

**SPOKANE CITY-COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA**



**Spokane Area  
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL**

***SPOKANE AREA STRATEGIC PLAN  
FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT***

**For the Period July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2009**

**May 16, 2007**

# SPOKANE AREA STRATEGIC PLAN FOR WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT 2007 - 2009

## Introduction

The State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) adopted guidelines for the development of a 2007-2009 local area strategic plan, based upon language in the Governor's Executive Order 99-02.

Overall Goals for July 2007 – June 2009 Local Area Strategic Plan:

- A. To articulate a vision for the local area's workforce development system
- B. To develop goals, objectives, and strategies to increase skill levels, employment, earnings, customer satisfaction and return on workforce development investments.
- C. To reach agreement on a blueprint to utilize the area's strategic workforce assets to meet the requirements of the changing economy.
- D. To create a planning process, facilitated by the Workforce Development Council (WDC), that assures meaningful opportunities for business, labor, Chief Local Elected Officials (CLEOs), program operators, WorkSource partner agencies, and others to communicate their needs, offer their perspectives and expertise and participate in the process. The review and comment process for developing the local strategic plan is dynamic, with opportunities for interested parties to comment as the plan is built.
- E. To create/update a plan that is consistent with *High Skills, High Wages 2006: Washington's Strategic Plan for Workforce Development* and is focused on the unique needs and resources of the local area.
- F. To broadly share goals, objectives, and strategies that:
  - Represent the priorities of the WDC and its partners.
  - Reflect stakeholder inputs.
  - Offer guidance and propose approaches that will clearly benefit the customers of the workforce development system (employers, jobseekers, workers, students and out-of-school youth.)
  - Are supported by current and specific economic and demographic data and needs assessment.
  - Take into account existing workforce development programs and services.
  - Are informed by program performance.

These goals create the framework within which the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council Strategic Plan will articulate our community's needs and our system's response through a comprehensive array of services that meet the dynamic needs of our diverse customer base.

Spokane's workforce development system is comprised of stakeholders from the private and public sectors including economic development, education, government, and community-

based non-profits. This system is positioned to effectively meet the goals and objectives set forth by the Governor and the WTECB.

To meet these goals, our local Workforce Development System will:

- ❖ Build, strengthen and expand partnerships that identify and meet workforce needs
- ❖ Act as the conduit for workforce intelligence to set an agenda for all stakeholders
- ❖ Collaborate and leverage all available resources to maximize benefits to our community
- ❖ Promote economic prosperity by developing a workforce with the skills necessary to meet business demand
- ❖ Be entrepreneurial to increase system capacity and innovation
- ❖ Utilize critical evaluation to continuously improve

The values that each stakeholder in our system agrees to guide our work are:

- |             |               |              |
|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| ◆ Efficient | ◆ Flexible    | ◆ Effective  |
| ◆ Trust     | ◆ Accountable | ◆ Excellence |
| ◆ Integrity | ◆ Expertise   |              |

Our Vision: *Innovate workforce solutions for the Spokane region*

Our Mission: *Lead a dynamic, demand-driven workforce system*

The “Local Workforce Development System,” as described in *High Skills, High Wages* is dynamic. Changes in the population, the economic and political climates, and in the availability of resources constantly create challenges to implementation of strategic and operations plans. While players may come and go and expand or decline, the goal of Spokane’s economic growth continues. Resolution of ongoing workforce issues will provide the foundation of long term economic prosperity.

Workforce development and economic development are now recognized to be interwoven and interdependent. To survive and grow, business needs appropriately skilled workers. At the same time, the workforce requires thriving businesses capable of utilizing their skills and paying wages that are sufficient to provide a good standard of living. The challenge of this plan is to address this complex relationship and the myriad policy implications.

The Strategic Plan begins with an explanation of the authorizing mandate and review of Spokane’s current economy and the initiatives to strengthen it and an examination of the workforce as it is today.

The Local Strategic Plan is written under EO 99-02 as the local unified plan for the workforce development system. In 2000, the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) changed the local Private

Industry Councils (PIC) from organizations primarily charged with the distribution and oversight of JTPA funds, to Workforce Investment Boards (Workforce Development Councils or WDCs in Washington State) charged with guidance of a broad, encompassing local workforce development system. Within this more expansive role, the WDC still has direct authority over a series of funded programs –WIA Title I-B Dislocated Worker, Adult, and Youth Programs. By state statute, the System also includes seven state agencies over whose funding and decision-making the WDC does not have control or authority. These include the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Employment Security Department, Department of Social and Health Services, Department of Services for the Blind, Department of Labor and Industries and Private Career Schools.

The system as it is operationalized in the community is even broader, and includes all of the elements which prepare individuals for work, support them with needed skill development while they are working and offer new skill acquisition through workforce education when they become unemployed so that they can re-enter employment. The WDC must guide by partnering, establishing collaborative relationships and encouraging means for reciprocal influence. Representatives from the various system components have joined the Council and are engaged in the planning process.

The need to manage by influence rather than direct authority is both a challenge and an opportunity for creativity. For example, some of the workforce development initiatives described in this report are not directly funded by the WDC but have been developed with its encouragement and support. The need to coordinate a broad system over which the WDC does not largely have direct control also leads to the need to foster community-wide collaborative relationships between industry and education/training, and between the education and training organizations themselves, so that the workforce that is actively being developed supports the region's long-term prosperity as well as the individual goals and needs of its workforce.

## SECTION I. TOMORROW'S ECONOMY

There are several dichotomies that must be reconciled before a clear picture of the Spokane economy emerges. The first of these is that Spokane's traditional regional services of government, manufacturing, retail trade and hospital services have taken on decreasing importance over the last decade. Each sector offers the Spokane economy competitive advantages in innovation and growth, but none has the degree of concentration they had in the past that made Spokane the regional hub for these services.

Industry	1996	2006	Change
Natural Resources and Construction	6%	6%	0.71%
Manufacturing	12%	8%	-3.37%
Wholesale Trade	5%	5%	0.01%
Retail Trade	13%	13%	-0.45%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Util.	3%	3%	0.01%
Information	2%	1%	-0.47%
Financial Activities	6%	6%	0.39%
Professional and Business Services	8%	11%	3.01%
Education	2%	3%	0.70%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	5%	5%	0.53%
Hospitals	4%	4%	-0.44%
Leisure and Hospitality	10%	9%	-0.33%
Other Services	4%	4%	0.03%
Government	17%	16%	-0.47%

Table 1.1

Source: Employment Security Department

At the same time, service sector jobs in construction, telemarketing, clinical medicine and private education have grown at above average rates. These structural changes pose for the labor market a competitive tension between training more people to support and revitalize our traditional industries and training people to support a new, service based economy.

Another dichotomy relates to the perception of how big the average company is in Spokane.

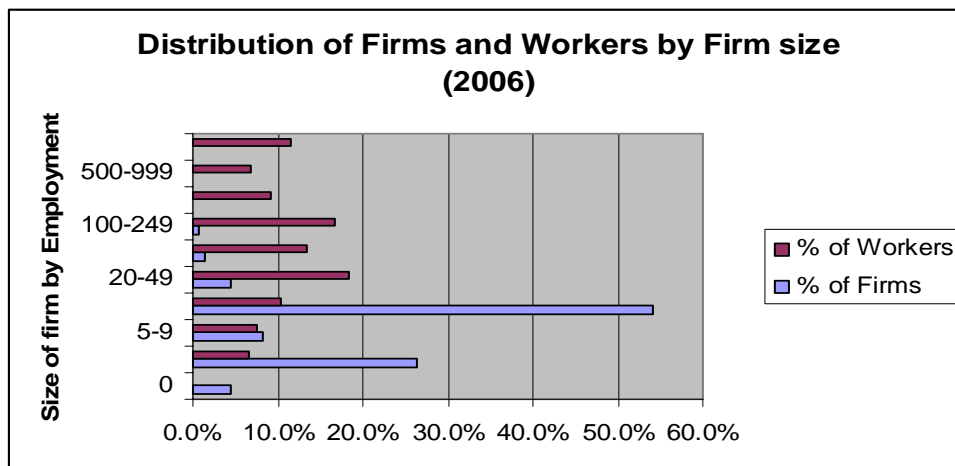


Table 1.2

Source: Employment Security Department

For business owners, the average size is quite small, with 93% of all businesses having less than 20 employees. For workers, on the other hand, only 24% of them work in these small

firms so they perceive the average size of the firm they must prepare to work in as a much larger employer. The tension here is between workers who want to target larger firms for employment and the needs of a business community dominated by small business.

A third dichotomy is the relative changes occurring in occupations and their wages.

