|  |
| --- |
| St. Lawrence County |
| Local Plan |
| July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2025 |

# **Table of Contents**

[**Table of Contents** 1](#_Toc63344908)

[**Strategic Planning Elements** 2](#_Toc63344909)

[**Local Workforce Development System** 3](#_Toc63344910)

[**Workforce Development and Career Pathways** 4](#_Toc63344911)

[**Access to Employment and Services** 4](#_Toc63344912)

[**Business Engagement** 6](#_Toc63344913)

[**Program Coordination** 6](#_Toc63344914)

[**Title II Program Coordination** 7](#_Toc63344915)

[**Youth Activities** 8](#_Toc63344916)

[**Administration** 9](#_Toc63344917)

[**Training Services** 10](#_Toc63344918)

[**Public Comment** 10](#_Toc63344919)

[**List of Attachments** 10](#_Toc63344920)

# **Strategic Planning Elements**

Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs) and Regional Demand Lists are now maintained [online](https://dol.ny.gov/lmi-workforce-planning). Changes to the Demand Lists can be made by following the directions on the webpage.

I attest that the priority ranked list of the LWDA’s demand occupations was last updated on [specify date in the text box below].

|  |
| --- |
| 4.22.2021 |

How is this information shared with the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB)? What was the last date on which it was shared?

|  |
| --- |
| Quarterly Workforce Development Board Meeting held June 9, 2021 |

1. Provide an analysis of regional economic conditions, including:
2. Existing and emerging in-demand sectors and occupations; and

|  |
| --- |
| Demand Sectors Sorted by Number of Openings  St. Lawrence County, April 27, 2020 - April 26, 2021  Industry Sector code Industry Sector Job Postings  62 Health Care and Social Assistance 1,929  44-45 Retail Trade 789  61 Educational Services 322  31-33 Manufacturing 266  72 Accommodation and Food Services 183  48-49 Transportation and Warehousing 160  52 Finance and Insurance 133  54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 102  92 Public Administration 101  56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services 94  23 Construction 89  51 Information 87  53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing 22  22 Utilities 21  42 Wholesale Trade 20  81 Other Services (except Public Administration) 16  11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting 7  21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction 6  71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation 4  55 Management of Companies and Enterprises 3 |

1. The employment needs of businesses in those sectors and occupations.

|  |
| --- |
| Demand Occupations, as sorted by number of openings in St. Lawrence County from April 2020-2021 are as reported: Registered Nurses - 444 openings (10%), Retail Salespersons - 270 (6%), Heavy and Tractor- Trailer Truck Drivers - 159 (4%), First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers - 98 (2%), Patient Representatives - 89 (2%), Stock Clerks, Sales Floor - 88 (2%), Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses - 86 (2%), Laborers and Freight, Stock and Material Movers - 83 (2%), Medical and Health services Managers - 82 (2%), Cashiers -80 (2%), Critical Care Nurses - 80 (2%), Nursing Assistants - 74 (2%), and Home Health Aides - 69 (2%). All other job openings were 1 % of the occupations posted.  In total, 24% of the job openings were in the health care field. |

1. Describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to meet the employment needs of businesses, including those in in-demand sectors and employing individuals in demand occupations.

|  |
| --- |
| Employers report, through the St. Lawrence County IDA, that they are seeking individuals with professional skills, once referred to as "soft skills". Employers state that they can train entry level employees on "job specific" skills, but need candidates that can provide good customer service and are reliable. The region's employers also have a difficult time recruiting professional level candidates due to the area's rural nature and the relatively low pay compared to more urban areas. More recently, it has come to light that the manufacturing sector is seeking employees with maintenance, vocational tech and fabrication skills to ensure that existing business can stay relative and that emerging enterprises are able to garner the skilled laborers necessary to compete in the marketplace. |

1. Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including:
2. Current labor force employment and unemployment numbers;

|  |
| --- |
| March, 2021 Jefferson-Lewis LWDA  Civilian Labor Force total : 53,900  Employed total: 50,000  Unemployed total: 3,900  UI rate total: 7.2%  March, 2021 St. Lawrence County LWDA  Civilian Labor Force total : 42,500  Employed total: 39,700  Unemployed total: 2,900  UI rate total: 6.7%  March, 2021 North Country LWDA (Clinton, Essex, Franklin & Hamilton)  Civilian Labor Force total : 168,700  Employed total: 157,300  Unemployed total: 11,400  UI rate total: 6.8% |

