and our higher education partners to develop specific curriculum to prepare individuals for fast employment into entry level careers in the construction industry. Integrated Education and Training- An example of ECW's goal to **integrate education with training** is in the aim to **expand opportunities for non-traditional apprenticeship occupations**.

Incumbent Worker- ECW board and staff investment in developing responsive incumbent worker training opportunities has seen remarkable success and has been identified as a state best practice; the model has also been implemented by partners Washington state. To date, ECW has funded over \$110,000 in Employer/Incumbent Worker Opportunities **focused on up-skilling workers** and have seen over 100 individuals trained with more than 100 certificates received, over 30 wage increases received, more than 20 promotions and over 15 back-filled positions. Secondary Diploma - ECW has been recognized in partnership with its youth providers for its best practice implementation of GED Wrap-around services, which **exceed state and federal performance outcomes for GED attainment year over year**.

Section 3: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

3.1 Taking into account the analysis in Section 1, describe the local board’s strategy to work with the organizations that carry out core programs to align resources in the local area, in support of the vision and goals described in Question 2.1. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(1)(F)]

To actualize the vision and achieve our shared goals, ECW convenes partners on a regular basis to assure the integrated delivery of services across partners. Continuous improvement tools are utilized to strategically focus collective efforts on service delivery improvements to both job seekers and business customers. To this end, ECW convenes the following meetings with core system programs:

- East Cascades Works Board – consists of public and private members and convenes quarterly.
- Local Leadership Teams – each of the three (3) sub-regions convene their local area’s core and co-located partners bi-monthly.
- Super Leadership Team – all Local Leadership Team members attend this region wide bi-monthly meeting.

3.2 Identify the programs/partners that are included in the local workforce development system. Include, at a minimum, organizations that provide services for Adult Education and Literacy, Wagner-Peyser, Vocational Rehabilitation, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, and programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

East Cascades benefits from housing some of the most integrated WorkSource Centers in the state, offering job seekers and businesses one physical location to access numerous services. Although services are coordinated across partners throughout this region, it can help create even more seamless integration to have partners physically co-locate. Below is a list of the partners in each comprehensive WorkSource Centers in ECW area:

Location	Deliver service at WorkSource	Services made available to WorkSource customers
WorkSource Bend	Dept of Human Services – Jobs and SNAP ET	Youth Build
	Vocational Rehabilitation	Warm Springs WIOA Title IB
	Title II Adult Basic Skills	Title 1B Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers
	Oregon Commission for the Blind	Regional Career and Technical Education
	Dept of Human Services – Aging & Disability Services	
	Oregon Employment Department	
	WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth	
WorkSource Klamath	Dept of Human Services – Jobs and SNAP ET	Dept of Human Services – Aging & Disability Services
	Vocational Rehabilitation	Title II Adult Basic Skills
	Oregon Employment Department	Oregon Commission for the Blind
	WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth	Klamath Tribes WIOA Title IB
		Title 1B Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers
	Regional Career and Technical Education	
WorkSource Redmond	Dept of Human Services – Jobs and SNAP ET	Youth Build
	Vocational Rehabilitation	Dept of Human Services – Aging & Disability Services
	Title II Adult Basic Skills	Title 1B Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers
	Oregon Commission for the Blind	Regional Career and Technical Education
	Oregon Employment Department	Warm Springs WIOA Title IB
	WIOA Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker	WIOA Title I Youth
WorkSource The Dalles	Dept of Human Services – Jobs and SNAP ET	Title 1B Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers
	Dept of Human Services – Aging & Disability Services	Regional Career and Technical Education
	Title II Adult Basic Skills	Vocational Rehabilitation

	Oregon Commission for the Blind	
	Oregon Employment Department	
	WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth	

3.3 Describe efforts to work with partners identified in 3.2 to support alignment of service provision to contribute to the achievement of WTDB’s goals and strategies. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(2)]

The partners outlined in section 3.2 have a strong collaborative history of partnership within each of the area’s sub-regions. As noted in previous sections, ECW utilizes three (3) sub-regional Local Leadership Teams (LLT) to set annual goals and focus on action-oriented steps to achieve their goals to improve service delivery to job seekers and business customers. The One Stop Operator leads these meetings and develops projects with the LLT to improve services to be completed in the program year. This more focused approach supplants a less action-oriented, updated format that had previously stalled our LLT’s from making progress on achieving greater alignment and integration as per the WTDB goals and strategies.