**Table 1.3**

SOC	Occupation	Employed 2006	Average Annual Wage		% Change
			2006	2005	
11	Management	5,010.00	\$ 91,429	\$ 89,676	2.0%
13	Business and Financial Operations	6,840.00	\$ 51,596	\$ 51,423	0.3%
15	Computer and Math	2,940.00	\$ 50,968	\$ 51,141	-0.3%
17	Architecture and Engineering	2,690.00	\$ 58,807	\$ 56,540	4.0%
19	Life, Physical, and Social Sciences	1,260.00	\$ 54,850	\$ 53,218	3.1%
21	Community and Social Services	4,250.00	\$ 37,455	\$ 36,776	1.8%
23	Legal Occupations	1,590.00	\$ 58,488	\$ 58,064	0.7%
25	Education, Training, and Library	9,980.00	\$ 40,248	\$ 40,225	0.1%
27	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	1,960.00	\$ 37,783	\$ 41,181	-8.3%
29	Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians	10,960.00	\$ 56,599	\$ 60,717	-6.8%
31	Healthcare Support	6,140.00	\$ 25,302	\$ 25,065	0.9%
33	Protective Service	3,320.00	\$ 38,181	\$ 37,471	1.9%
35	Food Preparation and Serving	16,040.00	\$ 20,411	\$ 19,543	4.4%
37	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	6,620.00	\$ 22,666	\$ 23,127	-2.0%
39	Personal Care and Service	4,130.00	\$ 21,314	\$ 21,077	1.1%
41	Sales and Related	22,790.00	\$ 32,224	\$ 31,853	1.2%
43	Office and Administrative Support	35,460.00	\$ 29,363	\$ 28,337	3.6%
47	Construction	6,530.00	\$ 43,451	\$ 31,341	38.6%
49	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	6,220.00	\$ 37,203	\$ 37,452	-0.7%
51	Production	11,560.00	\$ 30,327	\$ 30,501	-0.6%
53	Transportation and Material Moving	12,440.00	\$ 27,521	\$ 28,393	-3.1%

**Source: Employment Security Department**

Overall, the Spokane economy produced 7,200 new jobs in 2006 and average wages grew 1.5% for an outstanding year. The distribution of changes in wages for occupations, however, reveal some interesting patterns. The largest increases in wages were largely due to increased demand for construction workers that is highly cyclic and seasonal in nature. Most other occupations had wage growth related to this high demand as the economy reached full employment and business owners had to compete for qualified applicants from a very limited pool of available workers. Decreases in the wage gains of last year in healthcare and manufacturing (production) occupations may reveal a shift from the higher paid occupations in those industries toward lower pay/lower skill jobs and the relative productivity of those occupations. The choice in terms of labor preparation is whether the supply of low wage occupations should be supported as a reaction to this growth or ignored in favor of high wage occupations as a goal of economic development.

One final dichotomy that needs recognition is the demand for an educated workforce.

According to the latest Vacancy Survey, the growth in occupations align quite well with the growth rates reported in Table 1.3 above and the percentage of those jobs that were less than full-time occupations seem to explain some of the declines in wages for those jobs.

**Table 1.4**

Occupational Group	Estimated Job Vacancies	Full-time Positions	Permanent Positions	Newly Created Positions	Reporting Education Beyond HS/GED	Requiring License or Certificate	Requiring Previous Experience
Management	89	100%	100%	9%	82%	24%	96%
Business and Financial Operations	102	93%	97%	29%	96%	15%	81%
Computer and Mathematical	163	100%	100%	64%	95%	19%	98%
Architecture and Engineering	41	100%	100%	31%	100%	16%	82%
Life, Physical, and Social Science	571	53%	99%	4%	6%	1%	6%
Community and Social Services	127	50%	96%	25%	39%	60%	63%
Legal	<25	100%	100%	0%	100%	23%	100%
Education, Training, and Library	112	51%	73%	0%	92%	58%	87%
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media	186	20%	33%	17%	31%	0%	18%
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	551	64%	95%	8%	96%	96%	57%
Healthcare Support	272	77%	88%	0%	64%	89%	38%
Protective Service	<25	43%	57%	43%	0%	100%	57%
Food Preparation and Serving Related	451	44%	80%	9%	12%	73%	36%
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance	85	41%	90%	4%	0%	9%	48%
Personal Care and Service	431	77%	94%	2%	9%	9%	10%
Sales and Related	901	36%	46%	9%	17%	6%	24%
Office and Administrative Support	687	62%	88%	17%	14%	6%	39%
Construction and Extraction	204	100%	92%	27%	15%	49%	47%
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	136	90%	90%	13%	45%	66%	84%
Production	184	96%	98%	2%	12%	0%	82%
Transportation and Material Moving	885	56%	88%	16%	1%	58%	20%
<i>Total Vacancies</i>	6,212	60%	83%	12%	29%	35%	37%

**Source: Employment Security Department**

The key piece of information in the hiring of these positions for preparing the labor force, however, should be found in the amount of training and education that the job openings required. On average only 29% of the jobs advertised in 2006 were for employees with more than a high school education. With the unemployment rate for Spokane averaging 5% in 2006 (its lowest average since 1999) many employers were probably waiting to advertise higher paying jobs until the market softened a bit, but there was still a large growth in sales, transportation and office jobs of which less than 20% require a high school education.

In sharp contrast to the job openings, the Spokane region has enjoyed a remarkable growth in the average level of educational attainment of its population. In 2005 there were significantly fewer people without a high school education than there were in 2000 and many more with a graduate degree. This underscores the dual function of the workforce system in training and placement. While nearly a third of all the jobs placed do not require a high-school diploma, the training emphasis of the workforce system has been successful in supplying fewer untrained

and more trained workers to the workforce. Many of these trained workers may, out of necessity, be accepting lower paying jobs than they anticipated based upon information provided by the workforce system when they started their education.

<b>Education for population older than 25 years</b>	<b>2000 Census</b>	<b>2005 Census</b>
Less than 9th Grade	2.9%	1.9%
High School / GED	27%	25.8%
Some College, no degree	27.2%	27.3%
Associate's degree	10.1%	11.6%
Bachelor's degree	16.3%	16.7%
Graduate degree	8.7%	9.7%

**Table 1.5**

**Source: U.S. Census Bureau**

The Spokane Area Workforce Development Council must address each of these four dichotomies through its comprehensive strategy. Improved collaboration with business, economic development and educational institutions will facilitate a better flow of information and prioritization of investments in our community. As integrated planning occurs, industries to target and occupations to educate the workforce in will be agreed upon and resources brought to bear appropriately. The workforce needs created by structural changes can be balanced by policy that directs system activities. The limited resources of the public workforce investment system must be utilized in support of high wage/high skill occupations in order to achieve an acceptable return on investment for public funds and sustain economic development.

**The Future Economy**

In obtaining a vision of the probable future of the Spokane labor market, it is necessary to draw upon several sources and perspectives in order to “triangulate” on a prediction. The first and most often used by the workforce development system is the annual projections furnished by the Employment Security Department. These forecasts assume that the past is prologue and that trends will be unchanged by any current or future initiatives or innovations in the workplace. Nevertheless, they provide a conservative view of growth that can aid us in understanding how national forces may affect us locally.

According to this view, there should have been more office jobs than sales jobs and there should have been more openings in transportation, health care and production (manufacturing). Long term, however, the growth rates still seem reasonable if we assume no dramatic changes in oil prices, interest rates and other factors that have a tendency to shake up the economy.

Table 1.6

Title	Estimated Employment		Average Annuals Between Second Quarters of 2005 and 2007		
	2005 Quarter Two	2007 Quarter Two	Growth Rate	Openings Due to Growth	Total Openings
Total, All Occupations	231,226	239,120	1.7%	3,933	9,719
Management	7,151	7,365	1.5%	106	228
Computer and Math	3,818	3,995	2.3%	86	130
Architecture and Engineering	3,074	3,189	1.9%	58	121
Life, Physical, and Science	1,737	1,797	1.7%	29	68
Community and Social Services	5,098	5,283	1.8%	93	182
Legal	2,161	2,243	1.9%	41	65
Education and Training	14,620	15,148	1.8%	260	525
Arts, Design and Entertainment	4,774	4,938	1.7%	83	164
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	12,729	13,185	1.8%	227	446
Healthcare Support	7,813	8,139	2.1%	164	286
Protective Service	3,941	4,061	1.5%	59	204
Food Preparation and Serving	18,012	18,686	1.9%	336	1,287
Building and Grounds Maintenance	10,073	10,409	1.7%	170	370
Personal Care and Service	11,200	11,576	1.7%	190	491
Sales and Related Occupations	26,224	27,128	1.7%	450	1,395
Office and Admin.	38,938	40,229	1.6%	646	1,564
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	615	604	-0.9%	-4	10
Construction	13,194	13,777	2.2%	295	525
Installation, Maintenance, and Repair	8,210	8,436	1.4%	108	299
Production	14,108	14,505	1.4%	191	535
Transportation	15,679	16,138	1.5%	229	576

Source: Employment Security Department

The second perspective that should be consulted when defining a future economy are the economic development initiatives of its government and quasi-governmental entities. The newly created Greater Spokane Incorporated is responsible for the development of several strategic economic development plans that affect the workforce by supporting development for future industries. The primary strategy has been to identify high-wage/high-skill jobs in grouping of occupations within *industry clusters*.

Table 1.7

Cluster	Firms	Employees	Payroll Per Quarter (\$M)
Higher Education and Research and Development	1,037	4,863	334
Health and Biomedical	840	23,375	780
Information Technology	84	913	12
Financial and Shared Services	508	9,402	481
Logistic and Distribution Centers	219	4,534	134
Advanced Manufacturing	542	16,371	617

Source: Employment Security Department

These collectively comprise 25% of all firms in the region; 32% of all employees and contribute 41% of all wages. As a target, this represents an effective and wealthy portion of the economy.