1. Information on any trends in the labor market; and

|  |
| --- |
| Labor force issues are the top concern locally and nationwide. The size of the labor force was at a historic low in St. Lawrence County before the pandemic. That resulted in additional workers leaving the labor force as labor force participation rates declined. At a peek of approximately 52,000 in the workforce in 2000, a pre-COVID decrease to approximately 44,000 in 2014 and a further decline due to the pandemic speaks to the need to rebuild our local workforce.  Source: New York State Department of Labor Division of Research and Statistics    The working age population is projected to continue to decline in the near future before stabilizing at the end of the decade. This will make it difficult to fill openings that require strenuous physical labor in the building and trade industries. The working population between the ages of 24 -55 years of age is projected to decrease from approximately 40,000 in 2020 to 38,000 in 2031.  As 18 percent of the workers in the county are between the age of 55 and 64 they can be expected to retire with in the next decade. 40 percent of the county’s workers are 45-64. St. Lawrence County’s population will continue to age.  Source: Cornell Program on Applied Demographics (PAD)  As net out migration continues in the North Country Region and St. Lawrence County, the primarily source of labor will likely be local. The workforce can be strengthened by increasing labor force participation rates and reducing employee turnover. Both are moved in the right direction with education, training and support services provided by the One Stop Career Center.    "Compared to changing labor force and population trends, reducing employee turnover, or conversely, increasing employee retention is the least problematic, least expensive and quickest way to maintain an employer’s workforce.    There are many facets of labor force participation that provide opportunities for increasing the size of the work force.  ● Reduced qualifications - Reducing training and educational prerequisite for jobs increase the availability of workers. While some job requirements may be proforma, waiving of others will require training for the employee.  ● Women - The labor force participation rate of women grew rapidly from the 1970’s through the 2000’s, but it has since plateaued and remains below the rate of males. Opportunities exist for reducing issues preventing increased labor force participation of women.  ● Minorities - Minority labor force participation remains substantially below the population as a whole and provides an underutilized pool of labor.  ● Ex-offenders - While ban the box legislation has been passed, ex-offenders still provide a worker resource.  ● Veterans - As many military personnel leave before retirement, veterans provide an additional source of labor.  ● Compensation - While increasing wages may not be always possible, non-monetary benefits can bring more workers into the labor force. Benefits such as reduced and flexible hours are equally as important as wages for some workers.  ● Older workers - Aging workers with reduced labor force participation rates may stay in or re-enter the labor force with the right monetary and/or non-monetary compensation.  ● Disabilities - Workers with disabilities are underrepresented in the labor force, but they can work with reasonable accommodations.  ● Low income workers - Barriers to labor force participation increase for workers with the lowest income, reducing impediments for work, education and training can result in increased labor force participation rates.  Given the population as it exists today and will in the future, all the opportunities to reduce turnover and increase labor force participation must be explored. There is no one source of labor that can be made available, instead we must consider all potential sources of labor, including those listed above as well as others. “ |

1. Educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment.

|  |
| --- |
| Graduation Rates - NYSED, August 2020  Clinton County - 833 Total Students, 732 Graduates (88%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 35%, Regents Diploma 44%, Local Diploma 9%, Drop Out 7%, Credential w/o Diploma 2%  Essex County - 256 Total Students, 230 Graduates (90%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 39%, Regents Diploma 43%, Local Diploma 9%, Drop Out 5%, Credential w/o Diploma 3%  Franklin County - 510 Total Students, 451 Graduates (88%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 37%, Regents Diploma 42%, Local Diploma 10%, Drop Out 4%, Credential w/o Diploma 3%  Hamilton County - 30 Total Students, 26 Graduates (87%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 37%, Regents Diploma 50%, Local Diploma 0%, Drop Out 7%, Credential w/o Diploma 3%  Jefferson County - 1174 Total Students, 1023 Graduates (87%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 39%, Regents Diploma 43%, Local Diploma 5%, Drop Out 7%, Credential w/o Diploma 1%  Lewis County - 312 Total Students, 283 Graduates (91%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 48%, Regents Diploma 38%, Local Diploma 4%, Drop Out 4%, Credential w/o Diploma 4%  St. Lawrence County - 1128 Total Students, 967 Graduates (86%), Regents Diploma w/Distinction- 39%, Regents Diploma 43%, Local Diploma 4%, Drop Out 6%, Credential w/o Diploma 3% |

1. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region.
2. Identify strengths and weaknesses of these workforce development activities.

|  |
| --- |
| Any evaluation of workforce development activities in the North Country region must begin with the fact that the region is extremely large (12,550+ square miles), rural (approximately 36 people per square mile), and decentralized (its two largest cities, Plattsburgh and Watertown, being located 160 miles apart). Therefore, the region's economic activity - and the employment opportunities created by it - is also decentralized. These geo-demographic realities make the task of training and education of the workforce more challenging than would be the case if there was a larger population, living in a smaller area with a core community that focused the area's ecomonic activity. Added to these realities is the fact that much of the land area of the region's seven counties (except Jefferson County) is partly or wholly within the boundries of the Adirondack Park, whose economy is vastly different from the areas that ring it.  Much of the region has been de-industrialized, with the possible exception of Plattsburgh; a trend that has been underway for 40 - 50 years. That, with the small growth in population, has resulted in a challenging environment in which to educate and train the workforce for jobs for a changing and de-industrialized business climate.  Higher education (ten colleges/universities with a student population of approximately 29,000 in 2017) has been expanding, creating jobs and trained workers for the last two decades. Agriculture, particularly dairy farming, though undergoing consolidation, is still a vital part of much of the regions's economy. Because the population is aging, and the since the region has at least a dozen hospitals, health care is a growing employer. The Adirondack Park, together with toursist attractions like Lake Placid and the Thousand Islands, are located within the North Country region, so tourism is still strong. While hard-hit by COVID 19, the touism sector is expected to rebound as pandemic restrictions loosen and people look for ways to return to normalcy.  In light of this, the North Country Regional Economic Development Council continues to strategize and set goals for the region. Their most recent effort's Overall Goal is "to train its workforce to meet our employers' needs today and for the future." Four Strategic Objectives include: 1. Reduce barriers to enable the region to retain and recruit its needed workforce 2. Develop incumbent worker training opportunities in the region to meet current and future employer requirements 3. Recruit and retain the North Country Regional Workforce in order to increase the capacity and capability of the workforce 4. Develop the workforce beginning in our K -12 educational system.  Each of these strategies include the tactics by which they plan to accomplish the objective, the desired outcome, as well as next steps to be taken. This continual re-examination of data, shifting of goal setting and plans of action, as well as evaluation of successes and shortfalls helps to, ultimately, develop a workforce that meets the needs of local employers. |

1. Does the local area have the capacity to address the education and skill needs of the local workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of businesses? Please explain.