3.4 Describe strategies to implement the WorkSource Oregon Operational Standards, maximizing coordination of services provided by Oregon Employment Department and the local board’s contracted service providers in order to improve services and avoid duplication. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(12)]

As outlined in Section 3.1, the Local Leadership Teams (LLT’s) and Super Leadership Teams meet monthly to collaborate and align services. The WorkSource Operational Standards (WSO Standards 2.0) and their implementation are the minimum basis on which their work is derived. In addition, ECW contracts with a neutral third party to serve as the One Stop Operator (OSO) for the region in support of continuous improvement in implementation of the WorkSource Standards. As well, the OSO is responsible to assess the current state of our implementation which helps establish next steps.

In addition, due to the COVID pandemic health and safety measures, the WorkSource Centers have been closed to in-person appointments. To re-open in-person services in WorkSource, LLT’s must submit a plan to re-open safely to in person appointments as per Workforce System Executive Team guidance. To this end, the OSO plays a pivotal role in supporting the development of the re-opening plan by facilitating LLT meetings to support the co-development of the plan, ensuring all core partners have equal voice in the process.

3.5 Identify how the local board will carry out a review of local applications submitted under WIOA Title II Adult Education and Literacy, consistent with the local plan and state provided criteria. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(13)]

The Higher Education Coordinating Council – Community Colleges and Workforce Development Department (CCWD) oversees the WIOA Title II funds and awards. ECW has and will continue to participate in their procurement process utilizing WIOA regulations and CCWD guidance in reviewing applications for Title II services.

3.6 Describe efforts to support and/or promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services, in coordination with economic development and other partners. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(5)]

ECW leverages several local partner’s entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services. The primary partners in the provision of these services are through our community colleges’ Small Business Development Centers housed at Columbia Gorge, Central Oregon, and Klamath Community Colleges. In addition, there are strong and active Chambers of Commerce in this region that offer a variety of services and training including but not limited to The Dalles, Condon, Hood River, Bend, Klamath, and Lake Chambers of Commerce. There are also services that are available through our Economic Development partners at Mid-Columbia Economic Development District, Redmond Economic Development Inc, Economic Development of Central Oregon, and Klamath County Economic Development Association.

3.7 Describe how the local board coordinates education and workforce investment activities with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(10)]

ECW has a robust relationship with all three community colleges and the union and non-union State registered apprenticeships as well as connections to Oregon State University – Cascades and Oregon Institute of Technology. Community colleges deliver much of the training accessed through WorkSource and ECW investments through scholarships/training accounts to individuals, and cohort/customized training investments. The cohort/customized training investments are focused on either Target Populations or Target Sectors of ECW and often leverage the colleges’ non-credit programs as a launching point.

Both Klamath and Columbia Gorge Community Colleges are making significant investments in their infrastructure and as such have significant construction projects underway or nearly underway including the creation of Skills Centers, student housing and rural distance learning sites. Both colleges have been inclusive of ECW as well as Industry Partners in the early stages of planning and development. These relevant and essential expansion efforts will assist in creating even more relevant and accessible education and workforce training opportunities. See Section 1.4 for additional context.

In addition to the traditional ways of investing in training, ECW has also worked with Sector Partners to identify other ways to ensure a ready pipeline of talent to meet their industry needs. See the example in Section 2.3 under **Aligning workforce system programs and services and investments**.

3.8 Describe efforts to coordinate supportive services provided through workforce investment activities in the local area, including facilitating transportation for customers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(11)]

Supportive services are offered to eliminate barriers to employment for program participants, or to support participants in need of access to training or employment. Participants may not have the proper tools, equipment, or transportation they need to achieve success.

As part of the Local Leadership Team (LLT) service strategy, supportive services available through the various WSO partner’s resources are discussed to maximize service delivery opportunities and avoid duplication of services. If common gaps and/or needs become apparent through LLTs, the area of needs are elevated to ECW for clarity and support to address the common need across the region.

3.9 Based on the analysis described in Section 1.1-1.3, identify the populations that the local area plans to focus its efforts and resources on, also known as targeted populations.

As a result of this nearly yearlong process of reviewing data including demographics, existing services and gaps and through robust discussion, ECW’s Board identified specific under-served populations to strategically focus investments and services to support. These data-driven decisions included considerations of where there was not a specific program that focused on that population and/or where an intervention might unlock an untapped or under-utilized workforce.

As a result, in addition to the populations prioritized under WIOA (low-income individuals, those who are math or reading deficient and those receiving public assistance), ECW also prioritizes the populations below:

- Emergent Workforce
- Criminal Justice Impacted Individuals
- English Language Learners

Myriad efforts are underway to better serve the emergent workforce in the East Cascades area as identified in section 1.5 including increasing paid internships/work experiences for youth, access to pre-apprenticeship opportunities and STEM programs to encourage development of critical thinking, problem solving and tech skills.