Specific initiatives for these sectors vary, but the key initiatives focus on the competitive advantages Spokane possesses in terms of having a history and critical mass associated with the industry. In health, for example, several initiatives revolve around clinical research which takes advantage of the hospital records and patients. This type of technology is strongly tied to state and national trends in biomedical research upon which the region hopes to capitalize. In manufacturing, several initiatives have emerged to expand and modernize the technologies, workforce and diversity of manufacturers in the area. Besides the traditional aluminum smelters and associated industries, Spokane has set its sights on building a vibrant aerospace sector and several high tech manufacturing sectors. Biomedical technologies also include several initiatives to take advantage of regional agricultural production of bio-diesel crops. This initiative also has implications for transportation and distribution that are already seeing development with the proposed Geiger Spur and loading areas.

Finally, because the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council represents a cross section of regional interests in the Spokane labor force, the opinions of that body must be integrated with other projected futures to ground the vision and give ownership to its members. The primary mechanism for this vision lies in the SAWDC's amendments to the Demand/Decline list.

**Table 1.8**

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>2004 Employment (est.)</b>	<b>Avg. Annual Total Openings 04-09</b>	<b>UI ratio</b>	<b>State Vacancy Rate April 2006</b>	<b>2006 Entry Level Wage</b>
Retail Salespersons	6,939	375	1.46%	2.21%	\$17,416
Cashiers	5,394	445	0.95%	3.40%	\$17,002
Office Clerks, General	4,961	205	1.45%	1.02%	\$18,936
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	4,809	335	0.22%	1.88%	\$16,874
Registered Nurses	4,572	136	0.56%	9.99%	\$41,135
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4,329	214	1.03%	1.76%	\$17,089
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	3,690	130	1.25%	1.18%	\$23,023
Waiters and Waitresses	3,581	271	1.17%	3.22%	\$16,954
Child Care Workers	3,398	123	0.44%	0.92%	\$16,907
Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,275	78	0.61%	2.13%	\$16,883
Truck Drivers, Heavy and TractorTrailer	3,019	94	3.15%	3.94%	\$24,814
FirstLine Supervisors/Managers of Retail Sales Workers	2,872	87	1.41%	0.75%	\$29,426
Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	2,651	186	1.47%	2.95%	\$18,535
Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,472	108	1.02%	1.57%	\$28,337
Personal and Home Care Aides	2,407	111	0.49%	2.48%	\$16,946

Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	2,347	136	2.19%	3.41%	\$17,332
Carpenters	2,332	80	4.16%	1.69%	\$26,857
Team Assemblers	2,330	122	0.03%	0.83%	\$19,116
Customer Service Representatives	2,217	83	1.35%	2.04%	\$17,667
Nursing Aides, Orderlies, and Attendants	2,169	51	2.68%	5.89%	\$19,138
Teacher Assistants	2,142	73	0.18%	1.12%	\$19,462
Secretaries, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	2,072	76	0.56%	0.95%	\$22,972
FirstLine Supervisors/Managers of Office and Administrative Support Workers	2,066	86	0.90%	1.68%	\$32,449
Maintenance and Repair Workers, General	1,653	53	0.44%	2.16%	\$22,436
Home Health Aides	1,569	48	3.62%	1.02%	\$17,252
Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,522	79	1.91%	3.01%	\$18,829
Teachers and Instructors, All Other	1,511	39	0.34%	N/A	\$22,407
Truck Drivers, Light or Delivery Services	1,484	35	1.12%	2.18%	\$17,873
Accountants and Auditors	1,478	51	1.07%	3.41%	\$39,761
FirstLine Supervisors/Managers of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	1,475	53	1.13%	0.99%	\$40,366
Billing and Posting Clerks and Machine Operators	1,468	56	1.05%	2.21%	\$21,663
General and Operations Managers	1,420	53	1.55%	1.09%	\$58,499
Lawyers	1,418	31	0.43%	1.00%	\$50,546
Construction Laborers	1,392	45	2.53%	3.70%	\$21,279
Packers and Packagers, Hand	1,386	49	1.03%	3.03%	\$16,942
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	1,368	37	1.23%	4.02%	\$35,780
Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers	1,342	73	6.88%	1.38%	\$18,852
Cooks, Restaurant	1,305	73	2.66%	4.27%	\$17,625
Medical Secretaries	1,285	50	1.06%	1.86%	\$23,914
Counter Attendants, Cafeteria, Food Concession, and Coffee Shop	1,277	151	0.12%	2.25%	\$16,978
Rehabilitation Counselors	1,261	47	0.08%	2.00%	\$22,661

**Source: Employment Security Department**

This list accounts for 46% of all the jobs in Spokane County. The average starting wage for jobs on the demand/decline list totals \$22,642.

### ***Linkages between Workforce Development and Economic Development***

Prior to the advent of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA), the focus of workforce development had traditionally been one of reaching out to those at the bottom of the employment/wage scale, and providing them with the resources to move out of poverty. Thus, a great deal of workforce development activity was focused upon providing services to dislocated workers, school dropouts, welfare recipients, and other disadvantaged populations. While WIA requirements continue to direct funds to serve these populations, the paradigm of service delivery has shifted to one that prioritizes the business customer. This fundamental system change recognizes that jobs are created by businesses. Through understanding and meeting business workforce needs, the system will more effectively serve regional economic development needs. Under WIA, the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council is

responsible for regional strategic workforce leadership as well as a broad workforce development system that goes beyond WIA-funded programs.

Workforce development has been acknowledged as the single most important component of economic development in the new economy. Absent a skilled workforce, businesses cannot grow and prosper and efforts to bring new companies to our region will fail.

The business services offered by our system are evolving to become more responsive to the full range of employer needs. Assisting a specific business in finding a particular worker with the right talents remains an essential service provided. However, the system also needs to focus on training the workforce of the future and developing a communication pipeline to ensure appropriate responses to changes in skill needs. The reciprocal communication link between the economic development and the business community and the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council continues to be strengthened and provides vital information necessary to make adjustments to services and investment strategies that yield results in the short and long term. Economic development and workforce development entities need to work in partnership to ensure that the full range of system tools is available to support recruitment, growth and retention strategies.

Common objectives shared by the regional workforce and economic development systems include increasing incomes, support of jobs in high value clusters – manufacturing and advanced manufacturing, healthcare, logistics and distribution – and creation of an seamless service delivery system serving regional workforce development and education needs. These objectives are also in alignment with the Governor's *The Next Washington – Growing Jobs and Income in a Global Economy*, including support for appropriate investments in education and lifelong learning, infrastructure that connects people and markets, and the use of a cluster strategy to guide deployment of our public workforce investment system resources.

Current federal and state performance and accountability measures for the workforce development system focuses on job placement, retention, credential attainment, and wage progression. To successfully support economic development strategies, shared measures must be agreed upon by both systems and integrated strategies to achieve them must be pursued. A new initiative from the Governor has introduced the Government Management, Accountability, and Performance (GMAP) processes that measure interim indicators and help to design and modify business practices to more effectively reach outcomes. These have been adopted by the Spokane Workforce Development Council and continue to be refined to ensure delivery of the right services to customers while achieving defined outcomes. It is anticipated that further development of the GMAP process will incorporate measures that are shared by partners across our community, e.g., economic development, K-12 and post-secondary education, and workforce development. This significant change in measuring success may create synergies between partners and realign resources more efficiently.

The challenges facing the workforce development system are threefold:

- 1) Serve mandated program customers – adults, dislocated workers, youth
- 2) Link to economic development initiatives – develop comprehensive strategies for the community irrespective of fund sources
- 3) Support high skill/high wage job development across key clusters – focusing investments on meeting needs of a limited cross section of the business community

## SECTION II. THE CHANGING WORKFORCE IN SPOKANE COUNTY

The Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimated the population of Spokane County in 2006 at 443,800. That represents about a 6.2% increase over the 2000 census. Approximately 11,000 of the 26,000 people new to Spokane were from families resident in 2000. The remaining 15,000 people migrated here over the past six years.