|  |
| --- |
| The WDB has determined that the educational and training providers in the LWDA - especially SUNY Canton, the SUNY Canton CREST Center and BOCES - offer training programs that could address the education and skills needs of the local workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and businesses. It is important to highlight that these organizations, as well as others serving the LWDA, have a history of responding to the needs of local employers - by developing new programs as business needs have evolved.  It is important to note, however, that there is little competition among educational and training providers in the LWDA - a fact that is to be expected in a sparsely populated rural, county. Thankfully, given the low population density and the decentralization of the population, the County has a wide array of local training and education options available to both workers and businesses. One major exception to this may be that farm worker training is difficult to obtain - possibly because most training for traditional farm employees has been done on the job by the farm owners themselves. However, SUNY Canton is taking action to revive its long-dormant agricultural studies program and BOCES also has an agricultural CTE program initiative focused on training for agricultural jobs located at the St. Lawrence County Cornell Cooperative Extension. |

1. Describe the LWDB’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

|  |
| --- |
| The mission of the St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board, as a partnership of private and public community resources, is to ensure the economic vitality of our county by building and maintaining a quality workforce development system that strengthens and provides economic, educational, and developmental opportunities for all citizens and employers. |

1. How do the local area’s workforce development programs, including programs provided by partner agencies, support this strategic vision?

|  |
| --- |
| The LWDA's partner agencies have conscientiously demonstrated their commitment to supporting the WDB's vision. They have continued to find solutions and provide opportunities for education, training and supportive services despite continuing budget reductions, COVID-19 related constraints, and a difficult training and employment climate due to a global pandemic. |

1. How will the local area, working with the entities that carry out the core programs, align available resources to achieve the strategic vision and goals?

|  |
| --- |
| Despite the difficultly in doing so, the Partners continue to hold monthly meetings to discuss in detail available resources and avenues through which these resources can be delivered to our customers. When appropriate, customers are referred to other agencies for assistance when it is available. |

1. Describe the LWDB’s goals relating to performance accountabilities measures. How do these measures support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency?

|  |
| --- |
| The LWDB aligns its goals with Department of Labor performance measures to ensure the economic vitality of our county by building and maintaining a quality workforce development system that strengthens and provides economic, educational and developmental opportunities for all citizens and employers. It encompasses employment, earnings and supporting a viable and educated workforce. |

# **Local Workforce Development System**

1. Identify the programs, whether provided by the Career Center or any partners, that are a part of the local area’s workforce development system, including:
2. Core programs;

|  |
| --- |
| WIOA Title I Programs: Adult, Dislocated Worker, Year-Round Youth - delivered by St. Lawrence County Title I staff  Adult Education and Family Literacy: delivered by St. Lawrence-Lewis Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES)  Wagner-Peyser: delivered by the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL)  Services for Persons with Disabilities: delivered by ACCES-VR  Services to Veterans: delivered by NYSDOL and St. Lawrence County Veterans Department  Services to Older Citizens: Senior Community Service Employment Programs delivered by A4TD  Services to Blind Citizens: delivered by NYS Commission for the Blind  Services to People Suffering from Economic Dislocation: delivered by the St. Lawrence County Department of Social Services (SLCDSS) and the St. Lawrence County Community Development Program |

1. Programs that support alignment under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006; and

|  |
| --- |
| SUNY Canton administers and supports activities under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006. |

1. Other workforce development programs, if applicable.

|  |
| --- |
| Trade Adjustment Assistance - administered by St. Lawrence County Title I staff  Summer Youth - administered by St. Lawrence County Title I staff  St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau  St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES Workforce Development Training Program and Community Career Services Center  Akwesasne Mohawk Tribe  Job Corps  Workforce Development Institute  St. Lawrence County IDA  New York Power Authority Economic Development |

1. Describe how the local area will ensure continuous improvement of services and service providers.

|  |
| --- |
| The LWDA's primary vehicle for ensuring the continuous improvement of services and service providers is the monthly Partner Meetings. Additionally, information gathered at WDB Directors' meetings, DOL calls/meetings and discussions held with personnel from other WDB areas helps to circulate ideas and methodology that might otherwise remain unexplored. |

1. Describe how eligible providers will meet the employment needs of local businesses, workers, and jobseekers.

|  |
| --- |
| Each of the providers/partners (whose programs are listed above) understand that economic growth in the County cannot occur unless and until the businessses that create and maintain jobs have properly trained workers. A properly trained workforce is as much infrastructure for a business as their utilities and equipment.  All partners understand that they must not just respond to an employers' current training needs, but must aggressively seek information from employers regarding their changing workforce training expectations.  Ongoing conversations with local businesses, the St. Lawrence County IDA and Chamber of Commerce help to drive conversations that help meet local employment needs. |

1. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the Career Center partners.

|  |
| --- |
| All partners bring to the "training table" the resources that their particular programs allow. However, these programs present more that just funding opportunities to the table. For example, some Career Center partners bring physical assets such as classrooms (BOCES, colleges, St. Lawrence Co.), resource rooms, expertise or office space to the equation.  Most important is the professional experience and commitment that the various partners' staff possess. This experience encompasses both program familiarity and working across agencies to provide the most comprehensive service to St. Lawrence County residents. |

# **Workforce Development and Career Pathways**

1. Describe how the LWDB will facilitate the development of career pathways, including co-enrollment in core programs when appropriate.

|  |
| --- |
| The SLCWDB supports the development of career pathways as a workforce building strategy by linking the basic academic education provided by Title II providers to occupational skills training programs. When this type of programming is combined with integrated support services from partner agencies, community members are positioned to advance over time to higher level training and education that will enable them to access living wage jobs within local industry sectors. Career pathways are organized as a series of steps that lead community members toward employment with industry recognized credentials, certificates and /or licenses. The selection of specific career pathways is identified locally through business sector engagement and developed collaboratively by the community of partners, specifically occupational training program providers. Pathways will be highlighted by those sectors that need skilled employees and also have local promotional opportunities. |