To better activate the talent of individuals impacted by the criminal justice system, ECW convenes providers from WorkSource and other community-based organizations serving this population to ensure the array of services needed will be available pre- and post-release. ECW developed relationships with the two state prisons in this area – Warner Creek Correctional Facility in Lake County and Deer Ridge Correctional Facility in Jefferson County. Services are being provided inside Deer Ridge (on hold due to COVID-19) including resume development, employer presentations and pre-release job interviews. In addition, our partners at Oregon Employment Department have secured two full time positions that will be placed part time inside the prison and part time at the adjacent WorkSource Center to provide both pre-release and post-release support for job search and placement services.

There has been slower progress on the need’s analysis for English Language Learners but with renewed interest from Board members, the workgroup has been re-convened and we look forward to supporting these efforts in the coming years.

3.10 Based on the analysis described Section 1, identify all industries where a sector partnership(s) is currently being convened in the local area or there will be an attempt to convene a sector partnership and the timeframe. Identify whether or not the Next Gen model is being used for each sector partnership. If the Next Gen model is not being used, describe why it is not being used.

In 2019, ECW aligned all four of the Sector Partnerships being convened in this region to increase alignment, economies of scale and efforts across the region including: Construction, Health Care, Manufacturing and Tech. Each of the three sub-regions have a mix of varying levels of these four industries so partnerships are more active in some sub-regions than others. Sector Partnerships meet quarterly, and some have sub-groups that meet on off months to conduct work in support of the larger collaborative’s goals. ECW embraces the Next Gen model, in fact staff, some board members and sector partners have attended training and conferences to ensure broader understanding and adherence to the model.

3.11 Based on the analysis described Section 1, describe the local investment strategy toward targeted sectors strategies identified in 3.10 and targeted populations identified in 3.9.

Examples of ECW’s investment strategies in support of both target populations and sector partnerships have been outlined in many sections of this plan including Sections 2.2, 2.4, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, 3.12, 3.13, and 4.2. Please refer to those Sections for specific examples.

Overall, ECW investment strategies related to Sector Partnerships are industry-driven to meet a common challenge. The training vehicle may vary (cohort, customized, apprenticeship, recruitment to existing training, etc.) but a hallmark of these investments includes a commitment from employers to ideally hire, but minimally interview successful training completers. Further ECW seeks to leverage other investments and encourages a public-private co-investment model.

In relation to target populations, ECW seeks to leverage existing programs and services delivered within and outside WorkSource East Cascades as well as WIOA Title I Youth programs. This commitment to alignment and co-investment leverages expertise and programs that are relevant and effective with identified target populations.

3.12 Identify and describe the strategies and services that are and/or will be used to:

- A. Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs in addition to targeted sector strategies
- B. Support a local workforce development system described in 3.2 that meets the needs of businesses
- C. Better coordinate workforce development programs with economic development partners and programs

D. Strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs. This may include the implementation of incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, work-based learning programs, apprenticeship models, customized training programs, or utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies that support the local board's strategy in 3.1.

[WIOA Sec. 108(b)(4)(A&B)]

Industry Engagement is a critical element and part of what ECW contributes to the public workforce system throughout the East Cascades region. ECW has historically served as the neutral convener and facilitator that brought support and industry partners together to collaborate using the Next Gen model wherein Industry leads, and support partners listen and respond. With a small staff and very large physical area to serve this has not always been the most effective strategy therefore a new approach was needed to ensure effectiveness. To this end, ECW piloted a model wherein we contracted with a support partner (Redmond Economic Development Inc.) who had more robust industry relationships and credibility, based on a longevity of relationships with the industry (Manufacturing) to be the convener of the Manufacturing Sector Partnership in Central Oregon. Based on the success and learning from this pilot, ECW will be launching a revised strategy across the region to ensure relevance, effectiveness, and adherence to the Next Gen model as we move forward.

In addition to Sector Partnership and the various training strategies outlined in previous sections, ECW partners closely with economic development providers to support the recruitment, retention, and expansion of businesses in the region.

3.13 Does the local board currently leverage or have oversight of funding outside of WIOA Title I funding and state general funds to support the local workforce development system? Briefly describe the funding and how it will impact the local system. If the local board does not currently have oversight of additional funding, does it have future plans to pursue them?

ECW models lean standards and rigorous funds management. With 71% Federal Funding, 10% State Funding and 19% Diverse Resources, ECW maintains below 20% resources in-house for coordination, convening and oversight costs, with 80% or greater resources being allocated to support training and workforce development, with a focus on target populations and sector strategies. Each year ECW continues to bring more resources to bear for local job seeker, youth, and businesses services, in fact, based on the most recent tax return in 2019, ECW brought in \$8 of revenue for every \$1 spent on payroll.