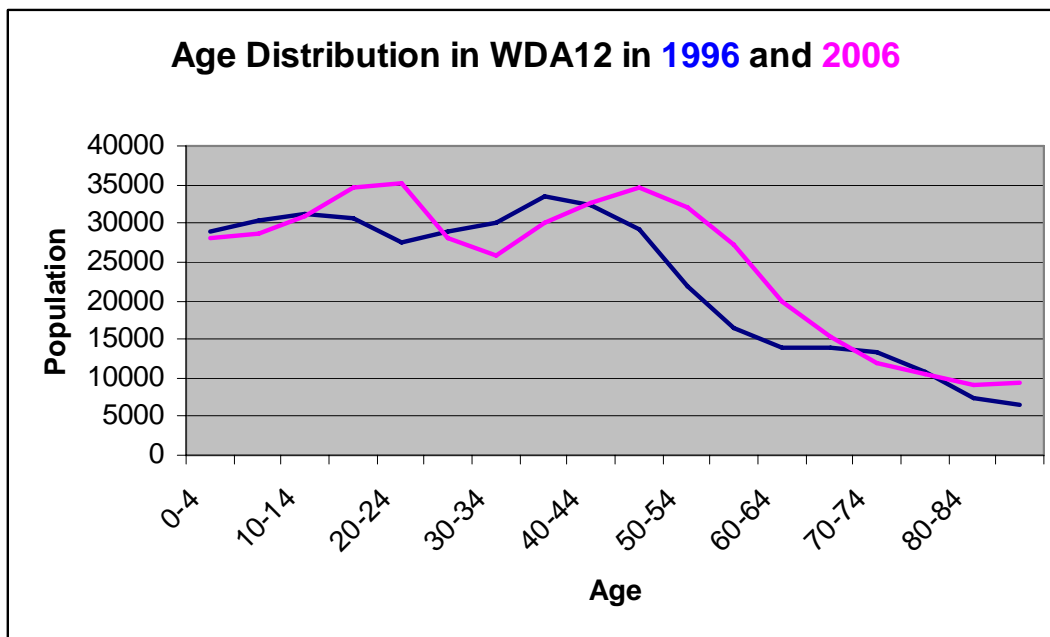
Table 2.1

### Population and Components of Population change In Spokane County: April 1, 2000 to April 1, 2006

Numeric Change	Percent Change	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase	Net Migration
25,961	6	33,175	22,269	10,905	14,956

Source: Office of Financial Management

Table 2.2



Source: Office of Financial Management

The OFM also estimated that the city of Spokane, which contains about 46% of the county's population, was the second most populous city in Washington but 27 other cities have higher population densities than Spokane.

As seen in the above chart, the "Baby-Boom" generation continues to age and the "Echo" of that generation in the 15-25 year-old age bracket is showing steady growth in Spokane. Spokane added 6 months to its average age of 41 years old with about 8,000 more women than men.

According to OFM estimates for Washington State in 2004, Spokane went from 81.9% of the population claiming “white” as their primary race in 2000 to 92.2% in 2004. While populations of all minority groups increased in number, they increased at a slower rate than among “whites”. According to the 2000 census, minorities in Spokane experienced an average unemployment rate of 14.7%, while unemployment for “whites” was estimated at 7.4%.

About 2.3% of the resident population over the age of 5 responded that they speak English less than “very well” to a survey by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2005. The number of foreign-born residents was 5.6% of the population with the largest non-English-speaking population being immigrants from the former Soviet states and Eastern Europe.

### ***Target populations***

Among the target populations for rapid integration into the labor force are several populations that have a large presence in Spokane. The *Veterans* population is attracted to Spokane for a variety of reasons including the presence of a Veterans Administration Hospital and the Fairchild Air Force Base. According to the American Community Survey (ACS) of 2005, there are 48,615 veterans living in Spokane County.

Another targeted population for workforce development is *individuals with disabilities*. The U.S. Census estimated that in 2005, 65,436 non-institutionalized people in Spokane County had some sort of disability. Of those, 39,701 were between 16 and 64 years old and therefore potentially part of the labor force.

Finally, Spokane citizens that fall within the federal definition of *poverty* remain a key concern of workforce and social development agencies in Spokane. According to the ACS, 14.5% of all Spokane County residents earned incomes below the poverty level for at least one month during 2005. In the 2000 Census, that statistic represented 12.3% of residents, indicating a higher number of affected residents. Also according to the ACS, 46.5% of single mothers with children under the age of 5 had incomes below the poverty level.

Many of the individuals in the abovementioned populations have barriers to employment that must be mitigated before they can successfully join the labor force. These barriers include lack of work readiness and basic skills, as well as issues with transportation, childcare, domestic issues or substance abuse. These needs are addressed through system partners holding extensive expertise in the assessment of barriers and leveraging all available resources to meet the needs of the client and help them achieve self-sufficiency.

### ***Planning Implications***

The demographic profile of the Spokane region presents opportunities for the workforce development system to position itself and more effectively connect the available workforce to high wage/high skill careers. The “Baby Boomers” and the “Baby-Boom Echo” represent populations that warrant particular attention as their numbers represent the majority of our workforce. As life spans continue to lengthen due to breakthroughs in medical science and improved access to healthcare, people are able and willing to work until later in life, and also may require income to supplement their savings and pensions. Strategies for retaining the mature workforce must be explored in order to keep these productive and knowledgeable workers engaged in the labor market. Data indicate that continuing education of this

population is effective in maintaining a connection to the workplace. The workforce development system needs to examine what types of skill acquisition and modalities of instruction best meet the interests and needs of mature workers and our business community.

The “Echo” also represents a cohort of workers who have the potential to play a critical role in the local labor market. Many of these workers have completed certificates and degrees but are underemployed and not yet plugged into high skill/high wage career pathways. Others in this cohort have not yet successfully attained a level of higher education. A third group is comprised of individuals that have not yet earned their secondary education credential. All three groups can benefit from the system by providing them with career information and access to resources, e.g., financial aid and career planning that will connect them with a path toward economic success.

### ***The Needs and Uses of Workforce Information***

A recurring theme throughout the strategic planning process has been the ongoing need for accurate and useful information about the workforce and the local economy. The Employment Security Department’s Regional Labor Economist has proven to be an exceptional asset to the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council (SAWDC), providing data and analysis on the regional economy and emerging trends. However, in order to ascertain a more complete picture of the economy and facilitate sound decision-making, the SAWDC acts as the forum where a reciprocal exchange of information occurs between stakeholders and the Regional Labor Economist. In this discussion the data from the state and federal agencies is compared to the real-time reporting and expertise offered by SAWDC members. The resulting synthesis guides policy development to ensure the best return on investment of WIA dollars.

### **Section III. Spokane's Workforce Development System Today**

One perspective on local workforce development is to view the ways in which the various workforce development system services provide opportunities for each of the component groups that make up the workforce. These groups include the emerging workforce (youth from K-12 through higher education), the transitional workforce (displaced workers, welfare-to-work, etc.) and incumbent workers.

#### ***Youth Services***

These descriptions represent current efforts to provide services for youth. Some of them are ongoing; others are newly initiated.

#### **Education**

##### ***K-12 System***

Washington State curriculum standards require that teachers give attention to application of knowledge. This has resulted in some K-12 teachers being trained in and implementing contextual education in the classroom.

School reform has affected curriculum development at all grade levels. In all grades, students are learning and applying information in a more deliberate and intentional fashion. The

certificate of mastery in 10<sup>th</sup> grade leaves 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> grades open for exploration and specialization. The K-12 curriculum is being reformed to meet standards-based requirements. One potential issue is that the federal law, No Child Left Behind, will require annual testing in math and reading starting in third grade. A principle test being used is the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). The change may require schools to shift emphasis to additional testing from other areas.

Statewide initiatives, including Washington Learns and Next Washington are also influencing K-12 education. Washington Learns is Governor Christine Gregoire's initiative to examine our state's education system—from early learning to K–12 to higher education—and find ways to improve it. Next Washington is the Governor's plan for maintaining and improving the state's ability to compete globally.

Advanced Placement courses and Running Start continue to be a resource for youth wanting to get college credit while in high school. Running Start for the Trades, implemented by Governor Gregoire last year, expand post-graduation apprenticeship opportunities for high school students.

The Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) continues to develop ongoing articulation agreements with K-12 schools. At schools where these articulations are in place, students may earn college credit for the competency-based coursework they have completed in high school. This is usually a non-transferable credit. The implementation of direct transcription will make this a more seamless process.

School systems accommodate students with cognitive and physical disabilities both through special education classes and in the regular classroom; programs such as the Skills Center and Special Education Training Resources in Vocational Exploration (STRIVE) operated by Spokane Public Schools focus on vocational training and community experience. Many special education students remain in school until age 21; some opt to leave earlier. Thus, workforce development for young people with disabilities is almost entirely focused around schools. The Department of Social and Health Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation also maintains a liaison relationship with local educational institutions.

Educational Service District 101 (ESD 101), in addition to other organizations, provides career counseling, preventive/ intervention services for at-risk youth; basic/remedial education; employment and training opportunities including paid work experiences in public settings and private sector; and non- traditional careers for women. ESD 101 also supports the K-12 system by providing staff development for new and existing teachers, educators, and parents. Through satellite broadcasts, ESD 101 provides GED, high school re-entry, ESL and citizenship services.

Out of school youth who (1) have graduated from high school and are desirous of immediate entrance to the workforce without further technical or higher education; or (2) have dropped out of secondary education without necessary credits to graduate follow self-directed job search or engage in programs sponsored by WorkSource or its affiliates. Career Path Services provides a combination of remedial education (GED), with job training and job placement activities for individuals who are 16 through 21 years of age, who have dropped out of school. This program is funded under WIA Title I-B. High School re-entry services are available to help a young person behind in graduation credits go back to their high school after completing a re-entry

program. ESD 101 and the Community Colleges of Spokane's Institute for Extended Learning also serve dropouts wanting to complete their GED.