1. Describe how the LWDB will improve access to activities leading to recognized postsecondary credentials.

|  |
| --- |
| Five colleges and universities operate facilities in St. Lawrence County. All offer recoginzed post-secondary credentials. One of them, SUNY Canton, has built its business plan around preparing the workforce for real world jobs, in St. Lawrence County and elsewhere.  In addition, since a "recognized post-secondary credential" also means a credential consisting of an industry-recognized certificate or certification, a certificate of completion of an apprenticeship, a license recognized by the State involved or Federal Government, or an associate or baccalaureate degree, all of the certificate based programs offered by the BOCES Adult Education & Workforce Development programs (e.g., CNA, Phlebotomy Technician, EKG Technician, Pharmancy Technician, Administrative Medical Assistant, etc.) would equally qualify. BOCES is also the Designated Lead Education Agency for St. Lawrence County for apprenticeship programs and is the primary provider of the related instruction.  The WDB has regularly ensured that Career Center staff is allerted to opportunities to direct job seekers to post-secondary programs at SUNY Canton and BOCES that will help them achieve their career goals. It is important not only to continue this practice, but to ensure that all partners are also familiar with the career opportunities at the County's other colleges and universities as well. The proper forum for this will continue to be our monthly Partners' Meetings. |

1. Are these credentials transferable to other occupations or industries (“portable”)? If yes, please explain.

|  |
| --- |
| Yes. The County's colleges are fully accredited, which makes their credit courses transferable. In addition, the County's higher education institutions offer many articulation agreements that build on credentials into more advanced studies. SUNY Canton and the Career Technical Education programs at BOCES offer technical programs that build participants' skill levels and are portable In particular, the BOCES certificate programs issue State and National industry recognized credentials that are portable anywhere within the state or country. Apprenticeship journeymen cards are also transferable. |

1. Are these credentials part of a sequence of credentials that can be accumulated over time (“stackable”)? If yes, please explain.

|  |
| --- |
| Yes, these credentials are part of a sequence, especially with BOCES and SUNY Canton. The stackable credentialing consists of certificate programs; complimentary and sequential training that builds competency over time.  The noteworthy examples of this are the BOCES Adult Education & Workforce Development Department. It has stackable credentials programs for Administrative Medical Assistant (which encompasses CPR, First Aid, EKG Technician, Nurses Assistant, Phlebotomy Technician and Clinical Skills for the Medical Assistant). BOCES also offers three Building Maintenance Certificates. In addition, all of the apprentice trades have a sequence of related instruction that is stackable. |

# **Access to Employment and Services**

1. Describe how the LWDB and its partners will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly individuals with barriers to employment.

|  |
| --- |
| The SLC WDB and its partners attempt to expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services through:  Media advertisements - television, radio, emailed bulletins, printed materials (brochures, posters, fliers, etc.) and newsprint  Social media - Facebook, Instagram  Websites - both our own as well as our partners'  Orientations  Job fairs - both in person and virtual through the NYSDOL platform  Targeted employment recruiting  Virtual training and instruction  Literacy and career centers located throughout St. Lawrence County |

1. Describe how the local area will facilitate access to services though the One-Stop delivery system, including remote areas, though the use of technology.

|  |
| --- |
| The SLC WDB and its partners attempt to achieve this goal through the use of social media, text, email and ZOOM technology.  Websites (including links to partners' websites) including on-line fillable forms  Virtual training and learning experiences (Coursera, NYSDOL virtual workshops)  Job fairs at remote locations and virtual job fairs  Purple Briefcase - a new innovative cloud software platform that allows for the creation of interactive profiles that can be made visible to employers  Remote area visits by partner staff  Remote location orientation |

1. Describe how Career Centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated technology-enabled intake care management information system.

|  |
| --- |
| At the onset of the pandemic, we realized that this is an area that requires some attention, as many of North Country residents have limited access to technology. We currently use teleconferences whenever possible. Additionally, our applications are available on line and are able to be completed and submitted electronically. We also use text messaging and ZOOM as means of communication. |

1. Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of programs and services provided to adults and dislocated workers in the local area.

|  |
| --- |
| All relevant Title I-IV services are available in St. Lawrence County to eligible adults and disclocated workers.  In addition to these, the network also makes an effort to coordinate with other non-WIOA financed programs. Examples of these include training programs offered by the local colleges and the BOCES system, any no-cost programs instituted by the St. Lawrence County Health Initiative and the financial literacy programs offered by local banks and credit unions. |

1. Describe how workforce activities will be coordinated with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and appropriate supportive services in the local area.

|  |
| --- |
| St. Lawrence County is one of the most sparsely populated counties in NYS, with an average of approximately 42 people per square mile. To make matters more challenging, the largest population center has only about 15,000 residents with smaller towns and villages scattered through out 2,800 square miles. This makes it very difficult for the existance of public transportation throughout the county region.  The partners' staff, as best they can, make an effort to schedule meetings at the career centers most convenient for the customer to make it possible for clients to utilize the subsidized bus transport services offered by NYSARC (St. Lawrence County Public Transit). |

1. Describe the replicated cooperative agreements in place to enhance the quality and availability of services to people with disabilities, such as cross training to staff, technical assistance, or methods of sharing information.

|  |
| --- |
| To the WDB's knowledge, other than the MOU among partners, there are no such replicated cooperative agreements in place in St. Lawrence County.  Nonetheless, ACCES-VR has cross trained staff in the past. ACCES-VR has counselors at all the local One Stops. They are available to provide technical assistance with participants with disabilities as needed or requested. The partners have worked on formalizing the referral process among themselves. The partners also rely on the monthly Partners' Meetings as a mechanism to continue to improve the cooperative process. |

1. Describe the direction given to the One-Stop System Operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

|  |
| --- |
| As a long-term workforce professional, the St. Lawrence County One-Stop System Operator is well acquainted with what is needed to make sure that priority for adult career and training services is given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals and individuals who are basic skills deficient. In addition, the WDB's Executive Director has requested that this matter be kept in the forefront of partner discussions. |