Further, ECW implements strategies for better leveraging of our direct state and federal resources to seek additional and more flexible dollars in support of the workforce system. Recent examples include securing funding for the creation of both a Central Oregon Behavioral Health Consortium (industry lead), awarded in the amount of \$1 million over three years by Oregon Health Authority and Oregon Health Sciences University, as well as the creation of North Cascades Youth Reengagement Network, awarded in the amount of \$290,000 over 6 months.

Section 4: Program Design and Evaluation

4.1 Describe 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. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

The COVID pandemic has necessitated WorkSource and Youth Providers to deliver services differently than ever before resulting in the creation more diverse access points. No longer is the expectation that staff work from a WorkSource Center solely and serve all businesses and job seekers in-person. As a result of the health and safety restrictions, additional methods of reaching customers (job seeker and business) have been developed and deployed including but not limited to:

- Virtual access to all WorkSource skill building workshops
- More effective utilization of multiple mediums for communication and support to customers beyond in-person including:
 - Phone
 - Electronic (predominately email)
 - Virtual (video calls, online courses, etc.)

4.2 Describe how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways, consistent with the Career Pathways Definitions. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

In support of Career Pathway development, ECW convenes several Sector Partnerships (see Section 3.10) in which industry leads the identification of their talent needs. Pathways should provide clear sequence of stackable credits and/or credentials across multiple institutions that enable participants to advance in careers in target in industries. These pathways emerge through ongoing engagement with industry partners, and education and training providers. ECW utilizes Sector Partnerships to integrate these efforts.

See also Section 3.7 regarding post-secondary education partners in the region, and Section 2.3 **-Creating and recognizing industry-driven credentials of value including essential employability skills** for an example career pathway co-development in the Construction Industry.

4.3 Describe how the local board will utilize co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs to maximize efficiencies and use of resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(3)]

Often, no one funding stream will cover all the true costs of supporting/launching an individual on their career pathway nor can one partner provide the robust array of specialized services that may be required; therefore, co-enrollment is an effective strategy. Through a cross referral system and based on the career plan for an adult job seeker, WorkSource partners collaborate to co-enroll adults into the programs and services that they most need to be successful. Further, to build on foundational investments made into services for WIOA Title I enrolled youth, co-enrollment in WIOA Title I Adult services and/or other programs in the community may be warranted to achieve their career goals.

4.4 Describe one-stop delivery system in the local area, consistent with the One-Stop Center Definitions including:

- A. The local board's efforts to ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services, including contracted services providers and providers on the eligible training provider list, through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, and workers and jobseekers. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(A)]

ECW uses several methods of continuous improvement with contracted service providers to ensure services meet employers', workers' and jobseekers' needs.

- Monthly contracted provider meetings are utilized to review enrollments, performance, expenditures, and problem solving. Quarterly narrative reports are also discussed at these monthly checks in meetings.

- Super IB is a monthly meeting during which all contracted (Adult/Dislocated/Youth) provider’s staff meet to share best practices and receive training. The goal is to create greater alignment and connectivity for all contracted providers, as well as ensure that our programs and services are meeting the needs of local employers, workers and job seekers.
- Compliance Meeting is a weekly meeting with contracted provider management to address outstanding issues, problem solve, conduct training and ensure our programs and services are meeting the needs of local employers, workers and job seekers.
- ECW convenes Sector Partnerships in Health Care, Tech, Manufacturing and Construction wherein business partners lead by articulating common needs, challenges and co-develop strategies to address their needs with support partners from education and training, economic development, industry associations, chambers, and community-based organizations.

B. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system in remote areas, through the use of technology, and through other means. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(B)]

Although across the East Cascades workforce area a variety of virtual ways to deliver services (see sections 4.1) using technology are available, they cannot be accessed without high-speed internet. There are many rural and frontier areas in East Cascades where high-speed internet is not available.

Therefore, ECW supports efforts by partners to increase highspeed internet access to residential areas across the region (e.g. Regional Solutions, Economic Service Districts, etc.). Community Colleges in this area are foundational partners in ensuring greater access to these more frontier areas as well in that they allow ECW to leverage their infrastructure investments in both facilities and technology. Columbia Gorge, Central Oregon and Klamath Community Colleges all offer simulcast technology allowing for synchronous and asynchronous delivery of content and facilities in remote areas where WorkSource Centers are not located.

C. How entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA section 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(C)]

ECW places high priority on ensuring compliance with WIOA section 188 and ADA requirements at all One-Stop locations. This is a compliance requirement as a condition of WorkSource Center certification that ECW conducts every 3 years. All comprehensive WorkSource Centers in the region are provided at barrier-free ground level. ECW will continue to assure appropriate staff training and support in connection with individuals experiencing disabilities.