Goodwill Industries offers the Planning Action for Youth Success (PAYS), young adult employment program. PAYS is a unique program that helps young adults ages 17-21 prepare for and attain employment in Spokane County. PAYS offers the tools to achieve higher education, progress in the workplace, gain valuable skills, and develop a career plan. In addition, PAYS provides opportunities for job seeking skills, assessments, goal setting, education assistance, paid work experience, skills training, and support services. Young adults with disabilities and/or a criminal record are encouraged to apply.

All area high schools offer career guidance. Many have a local career center which help with career and post-secondary education options for students.

### *Career and Technical Education*

The Spokane Area Professional-Technical Advisory Consortium (SAPTAC) has elected to use the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council as its General Advisory Counsel and approve the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Act plans for District Career and Technical Education Directors.

School districts throughout Spokane County provide a number of Career and Technical Education Courses of study. Comprehensive high schools offer a variety of programs in the following Pathways:

#### ***Business, Management and Operations***

- Digitools
- Business Computers/Applications
- Finance and Accounting
- Business Communications
- Business Law
- Marketing
- Introduction to Business

#### ***Family and Human Services***

- Early Childhood Education
- Fitness and Foods
- Culinary Arts
- Independent Living
- Teaching Academy
- Textiles and Apparel

#### ***Manufacturing and Technology***

- Auto
- Drafting
- Metals
- Materials Processing
- Photography
- Exploring Technology
- Sports Medicine

#### ***Environmental Science and Natural Resources***

- Horticulture
- Natural Resources Health

The Spokane Skills Center offers programs in automotive and collision repair technology, broadcast media production, clinical and scientific investigation/medical laboratory technology, computer information technology, computer programming, construction (pre-apprenticeship), dental occupations, hospitality and culinary arts, medical and nursing.

Qualified students from the Spokane Skills Center participate in an internship program at area businesses as part of their training, and receive community college credit through the "Tech-Prep" program.

Most of the Career and Technical Education programs in the area are associated with SAPTAC which is operated in partnership with several local businesses and institutions.

Through its Center for School to Work, ESD 101's Spokane Service Team trains at-risk youth for construction careers through affordable housing renovation and construction. The housing is then made available to low-income individuals. ESD 101's Washington Reading Corps recruits college education majors as AmeriCorps members to provide reading tutoring services to students from K-6<sup>th</sup> grade, an opportunity that provides on-the-job training to future educators.

Alternative based education schools are recognizing the value of making education relevant and are matching students with mentors, career training and other experimental programs.

### *Post-Secondary Education*

The Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) continues to be a leader in delivering workforce education programs to this region that are responsive to the needs of business. Both for-credit and non-credit offerings are available to teach individuals the skills necessary to succeed in today's marketplace. An increasing number of courses incorporate industry skill standards. Several community college programs have been modularized and a student earns a certificate for each section. This creates an opportunity for students to work toward a degree while taking advantage of training that may enhance their current employment.

The Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training, or I-BEST model is designed to deliver workplace skills to students in a two quarter program. The current model supports the manufacturing industry, training students in machine equipment and safety, applied math, mechanical blueprints, employment skills, welding, heavy equipment hydraulics and machine shop. Program completers receive a manufacturing college certificate.

CCS has incorporated soft skills outcomes across the curriculum. All courses must support four core abilities: responsibility, communication, global awareness and problem solving. Some courses also address explicit workplace skills such as appropriate dress.

Through its Institute for Extended Learning, CCS operates an adult basic education program, providing educational opportunities on a continuous enrollment basis, days and evenings, four quarters a year. Programming includes a number of wide ranged classes designed to meet the employment and pre-college educational needs of adults 19 years or older regardless of previous educational background or ability.

The University District continues to represent a fundamental shift in the pursuit of economic development for the City of Spokane and the region. The University District Master Plan was developed to addresses economic development issues, urban growth, environmental restoration, transportation and housing needs. It builds upon and incorporates existing plans, activities and assets, leveraging them into a strong economic engine that lays the foundation for Spokane's growth and a legacy for generations to come. The University District's proximity

to downtown, the medical district, mature residential neighborhoods, the Spokane River and an underdeveloped urban business district offers the opportunity to create a vibrant place that can attract a critical mass of top students, staff and faculty, cutting-edge researchers, and creative entrepreneurs – all of which are the catalysts for growth in the technology and health care industry, and overall economic prosperity for the city and the region.

Improved linkages with baccalaureate granting institutions are in progress. Workforce internships are being implemented and articulated pathways between Associate level and bachelor degree granting institutions are being developed and promulgated.

### *Apprenticeships*

Apprenticeships cut across segments of the workforce. The Spokane area has over 15 apprenticeship programs. Most apprenticeship programs locally are a voluntary labor and management effort. The apprenticeship programs provide on-the-job training, and some provide placement. Apprenticeship programs that also lead to an A.A.S. degree are run through a contracted program with Spokane Community College. Other recognized certifications are also available. Students get classroom training, but also work in a supervised setting where they are paid for their labor.

Partnerships with local apprenticeship training coordinators and career and technical education representatives have resulted in a renewed focus on apprenticeships in the Spokane area. Pre-apprenticeship training is available at area high schools through articulated pathways.

Additionally, the Construction Industry Skill Panel hosted by the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council is working to more effectively promote apprenticeships as a viable career pathway for youth.

### Youth Council

The WDC Youth Council is moving ahead with initiatives to better connect youth, businesses, and service providers in our community, deliver quality career-related events, and improve marketing of services to our youth customers. The Youth Council is focusing efforts on more effectively disseminating information to youth, parents, counselors and teachers to present opportunities for workforce education.

The addition of a Youth Involvement Coordinator to the staff of the WDC will facilitate an improved ability to develop and implement initiatives and projects for the Youth Council and its committees. This position will also act as liaison with career and technical education in the K-12 system, and provide more effective guidance and monitoring of program planning and service delivery for its United States Department of Labor Workforce Investment Act Title I-B funded youth programs.

### Mentoring Programs

Many organizations facilitate mentoring programs in Spokane County. These efforts enhance youth services and facilitate school-to-work activities in support of workforce development. Mentoring programs include the Spokane Regional Chase Youth Commission, Liberty Lake Youth Commission, Cheney Youth Commission, Project MOVE, America's Promise, Big

Brothers Big Sisters, Mentoring Children of Promise and the Northeast Washington State Rural Mentoring Partnership.

The Spokane Regional Chase Youth Commission empowers youth as leaders and develops resources to improve the health and vitality of families, schools, neighborhoods, and the economy. The Commission also advises the Spokane City Council and Board of County Commissioners on youth issues while pursuing its own agenda of programs and community activities. Since its inception more than 20 years ago, the Commission has developed infrastructures for both youth involvement in local government and community service. Among the most important initiatives of the Commission is its Teen Advisory Council (TAC). TAC provides an opportunity for high-school aged citizens to get involved in community projects and commission initiatives and serves as a conduit for the Commission to interact with local schools and community organizations at a peer-to-peer level.

The Liberty Lake Youth Commission began in December 2006 and is dedicated to providing, improving, and promoting services and programs for young people in the Liberty Lake and surrounding communities. Currently, there are 30 members representing grades 8 through 12, including a nine-member executive board. The Commission provides a vehicle for kids to learn about government, participate in the process, and represent and communicate the needs, issues, and activities affecting youth.

The Cheney Youth Commission is a 17-member group of teenagers in grades 8 through 12 who sponsors activities to create ways for youth to express themselves while benefiting the community. Activities include initiatives aimed at enhancing the general health and welfare of area youth, promoting open channels of communication between youth and adults and uniting community spirit.

A collaborative effort engaging four partners, Project MOVE is a mentoring program that supports youth with disabilities as they *move* into the workplace and/or post-secondary education after high school. Youth are matched with community mentors in Spokane County who listen and share experiences of achieving employment and educational goals. The youth-mentor relationship is a place for youth to discover their unique desires and skills while receiving help accessing various community resources. Partners include Washington Initiative for Supported Employment, University of Washington Center for Disability Policy and Research, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Inland Northwest and Community-Minded Enterprises.

America's Promise — The Alliance for Youth grew out of the Presidents' Summit for America's Future in 1997 when Presidents Clinton, Bush, Carter and Ford, with Nancy Reagan representing President Reagan, challenged America to make children and youth a national priority by keeping five promises correlated with success to 15 million underserved youth. The promises include access to caring adults, safe places and constructive use of time, a healthy start and healthy development, effective education for marketable skills and lifelong learning, and opportunities to make a difference through helping others. Spokane County is one of five communities in Washington State and 100 communities selected nationwide as a "Best Community for Young People". The 100 Best Communities for Young People competition honors outstanding efforts on behalf of young people by multiple sectors of communities. The annual competition sponsored by America's Promise is leading communities to assess their efforts, work more effectively together for young people and share best practices.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Inland Northwest matches school age children in the Inland Northwest area with quality volunteers committed to being positive role models, mentors, and friends. Their mission is to help children reach their potential through professionally supported, one-to-one relationships.