1. Describe how One-Stop System Operators and One-Stop partners will comply with the nondiscrimination requirements of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) (section 188), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding:
2. The physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs, and services;

|  |
| --- |
| The Canton One-Stop Center and other partner facilities comply with all architectural accessibility standards. The One-Stop Network Operator and partners will ensure that individuals with disabilities have the same opportunities to participate in programs and services as those without disabilities by receiving any reasonable accomodations, modifications, and assistive technology as needed. Programs will be administered in the most integrated setting appropriate and at satellite locations that are accessible by public/private transportation. Criteria for programs will be reviewed periodically in the Partners' Meetings to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not unintentionally put at a disadvantage. |

1. Technology and materials for individuals with disabilities; and

|  |
| --- |
| Assistive technology, adaptive equipment, auxiliary aides, modified materials, and other supports will be provided to participants with disabilities, as apppropriate, to access the services and training programs necessary to achieve their goals. Again, coordination among the partners to make sure that such technologies and materials are provided to individuals with disabilities occurs at the Partners' Meetings. |

1. Providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

|  |
| --- |
| Cross training of staff will be provided by partner agencies to include examples of job support strategies and services, disability etiquette, workplace flexibility, and employer negotiations for those who may be facing challlenges in employment. This effort will continue to be channeled through Partners' Meetings. |

1. Describe the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners related to the nondiscrimination requirements of WIOA (section 188), and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

|  |
| --- |
| Cross training of staff will be provided by partner agencies. It will include the roles and resource contribution of the One-Stop partners related to the nondiscrimination requirements of WIOA (section 188), and applicable provisions of he Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). These efforts will be supported by monthly Partners' Meetings. |

# **Business Engagement**

1. What strategies and programs, including training programs, will be used to facilitate engagement of businesses, including small businesses and businesses in in-demand sectors and occupations?

|  |
| --- |
| The SLC WDB and The County itself have implemented the following initiatives to facilitate business engagement:  Our WDB composition ensures that more that 51% of the membership of the WDB is from the business sector. Currently, the SLCWDB has 11 business members out of 21 and 2 additional members classified as discretionary appointments who are retired business owners.  The Executive Director of the WDB is in direct contact with members of the St. Lawrence County IDA, REDC and County Chamber of Commerce and has worked collaboratively on several projects including CDL Class A training and childcare concerns.  The WDB recognizes the need to make more extensive use of OJT to specifically help businesses find and develop employees for in-demand sectors and occupations and directly consults with local businesses to encourage these opportunities.  The Executive Director also attends monthly meetings of the St. Lawrence County Economic Development Advisory Board which includes representation from local colleges and universities, St. Lawrence County, St. Lawrence County Chamber of Commerce, St. Lawrence County IDA, the Development Authority of the North Country, ESD, the New York State Power Authority, several local business and agriculture representatives and small business development agencies. |

1. If applicable, describe the local area’s use of business intermediaries.

|  |
| --- |
| We participate in round table discussions with various representatives from the business community and the St. Lawrence County IDA to address local business needs and trends and develop training solutions. |

1. What strategies or services are used to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area?

|  |
| --- |
| The LWDA's primary method of supporting a local workforce development system that meets the needs of the businesses is to pay close attention to the business intelligence that the County's network of economic developers glean through their day-to-day interactions with businesses throughtout the County. Additionally, correspondance and conversations with the Chamber, County IDA, REDC and local employers regarding their needs, along with continual posting of job openings on our website, helps to support our business partners. |

1. Describe how the local area’s workforce development programs and strategies will be coordinated with economic development activities.

|  |
| --- |
| Our monthly Partners' Meetings include representation from economic development agencies, employment training program operators, training service providers and human service agencies. Strategies are dicussed, evaluated and, if warranted, put into place. |

1. Describe how these programs will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

|  |
| --- |
| By discussing the needs of employers at the Partners' Meetings, we are able to combine the expertise of the training partners and providers to the resources of the economic developers. We develop strategies to support and promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services. |

1. Describe how the LWDB will coordinate its workforce investment activities with statewide rapid response activities.

|  |
| --- |
| The DOL's rapid response coordinator is able to work at any of the three centers as needed. Both Title I staff and the staff at the One-Stop have frequent interactions with the coordinator. |

# **Program Coordination**

1. How do the local area’s programs and strategies strengthen the linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?

|  |
| --- |
| The SLC LWDA's programs and strategies strengthen the linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and Unemployment Insurance through several approaches including:  Conducting Unemployment Insurance (UI) appointments in three offices in St. Lawrence County, reviewing barriers to employment and promoting supportive services available through the NYSDOL and local workforce partners such as BOCES, ACCES-VR, DSS and local colleges.  Referring UI customers to local classroom training opportunities, on-the-job training programs, job fairs and recruitments, businesses looking for employees, health insurance navigators and other services available through partner programs.  Assisting businesses with hiring grants which target dislocated workers and long-term unemployed individuals.  Assisting businesses in times of downturn by promoting Shared Work programs, Rapid Response Services and the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) Program. Shared Work allows businesses to retain valuable staff and reduce payroll costs by enrolling employees in partial UI benefits. Rapid Response customers are commonly unemployed due to mass layoffs or plant closure and are case-managed by staff until they are once again connected to meaningful employment. TAA is a federal program that provides aid to workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports. Staff work with TAA customers to help them obtain weekly benefit payments, wage subsidies and training opportunities.  Sharing information regarding available services relating to UI at Partners' Meetings, meetings with the IDA, workforce development events and on our electronic bulletins for participants and local businesses. |

1. Describe how education and workforce investment activities will be coordinated in the local area. This must include:
2. Coordination of relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs;

|  |
| --- |
| Coordination of relevant secondary and postsecondary education takes place during monthly Partners' Meetings as well as during monthly meetings of the St. Lawrence County Economic Development Advisory Board. |

1. Activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies and enhance services; and

|  |
| --- |
| Referrals for occupational skills training come directly from training providers such as our local BOCES Adult and Career Education and from the SUNY Canton CREST. We work with our local ACCES-VR office to provide paid Work Experience internships (via WIOA Youth funds) to WIOA eligible youth with disabilities that require job coaching (with job coaches provided by ACCES-VR). |

1. A description of how the LWDB will avoid duplication of services.

|  |
| --- |
| Monthly Partners' Meeting discussions will help to avoid duplication of services. Each partner reports on their activities and plans for service development. Thus, partners are able to avoid duplication of services. |

1. Describe plans, strategies, and assurances concerning the coordination of services provided by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

|  |
| --- |
| The monthly Partners' Meetings will be the venue at which the SLC network will assure the coordination of services provided in the SLC LWDA by the State employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29 U.S.C. 49 et seq.), to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services. Our DOL representative is very active and informative at our Partners' Meetings. |

1. Provide a list of executed cooperative agreements that define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local Career Center System. This includes agreements between the LWDB and entities that serve individuals eligible under the Rehabilitation Act. If no such agreements exist, provide an explanation why this is the case and/or progress towards executing such agreements.

|  |
| --- |
| Aside from the Memorandum of Understanding among the partners, no such agreements exist in SLC. The workforce system partners are able to ensure integration of and access to the entire set of services available to the local Career Center system through regular monthly consultation conducted by the One-Stop Network Operator. |

# **Title II Program Coordination**

1. Provide a description of the LWDB’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, specifically addressing how to improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, as well as other strategies for serving out-of-school youth (OSY) and adults who have low literacy skills, are English Language Learners, or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent.

|  |
| --- |
| i. Vision: The St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board envisions for the St. Lawrence County Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA) a unified workforce development system that is locally coordinated and programmatically seamless, delivering workforce training, business services, and job linkages to all the job seekers and employers in the local area. To do this, the LWDA must address at least three general goals that can be categorized under the following headings: governance, service delivery, and accountability.  ii. Goals:  iii. Governance: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) programs in the St. Lawrence County Local Workforce Development Area will be governed in a seamless system that is coordinated with both the State Plan and the regional sector‐based workforce strategies that align with the NYS Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) strategic planning. It is a goal of this plan to build partnerships and strategic alliances to create a unified workforce vision that brings government, education, and business into an integrated force. Progress has been made towards integration; however it is important that this continues so that the workforce system can most effectively collaborate on the mission, vision, curriculum, and outcomes.  iv. Service Delivery: Services will meet the needs of businesses through public‐private sector partnerships such as education, government, and community, with priority given to removing barriers to employment for individuals with disabilities, veterans, formerly incarcerated persons, disconnected youth, individuals in economically distressed communities, adults with limited literacy or English language proficiency who lack a High School Equivalency (HSE), adults with limited literacy who have a HSE, New Americans including immigrants and refugees, and other special populations. Services will include: job development, job posting, job match and referral, basic skills training, occupational training in career pathways, HSE preparation, and employment support services.Services are easily accessible to provide all individuals with equal opportunity to work or obtain training, and frontline staff is able to seamlessly move individuals to applicable services. The LWDA partners will to the extent possible target adults who have low literacy skills, are English language deficient and those who lack a high school diploma or equivalent utilizing strategies to engage participants in Title II activities. These strategies may include, but not be limited to: the development of a comprehensive marketing and outreach program, sector partnerships, career pathways and the engagement of participants in programs that integrate both basic academic education and occupational skills training.  v. Accountability: Meaningful performance metrics will be reported to support evidence‐based and data‐ driven workforce investments and decisions, and accountable and transparent programs. This includes alignment of technology, metrics, and data systems across programs. The WDB recognizes that the number of the local area’s out‐of‐school youth and adults who have low literacy skills or lack a high school diploma or the equivalent are considerably below State‐wide averages and the LWDA’s One‐Stop Network Partners are determined to improve these metrics, even though they realize that to do this will require a long‐term concentration on a task that on incremental improvement. |

1. Provide a description of how the LWDB will expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services provided through the NYS Career Center System for Title II participants with barriers to employment.

|  |
| --- |
| i. The St. Lawrence County Workforce Development Board (SLCWDB) will work closely with One Stop Partners within the Local Workforce Development Network Area to identify and recruit eligible Title II participants. The SLCWDB will encourage and support local Title II Service Providers to develop a marketing and outreach program to provide needed employment, training, education and supportive services to community members who lack a high school diploma and/or are basic skills and English‐language deficient. The SLCWDB will create opportunities for Title II providers to regularly update One Stop Partners both during monthly partner meetings and through ongoing and direct outreach with agencies providing services to the target populations. Updates will consist of current and upcoming Title II offerings, as well as the various support programs that target specific populations. Through these efforts One‐Stop Partners will have the tools to facilitate the marketing of programs to clients and the referring of prospective participants. One‐Stop Career Network services are marketed broadly to prospective participants throughout the workforce delivery area. Marketing channels include the Local Workforce Development Network’s websites, newsletters, flyers, catalogs and other materials distributed throughout the community to include job fairs, community events, and social media. Resulting applicants recruited through these means are encouraged to provide background information that helps One Stop staff and partners to determine eligibility and initiate referrals. The SLCWDB and partner programs have built close working relationships which ensure that County residents needing education and career services are best served. Using the established referral process, One Stop Career Center staff and partner agencies refer clients who need services to Title II providers for registration/enrollment, which links clients to community career services, training opportunities and supportive services. These referrals include community members who lack a high school diploma and those that are basic skills deficient. These individuals are possible candidates for program activities that include: job search, job readiness assistance, job skills training/vocational education, educational training and work experience. Career counseling/case management is an essential component in the delivery of services within the Local Workforce Development Network. This process facilitates a comprehensive customer‐centered delivery system that utilizes the strengths of partner agencies within the workforce development system. The “system” provides job placement, career planning, preparation and training, linkage to supportive services, English language assistance, and job retention activities in order to offer a variety of services beyond those available from any single agency. This results in linkages and strategies that promote interagency communication and coordination for the purpose of improving the balance between participant management and administrative requirements. Career counseling/case management for Title II participants will be driven by an individual’s employment plan. The employment planning process is intended pinpoint a participant’s specific needs and engages all partners relevant to implementing that plan to ensure the individual is given all the necessary available resources to overcome any identified barriers. |