Further, ECW is very fortunate to have both Vocational Rehabilitation and Oregon Commission for the Blind co-located in many of the comprehensive WorkSource centers, as per Section 3.2. This proximity has helped expedite more awareness and training of WorkSource partner staff.

D. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners by providing a summary of the area’s memorandum of understanding (and resource sharing agreements, if such documents are used). [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D)]

The Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreement between ECW and required core partners allocates infrastructure and career services costs based on each partner’s proportionate use and benefit received, federal cost principles, and local administrative cost requirements in authorizing federal law.

To be compliant with this requirement, ECW has developed two (2) cost pools that are allocated based on the above requirements across core partners. The first is related to the infrastructure costs (facility, phones,

internet, etc.) and it is allocated based on co-located partners leases and square footage, and for non-co-located partners the basis is the cost of the shared partner desk identified in each of the comprehensive WorkSource centers. The other cost pool is related to the delivery of career services and is still under development and will be part of the 2021 Resource Sharing Agreement negotiation.

- E. Describe how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake and case management information system for core programs and programs carried out by one-stop partners [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(21)]

WorkSource Centers in the ECW area currently use a technology-enabled enrollment system called WorkSource Oregon Management Information Systems (WOMIS). This system determines eligibility for multiple workforce programs, which then populates I-Trac. I-Trac is the customer data and performance tracking system for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services and other discretionary grants. Subcontractors have appropriate access to I-Trac and iMatchSkills (iMS). iMS is the statewide job matching system. After intake and eligibility is established, job referrals to open listings and verification of STEP eligibility are made through iMS. WorkSource Oregon staff across all partnerships may have access to I-Trac and iMS for case management of core programs. ECW staff support training in the field as changes to these systems are implemented across the state.

4.5 Consistent with the Guidance Letter on Minimum Training Expenditures, describe how the board plans to implement the occupational skill development expenditure minimum.

Clearly state whether the local board will:

- A. Expend a minimum 25% of WIOA funding under the local board's direct control on occupational skill development.
- OR
- B. Use an alternative formula that includes other income beyond WIOA funding to meet the minimum 25% expenditure minimum. Provide a description of other income it would like to include in calculating the expenditure minimum.

ECW has implemented Option B and has diversified its resources as outlined in 3.13 to meet the board's primary goals in support of its mission.

4.6 Describe the policy, process, and criteria for issuing individual training accounts (ITAs) including any limitations on ITA amounts. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

ECW has an Individual Training Accounts (ITA) policy for Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs. This policy outlines participant eligibility criteria, coordination of WIOA training funds and other federal assistance, ITA authorization requirements, ITA funding limits, continued ITA funding, and ITA modifications. Eligible participants engage with a Title 1B Employment Counselor for an individual assessment of job readiness, employment and training needs, financial, social and supportive needs, labor market demand and potential for successful completion. This is documented on an Individual Employment/Education Plan. Participants then choose a career training with Eligible Training Providers. Participants go through a scholarship application process for consideration of funding. Individuals with documented priority service considerations are prioritized accordingly. ITA's are intended to provide training services in instances where there is no grant assistance or insufficient assistance from other sources. The limit for an ITA is \$5,000, service provider managers or designees have the authority to increase the ITA limit by an additional \$1,000 on a case-by-case basis.

4.7 If training contracts are used, describe processes utilized by the local board to ensure customer choice in the selection of training programs, regardless of how the training services are to be provided. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(19)]

ECW's training providers utilize the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) to help guide participants towards training options, specifically when informing and Individual Training Account. If the ETPL does not provide a customer with adequate options for their industry or occupation, a search for reciprocal agreements with other

programs or assistance to facilitate adding additional programs onto the ETPL are explored. ECW has also implemented a waiver program to allow for resources to be accessed for training for individuals who are exploring alternative training options, which fall within the ETPL exceptions, such as self-guided programming. ECW wants to ensure that all participants, especially those that already have difficulty in gaining access to programming due to the distance in which they live from the nearest training centers, have adequate choices.

4.8 Describe process utilized by the local board to ensure that training provided is linked to in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area, or in another area to which a participant is willing to relocate. [WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G)(iii)]

ECW makes strategic investments in four (4) Target Industries based on guidance received directly from industry through our Sector Partnerships (see Section 3.11 and 3.12). This can result in both cohort/customized training investments with direct hire of those who successfully complete training or through individuals accessing Individual Training Accounts to pursue in-demand training from one of the Eligible Training Providers listed on the state's approved list.