Operated by ESD 101, Mentoring Children of Promise provides services to young people who reside in Spokane County whose parents are or have ever been incarcerated. It also supports mentoring services to young people who reside outside of Spokane County, including the Tri-County region of Eastern Washington, and select areas in Central and Western Washington. Key partners include the Washington State Department of Corrections and Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest. The Department of Corrections East Region Section I provides access to offenders who can identify the target population at four local institutions: Airway Heights Correctional Center, Brownstone Work Release Center, Pine Lodge Correction Center for Women, and Eleanor Chase Work Training Release. They also provide the capacity to link children, who reside outside of this area, with other mentoring programs. Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest provides the infrastructure to support one-on-one mentoring relationships. Boys and Girls Club of Spokane County is also a key partner in this program.

Also operated by ESD 101, the Northeast Washington State Rural Mentoring Partnership consists of a consortium of 13 school districts that receive school-based mentoring in the rural/frontier northeastern corner of Washington State to as many as 255 youth annually in grades four through eight. Project activities consist of creating mentoring programs in each school district; improving student outcomes for students receiving mentoring for 12 months or more; and increasing the capacity of school districts to sustain the mentoring program.

### ***Services for the Transitional Workforce***

#### *WorkFirst*

The WorkFirst program is a partnership of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBTC), Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED), and the Employment Security Department (ESD). These organizations work together to serve Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients parents. The goal is to reduce the TANF caseload through moving parents into employment. The philosophy of WorkFirst is for parents to obtain not just any job, but a job that is linked to their skills sets, interests, and work values thus increasing the likelihood of job retention and wage progression.

DSHS refers TANF parents to the WorkSource Center for a Comprehensive Evaluation. The evaluation consists of three assessment tools: Choices CT, CASAS and an education assessment to determine learning disabilities. ESD conducts Choices CT, the Community Colleges of Spokane (CCS) conducts CASAS and the education assessment. CCS then presents potential training options to the parent. ESD takes the results of this comprehensive assessment into consideration when making a recommendation to DSHS regarding participation pathways. Those not deemed employable are referred to training and other programs which may offer services, such as Workforce Investment Act and Community Jobs. Those recommended for job search meet daily with an Employment Security WorkFirst

counselor at WorkSource and utilize the Center's resources, e.g., computer labs, job clubs, Job Hunter Modules, other workshops (soft skills and computer basics), and Employer Hiring Events. A further evaluation is conducted at 4, 8, and 12 week intervals to determine appropriateness of job search. Job retention and support services are provided to employed TANF parents.

The Community Jobs program is operated by Career Path Services in Spokane County. This is a short-term paid work experience program for TANF recipients and it focuses on placing participants into host sites with the private for profit, public and private nonprofit sectors.

### *Low income Adults*

Career Path Services and Spokane's WorkSource Center provide comprehensive transitional employment services to economically disadvantaged adults under WIA Title I-B. Services include self-directed job search and placement assistance, short term vocational and skills training, Intensive Training Accounts, On-the-Job Training, job retention and placement. Employer services include applicant recruiting and prescreening and employee retention. Job seekers may be those who have lost their job and are seeking re-employment, those entering the workforce for the first time, as well as those who are currently employed who wish to change their employment either to increase their wages or find more amenable working conditions. Job seekers can utilize the comprehensive web sites developed by WorkSource Spokane ([www.workspokane.org](http://www.workspokane.org)) as well as the state's [www.go2worksource.com](http://www.go2worksource.com) to identify potential employment opportunities and training activities. These web sites connect job seekers with both local and national markets. Job seekers can obtain in-person services and referral to training at both the WorkSource Center and affiliate sites.

### *Adults with Disabilities*

Adults with disabilities have access to an extensive system of assistance. Services are administered by governmental agencies and delivered to a large extent by a network of for-profit and non-profit community-based providers. The Department of Social and Health Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) offers services to persons with disabilities and assists them in entering the workforce by providing resources that enhance participant employability. DVR also maintains a liaison relationship with local educational institutions.

The Department of Social and Health Services Division of Developmental Disabilities provides funding for services that include employment, from sheltered workshops, work enclaves, and group supported jobs, to individual supported jobs. Supported jobs have a job coach present continually or intermittently, depending upon need. Services/activities are administered by the Spokane County Community Service Department. Services are provided by a variety of providers throughout the community.

### *Rapid Response*

Rapid Response services are provided to companies and workers experiencing large layoffs. The response utilizes a coordinated and collaborative team including representatives from the Employment Security Department/Unemployment Insurance, WorkSource, Community Colleges of Spokane and the local providers of Dislocated Workers Program services. The

rapid response unit provides on-site information services including the state Basic Health Plan and other related services such as Consumer Credit Counseling.

### ***Services for Incumbent Workers***

#### *Underemployed*

Income-eligible underemployed workers who seek higher wages and skills may obtain services through Workforce Investment Act Title I-B Adult programs.

WIA grant-funded programs for incumbent workers have been piloted in Spokane serving manufacturing companies in order to update workforce skills.

#### *Job Skills Program*

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges' Job Skills Program provides employee training to eligible businesses if an employer has new processes or is expanding. Training provided under this grant at Triumph Composite Systems, for example, was less about workforce skills than about a change in culture from a cost center to a profit center.

#### *Employer Funded Education*

Some employers offer education in their benefits package. Some offer their employees funding for training for long-term employability as well as job-related skills. Others are narrowing the focus of training. This resource is traditionally under-utilized.

#### *Workshops and Seminars*

A number of local groups, such as Associated Industries, provide workshops and seminars for enhancing employee skills. Organizations external to the region often deliver workshops in the area as well.

### ***System-Building Activities***

#### *Public and Private Workforce Initiatives*

Spokane Area WorkSource Operations Committee continues to meet on a monthly basis to address one-stop service delivery, coordination issues, identify system problems, and focus on continuous quality improvement. Members include representatives of the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council's administrative staff, partners, One-Stop Site Operator, comprehensive center, and affiliate sites. Topics of discussion center on services to business and job seeker customers, continuous quality improvement, and greater integration and communication across our system partnership. More efforts have been made for overall system integration, which represents a change in paradigm about how the Workforce Development System works.

A joint Business Solutions Team comprised of partner representatives from WorkSource, ESD 101, Career Path Services, Goodwill Industries and the Community Colleges of Spokane provides a branded and unified approach to meeting business' workforce needs. Job Expos

are coordinated by the Business Solutions Team, in which employers with current openings actively recruit. A new approach to targeted events has been piloted this year with marked success.

Relationships among the partners in our system have been further strengthened by the adoption of the Government Management, Accountability, and Performance (GMAP) process. This process established metrics that are shared by different stakeholders and help to drive better customer service and outcomes.

The WorkFirst–WorkSource integration continues with movement of WorkFirst customers into shared universal customer resources. While the physical move has been completed, the local LPA is still working to address the full integration of various programs into to the One-Stop environment. Employment Security co-located staff also operate at Community Colleges campuses.

The continuous quality improvement (CQI) process utilizing quarterly surveys of business and job seeker customers provides feedback to providers in order to refine business practices and improve services

Spokane encompasses 17 census tracts, including most of the West Central, East Central and Hillyard neighborhoods and surrounding areas, designated as a Washington State Community Empowerment Zone (CEZ). The CEZ’s goal is to develop family wage jobs for the unemployed and underemployed citizens within the core of the city through the use of sales and business and occupation tax exemptions and deferrals as an economic development tool to encourage investment and redevelopment of low-income neighborhoods. CEZ is marketed by Greater Spokane Incorporated as a tool for economic development.

Skill Panels have been an instrumental mechanism for business to inform the community of existing and future skill gaps in the labor force and to help shape regional workforce policy. Skill Panels have addressed three industry clusters – manufacturing, healthcare, and construction trades.

*Private Employer Training*

Private employers may respond to changing industry needs by providing training to their employees. The WTECB conducted a survey of employer training practices. By management estimates, 20% of incumbent employees needed further formal training. The following tables reflect results (2006 Washington State Employers' Workforce Training Needs and Practices).

**In the past three years, have the skills required to perform production or support jobs changed?**

	Spokane
Increase	36%
Stay same	51%
Decrease	1%

**In the past three years, has the percentage of your employees who received classroom, workshop, or seminar training changed?**

	Spokane	Statewide
Increase	29%	29%
Stay same	46%	58%
Decrease	6%	4%

**Spokane employers who provided training for incumbent workers (Classroom training, workshop, seminar)**

For any employee	53%
In Work-Place Practices	27%
For Basic Skills	7%
For Job Specific Skills	38%

**Percent of Employers that Provided Various Trainings for at Least 4 Hours, or had a Tuition Reimbursement Program, or a Written Plan for On-The-Job Training, in last 12 months**

Classroom Training Provided/Paid for Any Employee	Classroom Training, Workshop, Seminar					On-The-Job Training In A Written Plan Or An Agreement
	In Workplace Practices	For Basic Skills	In Job Specific Skills	For Any Employee	Restricted To Job-Related Training Only	
53%	27%	7%	38%	17%	31%	33%

**Change in firm's need for employees with each type of education in next few years**

	Increase	Stay about the same	Decrease	Not Needed
Neither a high school diploma or GED	3%	36%	6%	54%
High school diploma or GED	18%	46%	0%	35%
Some college course work	15%	54%	1%	30%
Vocational certificate	12%	45%	0%	42%
Vocational associate degree	9%	41%	1%	49%
Academic associate degree	6%	41%	0%	53%
Baccalaureate degree	3%	49%	4%	45%
Master's degree	4%	38%	2%	57%
Doctoral or professional degree	0%	28%	1%	71%