1. Identify how the LWDB will facilitate the development of a career pathways and co-enrollment in academic training programs.

|  |
| --- |
| i. The SLCWDB supports the development of career pathways as a workforce development strategy to link basic academic education provided by Title II providers to occupational skills training programs. When this type of programming is combined with integrated support services from partner agencies, community members are positioned to advance over time to higher level training and education and to living wage jobs within local industry sectors. Career pathways are organized as a series of steps that lead community members towards employment with industry recognized credentials, certificates and/or licenses. The selection of specific career pathways is identified locally through business sector engagement and developed collaboratively by the community of partners, specifically occupational training program providers. Pathways will be highlighted by those sectors that need skilled employees and also have local promotional opportunities. |

1. Provide a description of how the LWDB will support the strategy identified in the State Plan and work with the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs, including those authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act to support service alignment.

|  |
| --- |
| i. The SLCWDB expects that the key mechanism that will ensure service alignment in St. Lawrence County is the monthly (at least) Network Partner meetings that will be organized and managed by the St. Lawrence County Network Operator. Even prior to the changes wrought by implementing WIOA, the partners in St. Lawrence County worked well together, if only because the sparsely populated rural nature of the area translated into fewer partner organizations and staff members. However, the recent series of meetings among the enlarged list partners focused on developing and understanding the WIOA‐mandated Memorandum of Understanding has brought the partners together in a way that has added to their cohesion. The plan is to use this momentum as the partners come to grips with how to maintain and enhance seamless services to all job seekers and employers in the local area. In the decentralized environment sanctioned by WIOA, i.e., where only two required partners must be physically located at the central One‐Stop Career Center, the MOU assures that a cohesive service alignment is present. |

# **Youth Activities**

1. Provide contact details of Youth Point(s) of Contact for your local area including:

Name of organization, name(s) of Youth Point(s) of Contact, title, address, phone number, and email address. Youth Point(s) of Contact details are primarily used to refer young adults, parents, and partners about youth programs and posted on the [NYSDOL webpage](https://labor.ny.gov/youth/get-local-assistance.shtm).

|  |
| --- |
| St. Lawrence County One-Stop Career Center  Larry Fetcie, Senior Employment Coordinator  80 State Highway 310, Canton, New York 13617  315.229.3343  lfetcie@stlawco.org |

1. Provide the number of planned enrollments in PY 2021 for new Out-of-School Youth (OSY), carry-over OSY, new In-School Youth (ISY), carry-over ISY, and work experience. \*
2. New OSY

|  |
| --- |
| 39 |

1. Carry-over OSY

|  |
| --- |
| 36 |

1. New ISY

|  |
| --- |
| 4 |

1. Carry-over ISY

|  |
| --- |
| 6 |

1. Work experiences

|  |
| --- |
| 36 |

\*Please note that PY 2021 enrollments will provide the baseline estimate for the remaining three years of the Plan.

1. In Attachment F, Youth Services, located on the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) [website](https://dol.ny.gov/search/lwdb-resources) under the Local Planning section, identify the organization providing the Design Framework which includes: Intake & Eligibility, Objective Assessments, and Individual Services Strategies (ISS), and 14 Youth Program Elements and whether the provision of each element is contractual, with a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), or provided by the LWDB.
2. Explain how providers and LWDB staff ensure the WIOA elements:
3. Connect back to the WIOA Youth Program Design Framework, particularly the Objective Assessments and ISS; and

|  |
| --- |
| In St. Lawrence County, Title I staff administers the WIOA Youth Program Design Framework Services (intake, eligibility, assessment, etc.). Part of the creating the ISS is to list which of the 14 program element services the individual Youth is receiving and which agency will provide the appropriate services. |

1. Are made available to youth with disabilities by describing specific program practices, tools, and services that are tailored to serve youth with disabilities.

|  |
| --- |
| The LWDB has in place a policy of non-discrimination, which applies to youth with disabilities as well as minorities. The partners, too, have similar policies in place. |

1. Describe successful models for youth services from your local area, including but not limited to virtual work experiences, OSY recruitment. and engagement strategies.

|  |
| --- |
| Referrals for occupational skills training come directly from training providers such as our local BOCES Adult and Career Education and from the SUNY Canton CREST. We work with our local ACCES-VR office to provide paid WE internships (via WIOA Youth funds) to WIOA elligible youth with disabilities that require job coaching (with job coaches provided by ACCES-VR). |

1. Does your local area plan to serve ISY and/or OSY using the “Needs Additional Assistance” qualifying barrier for eligibility?

Yes (Attach a Needs Additional Assistance policy that defines reasonable, quantifiable, evidence-based, and specific characteristics of ISY and OSY as described in Technical Advisory (TA) #[19-2](https://dol.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/03/ta-19-02.pdf).

No (Not required to attach a policy)

1. Attach a Basic Skills Deficiency policy of youth program as described in the in TA #[19-2](https://dol.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/03/ta-19-02.pdf).