4.9 Describe how rapid response activities are coordinated and carried out in the local area. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(8)]

ECW has a designated Rapid Response Liaison who is responsible for the oversight and implementation of Rapid Response services throughout the East Cascades region. To accommodate local area needs, Rapid Response Services are divided into three subregional teams and coordinated by an identified Rapid Response Coordinator:

- North – Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam and Wheeler Counties
- Central – Jefferson, Crook and Deschutes Counties
- South – Klamath and Lake Counties

Rapid Response Team members in each subregion include but are not limited to:

- WIOA Title 1B Service Provider
- Oregon Employment Department Business & Employment Specialist and Business Services Rep
- Trade Act Navigator
- State Labor Liaison
- Local community college
- Social Service agencies as appropriate

A company who may potentially or actually lay-off workers and/or the labor union who represents the affected workers will contact either the Rapid Response Liaison or the Rapid Response Coordinator in the area. In addition, the Rapid Response Team proactively reach out to companies they find in the news or via Quality Info who are experiencing or potentially experiencing downsizing. The Rapid Response Coordinator works with the company to create a Rapid Response Information Session based on the individual needs of the company. If the company has union representation, the State Labor Liaison is brought into the planning discussion. If the company was affected because of shifts in production to foreign countries or increased imports, Trade Act Navigators are brought into the conversation and a Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) petition is filed for additional assistance. If additional assistance funds are needed to support the affected workers a request for Rapid Response State Additional Assistance funds will be completed and submitted to the State Dislocated Worker Unit for approval. Upon approval, ECW coordinates the delivery of services among all WorkSource Oregon partners with the goal of getting the affected workers back to work in a comparable or higher wage position as quickly as possible.

4.10 Describe the design framework for youth programs utilized by the local board, and how the required 14 program elements are to be made available within that framework.

ECW currently contracts WIOA Title 1B Youth Programs through three separate youth provider contracts, separated by sub-region. Providers of youth services must have the capacity, experience, and the community networks necessary to operate comprehensive year-round services for eligible youth and young adults, located within their sub-region.

In addition, they must implement all required WIOA Youth Program Elements¹, either directly or through formalized partnerships with youth-serving organizations within the community; EC Works expects each of its youth providers to:

- Focus 80% of enrollments on Out-of-School Youth (OSY), as determined at the time of enrollment.
- Provide equitable services to eligible youth in their sub-region.
- Develop, document, and demonstrate progress on Individual Services Strategies for each youth, based on comprehensive assessments of career interest, educational needs, and short and long-term goals.
- Provide career exploration and work-based learning opportunities for all enrolled youth.
- Provide job search assistance, appropriate employment training, and job coaching to assist youth in securing and retaining employment.
- Provide services to support and prepare youth for successful transitions into and through completion of post-secondary education and/or training.
- Ensure a 20% minimum expenditure is spent on Youth Work Experience/Internships.
- Deliver services through the following program phases:
 1. Outreach and Recruitment: Implement strategies to inform potentially eligible youth about available services. Appropriate activities may include information sessions, targeted recruitment through partner organizations, schools, and other agencies.
 2. Enrollment and Eligibility: Provide on-site eligibility determination and enrollment and maintain capacity throughout the contract period.
 3. Active Enrollment: Ensure that youth receive intensive program service, related to their Individual Service Strategy.
 4. Follow-up/ Retention and Advancement: Ensure that youth receive one year of services following transition into post-secondary education or employment.
- Ensure compliance with all WIOA, state and local laws, regulations, EC Works policies, procedures, and strategic direction.
- Ensure that all staff are trained on federal law, regulations and policies, state policies, and EC Works policies and standards.
- Actively participate in training opportunities and monthly provider check-ins, as instructed by the EC Works.
- Ensure that staff can equitably respond to the emerging needs and opportunities of non-English speaking participants.
- Implement strategies and initiatives to ensure that all services are available and accessible to customers with multiple barriers, including but not limited to those with disabilities, pregnant or parenting, lack of a high school diploma or general education development (GED), basic literacy/math deficiency, homelessness or housing instability, involvement in the foster care system, and/or involvement with the juvenile justice system.

¹ Employment and Training Administration, Training and Employment Guidance Letter WIOA [NO. 21-16](#), March 2, 2017

Section 5: Compliance

5.1 Describe the process for neutral brokerage of adult, dislocated worker, and youth services. Identify the competitive process and criteria (such as targeted services, leverage of funds, etc.) used to award funds to sub-recipients/contractors of WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services, state the names of contracted organizations, and the duration of each contract. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(16)]

ECW competitively procures all WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth services to ensure maximum competition and adequate delivery of services. Competitive procurements are separated by and rotate by the sub-regions, on an average cycle of 3 years. During an open procurement, all applicants are prohibited from contacting members of the ECW board, the Central Oregon Workforce Consortium, and any staff member regarding the procurement, to avoid real or perceived conflicts of interest. ECW takes every precaution to ensure that both the development of the requests as well as our review are kept confidential until an official award has been announced.