**Percentage of Employers Reporting Difficulty with Entry level Workers Hired in the Last 6 Months Demonstrating the Following Skills:**

	Among Employers with Difficulty Hiring Qualified Applicants	Among All Employers
a) Speaks so others can understand	19%	7%
b) Listen actively	44%	16%
c) Read with understanding	24%	9%
d) Observe critically	28%	10%
e) Cooperate with others	32%	12%
f) Resolve conflict and negotiate	22%	8%
g) Use math to solve problems	24%	9%
h) Solve problems and make decisions	44%	16%
i) Take responsibility for learning	19%	7%
j) Use information and communications technology	44%	16%

## Section IV. Performance Accountability

### *Performance Summary*

Overall, programs within the Spokane Workforce Development area effectively address program goals and are very competitive with statewide program results. *Workforce Training Results 2006* for the Spokane Area looked at the results for seven programs:

- Community and Technical College Job Preparatory Training
- Community and Technical College Worker Retraining
- Adult Basic Skills Education/English as a Second Language
- WIA I-B for Adults
- WIA I-B for Dislocated Workers
- WIA I-B for Youth, and
- Secondary Career and Technical Education

One consistent indicator that points to an issue requiring our attention is that of median annualized earnings in the third quarter after leaving programs. The outcomes for Spokane were below statewide averages across all Adult programs. This lower median income for Spokane residents is also reported on by the Community Indicators Initiative of Spokane County and in the “Spokane Vitals” of Greater Spokane Incorporated. This indicator is a useful gauge of the quality of life in our community. Spokane continues to lag behind the rest of the state in terms of real income. Thus, workforce development program services and comprehensive strategy needs to address this issue and move the needle of this indicator.

In the Youth programs this same outcome showed a slightly higher level of earnings compared to the rest of the state. While a positive sign, the median annualized earnings for this population were a meager \$9,645.00 and \$9,584.00 per year – clearly room for improvement exists here as well. Thus, the importance of linking *high skill, high wage* strategies with economic development to develop higher paying jobs become apparent.

WIA Title I-B performance (proxy) measures are tracked and reported monthly. The use of GMAP to track interim indicators across all Wagner-Peyser and WIA programs has proven helpful in this workforce development area. On a quarterly basis, all WIA service providers evaluate their performance using the GMAP indicators and processes. As further integration occurs in our One-Stop, this tool will be used to assist other partners whose fund sources differ in better understanding shared outcomes.

The WorkSource Operations Committee has implemented a quarterly CQI (continuous quality improvement) feedback system for both job seeker and business customers. Regular reports are discussed at meetings and used to improve service delivery.

Coordination exists among the various programs to maximize resources by coordinating training plans and by co-enrollment as appropriate.

## **Section V. Agenda for Action**

### *Systemic Solutions*

To ensure that Spokane can successfully compete in today's global marketplace, it must develop and implement an integrated workforce strategy that takes into account the area's needs as a whole, without regard to individual programs or funding sources. To successfully achieve this structure, the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council will, at a minimum, take the following steps:

- Implement a comprehensive outreach plan to businesses and job seekers to increase brand awareness and knowledge of the system
- Mandate that all WIA-funded services be provided at the One-Stop
- Encourage all non-WIA funded employment and training related programs to have a presence at the One-Stop
- Investigate new or additional One-Stop locations for future growth opportunities
- Designate an area within the One-Stop for Youth services and activities
- Develop the specific services to be provided within the center
- Create an RFP for a Business Services Unit that outlines the specific employer-related services to be provided through the One-Stop
- Mandate a 40% minimum for client-related services for WIA-funded programs
- Consider alternative funding sources when making strategic investments in workforce programs

### *Attributes of an Effective Workforce Development System*

A well-integrated and effective workforce development system will have a number of recognizable attributes:

- a balance in the system that acknowledges both new and existing programs, for example, supporting business retention while at the same time fostering the innovation that will create new economic drivers
- regional communication among key stakeholders that captures emerging issues and supports a proactive strategy for addressing them
- flexibility, including the ability to recognize and address changes, take advantage of opportunities, and envision future needs

- seamless service delivery, so that customers entering the system at any point can readily access needed services without having to make multiple contacts to meet their needs
- a clear map of system-wide resources
- a structure that is understandable and user friendly for business, job-seekers, and participating organizations
- a structure that minimizes unneeded duplication and eliminates gaps
- ongoing review of accomplishments toward stated goals
- consistent marketing to business and job seekers

### *High Skills, High Wages 2006 Strategies*

*High Skills, High Wages* sets four goals for the state’s workforce development system:

1. *Youth:* Ensure all Washington youth receive the education, training, and support they need for success in post-secondary education and/or work.
2. *Adults:* Provide Washington adults (including those with barriers to education and employment) with access to lifelong education, training, and employment services.
3. *Industry:* Meet the workforce needs of industry by preparing students, current workers, and dislocated workers with the skills employers need.
4. *Integration:* Integrate services provided by separately funded workforce development programs so that we provide the best possible service to our customers

All four goals are encompassed and addressed by the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council Strategic Plan.

Additionally, within the context of the state’s strategic plan, *High Skills, High Wages 2006: Washington’s Strategic Plan for Workforce Development*, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board has requested that the SAWDC give particular attention to the nine strategies outlined below.

Strategy 1.2 Expand the Dropout Prevention Initiative to more high schools.  
*Leads: Governor, OSPI, ESD, Workforce Board, and WDCs.*

Strategic Opportunity: **Increasing high school graduation rates.**

Strategy 5.3 Provide WIA Title I resources to help student access and retention, including upfront “bridge” funds. *Lead: WDCs.*

Strategic Opportunity: **Increasing financial aid and retention support for workforce education students.**

Strategy 6.1 Create and take advantage of opportunities to redirect resources to front line services.  
*Leads: ESD, SBCTC, DSHS, and WDCs.*

Strategy 11.4 Develop expertise in the WorkSource System in serving the needs of local employers in key clusters. *Leads: ESD and WDCs.*

Strategic Opportunity: **Improving coordination between workforce and economic development in key economic clusters.**

Strategy 12.1 Rapidly link dislocated workers with appropriate employment services and retraining programs. *Leads: ESD, WDCs, and SBCTC.*

Strategy 16.3 Mandate increased use of common assessments. *Leads: ESD and WDCs.*

WDCs are asked to include the following strategies in their area's strategic plan when local workforce and education partners see the strategy as appropriate to meet regional needs:

Strategy 9.1 A wide variety of local organizations will pilot the Work Readiness Credential.  
*Leads: Workforce Board, WDCs, Community and Technical Colleges, and Chambers of Commerce.*

Strategic Opportunity: **Expanding the availability of the Work Readiness Credential.**

Strategy 16.2 Co-locate WorkSource Centers and establish affiliate sites on more community and technical college campuses. *Leads: Governor, Legislature, ESD, SBCTC, and WDCs.*

Strategy 16.6 Pilot the co-location of L&I Vocational Rehabilitation Services at WorkSource Centers.  
*Leads: L&I, ESD, and WDCs.*

These strategies cover a broad spectrum of activities that support the development and integration of the system and its capacity to serve both business and job seeker customers.

**Youth** continue to be a priority focus of the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council. The change in the service delivery system to bring all service providers into one center gives the SAWDC and its partners the opportunity to create a structure that is more responsive to the needs of youth in our community. A revitalized Youth Council is actively participating in center and event planning and coordination, outreach efforts, and the development of tools (including web-based and multi-media) designed to deliver career information more effectively to youth, parents, teachers, youth serving organizations, and business. Increased capacity at the SAWDC will also enhance relationships with the business community and provide consistent coordination of various initiatives.

In 2007, the SAWDC has become the endorsing body for Carl Perkins Act plans submitted by area Career and Technical Education directors. This will greatly improve the linkages between the SAWDC and CTE and give both the opportunity to better understand and influence

community-wide strategies and more effectively articulate available career pathways. The Dropout Prevention and Retrieval program piloted by the Educational Service District 101 continues to successfully serve youth in need of additional services to remain in school or rejoin their classmates. This program will serve as a model for expansion as more funds become available. The SAWDC will continued to use ESD101's program delivery capability and the role it plays for area school districts as an avenue to develop specific partnerships.

The Construction Industry Skill Panel hosted by the SAWDC in 2007 focuses upon connecting youth to career opportunities through apprenticeships in the construction industry trades. Materials are being developed to promote these careers and are part of a larger branding strategy in coordination with Greater Spokane Incorporated and other Skill Panels. Events such as Pizza, Pop, and Power Tools, which focuses upon middle school age girls, and Construction Career Day, which focuses upon high school students, help to inform youth about career options and demonstrate the relevance of coursework in order to succeed in these pathways.

The Work Readiness Credential is being piloted in the Spokane WDA by Greater Spokane Incorporated and Spokane Community College. Several target populations which may benefit from the use of this assessment have been identified, including youth that are WIA program participants, both in-school and out-of-school.