# **Administration**

1. Identify the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official(s) (CEOs) or Governor.

|  |
| --- |
| The St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators is responsible for the disbursal of grant funds. |

1. Describe the competitive process to be used to award subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities in the local area.

|  |
| --- |
| The St. Lawrence County Board of Legislators, as the WIOA contract holder, has chosen to manage the Title I adminstration using County employees. Therefore, no competitive process was necessary. |

1. Provide the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO(s) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the LWDB for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (when applicable), eligible providers, and the One-Stop delivery system, in the local area.

|  |
| --- |
| The local negotiated performance levels for St. Lawrence County are as follows:  2020 Adult: Emp. 2nd Q = 69%, 4th Q = 64.5%, Med. Earn. 2nd Q = $5,300.00 Cred.= 46%, MSG = 45%  2020 DW: Emp. 2nd Q = 67%, 4th Q = 63.1%, Med. Earn. 2nd Q = $5,865.00 Cred.= 46%, MSG = 45%  2020 Youth: Emp. 2nd Q = 73%, 4th Q = 63%, Med. Earn. 2nd Q = $3,000.00 Cred.= 51.4%, MSG = 50%    2021 Adult: Emp. 2nd Q = 69.5%, 4th Q = 65.5%, Med. Earn. 2nd Q = $5,400.00 Cred.= 46.5%, MSG = 45.5%  2021 DW: Emp. 2nd Q = 67.5%, 4th Q = 64.1%, Med. Earn. 2nd Q = $6,047.00 Cred.= 46.5%, MSG = 45.5%  2021 Youth: Emp. 2nd Q = 73.5%, 4th Q = 63.5%, Med. Earn. 2nd Q = $3,100.00 Cred.= 52.4%, MSG = 50.5% |

1. Describe the actions taken toward becoming or remaining a high-performing LWDB, consistent with factors developed by the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB). The LWDB will be defined as high performing if it meets the following criteria:
2. It is certified and in membership compliance;
3. All necessary governance actions and items have been accomplished, including executing a local Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), selecting a One-Stop System Operator, and implementing all required local policies, etc.;
4. All One-Stop Career Centers in the LWDA have achieved at least an 80% score in the Career Center Certification process; and
5. The LWDA meets or exceeds all performance goals.

|  |
| --- |
| These tasks are ultimately the responsibility of the Executive Director of the SLC WDB.  i. The SLC WDB is currently certified and its membership has been reviewed at each recent Quarterly Board meeting. The membership is kept aprised of expiring board terms and is asked for input regarding potential board openings.  ii. The local MOU draft has been submitted (3.21) corrected and re-submitted (4.21). It will be fully executed upon DOL approval and the attainment of all necessary electronic signatures. An RFP was issued for the One-Stop Operator and was a failed procurement. An agreement between SLC and the WDB will be signed to fill that position with a Career Center employee by the June 30, 2021 deadline. All required policies are reviewed and implemented by staff. Policies and procedures are discussed and reviewed frequently at weekly staff meetings.  iii. A score of at least 80% in the Career Center Certification process, as we are housed in a public SLC building that meets ADA standards and all other necessary processes and modifications, including equipment, necessary are currently in place.  iv. The SLC LWDA will meet or exceed its performance goals, as we played an intimate role in negotiating our performance measures and felt them to be attainable measures. |

# **Training Services**

1. Describe how training services will be provided in the local area. This may include incumbent worker, on-the-job, and customized training programs.

|  |
| --- |
| All partner agencies deliver their training services directly through their respective staff. Except in unusual circumstances, none contract out with third-party providers. |

1. Describe how contracts will be coordinated with the use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

|  |
| --- |
| Title I staff make extensive use of ITAs. Utilization and coordination of ITA use throughout the St. Lawrence County network continues to be a regular agenda item at monthly Partners' Meetings. |

1. Describe how the LWDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how training services are provided.

|  |
| --- |
| Policies in place direct staff to make their best effort to act as an advocate when advising clients on their career choices. Staff offers only the appropriate tools to customers when evaluating available services. While staff acts in the best interest of the cutomer, as experienced professionals, they are non-judgemental, nor do they dictate choices for individuals utilizing One-Stop services. |

# **Public Comment**

1. Describe the process used by the LWDB to provide a period of no more than 30 days for public comment and input into development of the plan by representatives of business, labor organizations, and education prior to submission.

|  |
| --- |
| Advertisements placed in: Watertown Daily Times and North Country Now  Posted on website: June 7, 2021  Reviewed by WDB on: June 9, 2021  Presented to Partner Agencies on: June 15, 2021 |

# **List of Attachments**

Please complete all attachments listed below.

**Attachment A** – Units of Local Government

**Attachment B** – Fiscal Agent

**Attachment C** – Signature of Local Board Chair

**Attachment D** – Signature of Chief Elected Official(s)

**Attachment E** – Federal and State Certifications

**Attachment F** – Youth Services Chart

Original signature pages for Attachments C, D and E, must be delivered to NYSDOL in one of the following two ways:

* Electronic signature (if the LWDB has the capability for it) – Note that electronic signatures must follow the requirements and guidelines of the Electronic Signature and Records Act ([ESRA](https://its.ny.gov/nys-technology-law#art3)). LWDBs choosing to submit signature pages via electronic signature may submit these pages via email with the Local Plan.
* Mail original versions – Hard copies of traditional signature pages may be sent to:

**Attn: Local Plan**

**New York State Department of Labor**

**Division of Employment and Workforce Solutions**

**Building 12 – Room 440**

**W. Averell Harriman Office Building Campus**

**Albany, NY 12240**

All other attachments must be submitted via email with the LWDB Local Plan Template.

In addition to these attachments, LWDBs must provide copies of the agreements listed in the Program Coordination section of this template under [(d).](#ProgramCoordination)  If possible, it is preferable to provide a list of hyperlinks to these agreements available on the LWDB website.