The funding amounts used are based upon anticipated funding for the upcoming program year (July 1- June 30), upon which the applicant should use to base their proposal. In addition, a 15% Minimum Training Expenditure Rate (MTE) for Adult and Dislocated Worker Services, is required for applicants to speak to within their proposal, that will contribute to ECW overall 25% MTE as required by the Workforce Talent Development Board.

For Youth Services, a Minimum Enrollment Capacity based on a Cost Per Participant Calculated at \$6,675/per youth divided by the total anticipated award is calculated. Applicants must address how they will maintain this capacity throughout the program year to ensure they continue to uphold this enrollment capacity as youth exit the program.

In addition, applicants must describe in detail the ways they will braid or leverage new or existing resources to maximize limited funds and integrated services to avoid duplication. Other key components of the procurements are in requiring all applicants to respond to how their organization has the capacity to manage federal funding, comply with federal regulations and meet performance. Moreover, all respondents must address their strategies around delivery of services to diverse populations, including economically disadvantaged individuals, persons experiencing disabilities, individuals with low educational attainment or low literacy proficiencies, veterans, English language learners, and individuals with criminal back grounds.

5.2 Identify the One-Stop Operator and describe the established procedures for ongoing certification of one-stop centers.

ECW has an existing contract with Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership (OMEP) for One-Stop-Operator Services, which will expire on June 30, 2021 and will not be eligible for renewal. ECW will be procuring for One-Stop-Operator Services, for which OMEP is eligible to apply, during the submission of this Local Plan, with a contract start date of July 1, 2021.

All Comprehensive and Affiliate One-Stop Centers are Certified by ECW every three years, using an Assessment developed by ECW, which evaluates the center on four categories: Availability of Programs; Effectiveness in Serving Customers; Implementation & Continuous Improvement of the WorkSource Standards; Physical Accessibility.

As part of ongoing assessment and contributing to Center Certification, our One-Stop-Operator is specifically responsible for evaluating Effectiveness of Serving Customers and for Implementation and Continuous Improvement of the WorkSource Oregon Standards.

5.3 Provide an organization chart as Attachment A that depicts a clear separation of duties between the board and service provision.

See Attachment A

5.4 Provide the completed Local Board Membership Roster form included in Oregon draft policy WIOA 107(b) – Local Board Membership Criteria as Attachment B. See Local Plan References and Resources.

See Attachment B

5.5 Provide the policy and process for nomination and appointment of board members demonstrating compliance with Oregon draft policy WIOA 107(b) – Local Board Membership Criteria as Attachment C.

See Attachment C

5.6 Provide the completed Local Workforce Development Board Certification Request form included in Oregon draft policy WIOA 107(c) – Appointment and Certification of Local Workforce Development Board as Attachment D. See Local Plan References and Resources.

See Attachment D

5.7 Provide the name, organization, and contact information of the designated equal opportunity officer for WIOA within the local area.

Jessica Fitzpatrick, Director of Compliance & Operations, jessica@ecworks.org and 541-904-5084

5.8 Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(15)]

ECW serves as the fiscal agent as designated by the Central Oregon Workforce Consortium.

5.9 Indicate the negotiated local levels of performance for the federal measures. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

Adult/Dislocated Worker

Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;	71.4%
Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;	71%
Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;	\$6,400
Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;	60.5%
Measurable Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.	51%

Youth

Employment Rate – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;	63.5%
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Employment Rate – 4th Quarter After Exit: The percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program;	63%
Median Earnings – 2nd Quarter After Exit: The median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program;	\$3,477
Credential Attainment: The percentage of those participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in on-the-job training (OJT) and customized training) who attain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program. A participant who has attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent is included in the percentage of participants who have attained a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent only if the participant also is employed or is enrolled in an education or training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within one year after exit from the program;	68.4%
Measurable Skill Gains: The percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.	51%

5.10 Describe indicators used by the local board to measure performance and effectiveness of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), contracted service providers and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(17)]

ECW uses the above negotiated performance and calculates the following for youth:

- Enrollment Capacity Expectation - The number of total youth enrolled at any one time, between Active and Follow-up services (calculated at \$6,675 cost per youth). As youth exit the program, new eligible youth must be enrolled to maintain a consistent enrollment capacity.
- Out-of-School Youth Minimum Enrollment Expectation - 80% of enrollment based on ECW policy for 80% Out-of-School Youth vs In-School Youth enrollment

The performance, program, and fiscal compliance of sub-recipients is managed through on-going and consistent monitoring throughout the program year. As per Section 3.1, all Title 1B Managers participate in weekly compliance meetings with the ECW Director of Compliance and Operations, the Director of Programs, and the Program Manager to ensure consistent touch points around new and changing guidance and to address substantive issues and matters of best practice. Title 1B Managers also participate in monthly Local Leadership Team meetings, co-hosted by the One-Stop-Operator and the ECW Program Manager- aimed at continuous improvement for service delivery within the one-stop-system. ECW has also implemented quarterly Super 1B which includes both managers and staff of the 1B system to attend and surface issues and matters of best practice within the region. Similarly, ECW have implemented a Super LLT meeting, which convenes our three regional LLTs together to address one-stop service delivery issues on a more regional and system wide level.

ECW provides program and compliance review of each monthly billing statement to ensure that the monthly billing statements and request for reimbursement align with the delivery of services and to address any need for reallocation of resources, under expenditure, or over expenditure. Each of the sub-recipients must also provide a Quarterly Narrative Report for each of their grants, detailing their progress towards outcomes and performance milestones and to address any issues they have with meeting customer need or requirements outlined within their scope of work.

Lastly, each provider/sub-recipient, including our One-Stop-Operator is required to undergo an annual Fiscal and Program Monitoring by ECW and based on the size of their contract award and level of risk, which includes a review of a sample of General Ledger Entries, Participant Expenses, Eligibility, Record Keeping, and Compliance with Program and Fiscal Standards and Policies.

5.11 Provide a description of the replicated cooperative agreements, as defined by WIOA 107(d)(11), in place between the local board and the Department of Human Services' Office of Vocational Rehabilitation Services with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

The Memorandum of Understanding and the Resource Sharing Agreement to which ECW and DHS-VR are the signatories provides that:

- Partners will continue to work together to provide services to participants.
- Share service opportunities and information on a regular basis through the Local Leadership Team meetings.
- Provide space at non-located partner offices to the extent possible.
- Mutually agree to explore opportunities to develop dedicated space for full-time provision of shared services at single locations, including entry into shared leases.

5.12 Describe the process for getting input into the development of the local plan in compliance with WIOA section 108(d) and providing public comment opportunity prior to submission. Be sure to address how members of the public, including representatives of business, labor organizations, and education were given an opportunity to provide comments on the local plans. If any comments received that represent disagreement with the plan were received, please include those comments here. See Local Plan References and Resources. [WIOA Sec. 108(b)(14)]

ECW staff to update following the completion of the public comment process to ensure accuracy; Executive Committee members will review the entire plan at their March 9, 2021 meeting prior to final submittal.

5.13 State any concerns the board has with ensuring the compliance components listed below are in place. Copies of documents are not required at this time but may be requested during monitoring.

- Administration of funds
- Agreement between all counties and other local governments, if applicable, establishing the consortium of local elected officials
- Agreement between the Local Elected Officials and the Workforce Development Board
- Local Workforce Development Board Bylaws
- Code of Conduct
- Approved Budget
- Memorandum of Understanding and/or Resource Sharing Agreements, as applicable
- Required policies on the following topics
 - Financial Management including cost allocation plan, internal controls, cash management, receipts of goods, cost reimbursement, inventory and equipment, program income, travel reimbursement, audit requirements and resolution, annual report, property management, debt collection, procurement, allowable costs
 - Program Management including equal opportunity for customers, supportive services, needs related payments, file management, eligibility, self-sufficiency criteria, individual training accounts, layoff assistance, priority of services, grievance for eligible training providers list, determination of an insufficient number of eligible training providers in the local area (if applicable), transitional jobs, stipends, training verification/refunds,
 - Risk Management including records retention and public access, public records requests, monitoring, grievance, incident, disaster recovery plan
 - Board Policies including board appointment, board resolutions, conflict of interest
 - Human Resources including employee classification, benefits, holidays and PTO, recruitment and selection, employee development, discipline, layoffs, terminations, and severance, drug

policy, sexual harassment, equal opportunity/non-discrimination

- Professional Services Contract for Staffing/Payroll Services, if applicable
- Contract for I-Trac Data Management System

EC Works is compliant with all the required components and does not have any concerns related to the monitoring of any of the required policies.

However, as we further explore the relative benefit and proportional use of services to our common customer, in compliance with WIOA Sec. 108(b)(6)(D) a common data system or means to ensure data systems integration is essential. Currently, WorkSource partners need to enter data into multiple systems that do not all connect. This creates a burden for both customers and staff and misses an opportunity to ensure greater alignment and ability to serve our common customers efficiently and effectively.

5.14 Provide the completed copies of the following local board approval forms:

- Statement of Concurrence
- Partner Statement of Agreement
- Assurances

WIOA compliant versions of these documents are posted at: <https://oregonlocalplanning.weebly.com/>