The SAWDC is also working to find flexible vocational training that fits both the workforce needs of regional businesses and the availability of youth. One persistent issue is that of disadvantaged youth needing to quickly connect to gainful employment or risk not completing training. Education leading to high demand jobs needs to be delivered to youth at times when they are free and in as short a time as possible. More options are needed to ensure that youth can successfully begin their careers in pathways that lead to self-sufficiency. Wrap around services are also being provided so that youth are supported during their education and starting work.

**Adult** services continue to evolve in response to customer needs. The local system has a broad range of expertise and partners delivering services. The consolidation of all funded services under one roof this year will create synergies among partner staff and increased efficiencies. The Washington State Employment Security Department, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and Spokane Community College are already co-located at the WorkSource center and have created a successful partnership that is responsive to the unique needs of our customers. Low income and TANF recipients, unemployment insurance claimants, veterans, persons with disabilities, mature workers, and our shared universal customers all have access to state of the art career information and programs. Financial aid assistance through the federal system as well as via program services is available, based upon eligibility.

The Employment Security Department (ESD) WorkSource Spokane, along with system partners, will work to reduce operating costs while maintaining a strong partnership, directing more resources to customers, while continuing to provide high-quality services to the public. The focus will be on providing more intensive staff assisted services and less customer self service. The result will be a concentrated focus on those customers who can most benefit from WorkSource services.

All system partners will respond constructively to the fiscal and policy challenges facing the partnership and will examine business practices that are duplicative or redundant among programs. All WorkSource partners will maintain a close working relationship in developing this effort and in continuing to implement the other requirements of the WorkSource system. As mentioned above, all partners receiving WIA funds will locate in the Spokane WorkSource Center, and contribute to the operating costs of the Center, thus allowing partners to redirect resources to front-line services.

Also being examined is the reconfiguration of the WorkSource Center into a functional service delivery design. Functional areas will include such activities as assessment, case management, business services, and job placement. The outcome of this new configuration will result in improved quality of job-matching efforts, increased quality of job referrals and the number of job placements to regional employers in the local area. By redirecting resources we will effectively meet the local workforce needs of targeted local industries.

One area where the partnership continues to work very well is that of providing services to workers impacted by layoffs. In the event a business experiences a large layoff, a collaborative community response is initiated by the SAWDC. A team of service providers including staff from the WorkSource Center, Unemployment Insurance, Community Colleges of Spokane, local providers of Dislocated Worker services and Community Service Organizations coordinate information services with Management and Labor at the affected business. Staff cooperate with the State Dislocated Worker Unit and locally administered Trade Act program to coordinate all resources in our area.

In addition to Rapid Response services provided to companies and workers experiencing large layoffs, Title I-B dislocated worker and adult program service providers provide one-on-one services to affected individuals. These services include an initial assessment to determine possible barriers to employment, and when appropriate, a staff assisted job match and job referral. In the event an individual is determined not to be job ready, staff makes appropriate referrals to other key services, including referrals to education and training. Resources are made available to ensure that individuals needing financial assistance can access WIA funds that support their career goals. These funds may take the form of tuition assistance, support services while in school, and help to maintain their jobs once placed in unsubsidized employment. WIA staff also help individuals connect to other community agencies and make maximum use of a variety of financial resources.

**Industry** workforce needs are being met by the workforce development system in Spokane under the guidance of a business-led and proactive WDC. The SAWDC has rapidly transformed local infrastructure into a demand-driven model with broad community support. Strategies linking program services to economic development initiatives have been established and a community-wide ability to communicate workforce intelligence has resulted in better resource utilization and improved responses for businesses and workers. This mechanism continues to be improved so partners continue to share relevant information among service programs, education programs, and economic development entities concerning worker characteristics, skills, employment, and expansion opportunities. Businesses that would benefit from incumbent worker training are identified; SAWDC and training institutions with access to funding sources then use this information.

The SAWDC and its economic development counterparts have increased the level of collaboration and identified shared goals in support of key industry clusters. These include advanced manufacturing, aerospace manufacturing, healthcare, and transportation and logistics. Current projects include joint grant applications for workforce development programs that will leverage resources from each organization. The SAWDC is working with Greater Spokane Incorporated to submit a proposal as part of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region. The SAWDC has also been asked to coordinate all workforce proposals to ensure that each is within the context of the community's larger strategic plan. Linkages with the City of Spokane, its Economic Development Division, and the SAWDC have been reinforced, resulting in integrated strategic planning and aligned goals and objectives for economic growth within the city.

The Business Solutions Team plays an important role as a vital link between the business community and our system partners. This team is a partnership between the SAWDC and local WorkSource system partners, which include WorkSource Spokane, Career Path Services, Goodwill Industries, Spokane Community College, and Educational Service District 101. The team coordinates outreach activities to businesses in the key clusters, while businesses inform staff of skill needs and industry trends, learn of available services, access the system services necessary for recruiting from the job seeker customer base, and help shape effective outreach and service strategies. This model engages both business and the job seeker in tailored recruitment strategies and encourages the WorkSource system to organize their operations in line with targeted regional industries.

One of the Business Solutions Team's areas of focus targets improving the quality of job referrals to local employers and increasing job placements for targeted industries in the Spokane catchments area. The Employment Security Department plays a lead role in implementing standards for quality job orders and identifying steps to meet industry recruiting and placement needs. WorkSource staff will utilize available data, such as job seeker inventory and O\*Net codes, to customize and concentrate services to business.

***Integrated Services*** and seamless, transparent programs are goals of the SAWDC for services delivered in Spokane. Customers – both business and job seeker – require streamlined processes and consistent service in order to reach their objectives. Bringing more workforce development programs together through the consolidation of funded programs at the center in the new program year will improve service delivery to customers by creating a true one-stop. WorkSource Spokane currently includes a range of state agency and partner programs. Wagner-Peyser, WIA Title I-B Adult and Dislocated programs, WorkFirst, Unemployment Insurance, Worker Retraining, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and AARP are currently co-located at the comprehensive center. Businesses and job seekers will be able to access more partner resources and new partners will be encouraged to co-locate. The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation may increase the number of staff at the center while discussions with the Department of Labor and Industries Vocational Rehabilitation Services may result in placing their staff at WorkSource.

In addition to the comprehensive center, the SAWDC administers WorkSource affiliate sites at several locations in the community offering portals to our system. These include sites at Spokane Community College and Spokane Falls Community College. Housed with the career and employment services departments at the colleges, these two affiliates assist students in workforce education programs and the general student population.

One of the tools being explored for more efficient and portable services for customers is that of common assessments. At this time, the SKIES initial assessment is in use and WorkSource Spokane requires it to be completed for 100% of the Veteran, WorkFirst, Unemployment Insurance and job seeker customers as appropriate. More in-depth assessment and testing is performed by specific programs such as the WorkFirst Comprehensive Evaluation, WIA adult and dislocated worker programs, and the Trade Adjustment Assistant (TAA) program.

The Employment Security Department is interested in working with the SAWDC and system partners to define the elements, usage with specific programs and population, and appropriate use of a common assessment tool. The SAWDC would like to test an assessment tool in the next program year that can be used for all job seeker customers in the center, as well as by business customers to better determine fit and match in their jobs. A number of WDCs around the state have adopted assessment tools such as JobFit™, WorkKeys®, and Prove-It!, and staff will conduct research and apply lessons from their areas' experiences.

### **Planning Process**

There have been a number of changes to the workforce development system and to the regional economy since the plan was updated in 2005. While some data was still relevant, there was a desire to insure the latest information available was included. To improve the relevance, data for the update was gathered in several ways.

Current documents and Web sites were consulted. The Regional Labor Economist contributed updated information outlining the status of the local economy and regional demographics. Groups comprised of the Spokane Area Workforce Development Council and community stakeholders met and reviewed the plan and developed key success factors and system values.

### **Group Attendees**

Frankie Arteaga	WorkSource Spokane
Steve Dahlstrom	Spokane Teachers Credit Union
Tom Fritz	Inland Northwest Health Services
Liz Collier	Sterling Savings Bank
Angelique Signorelli	Educational Service District 101
Anne Millane	Educational Service District 101
Celeste Estrada	Career Path Services
Darrell Mihara	Spokane Falls Community College
Dawn Karber	Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest
Don Howell	Spokane Skills Center (SAWDC/YC)
George Iranon	Career Path Services
Jeff Zahir	WorkSource Spokane
Joanne Murcar	Business and Community Training (CCS)
Julie Meyer	Providence Services (WDC)
Nick Hughes	Career Path Services
Peg Waldron	WorkSource Spokane
Janet Bloom	WorkSource Spokane
Anne Lockwood	SAWDC
Danny McDaniel	SAWDC
Lori Meakin	SAWDC
Mark Mattke	SAWDC
Gordon Gutterud	SAWDC

The draft plan was posted on the SAWDC Web site for review and comment period with a legal ad published in the paper announcing its availability. Relevant comments were incorporated in this final version.

SPOKANE AREA WORKFORCE COUNTY  
DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL :

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Mayor/Deputy Mayor

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Board of County Commissioners

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk of the Board

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Workforce Development Council Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Tom Fritz  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (printed or typed)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
Signature on File  
Assistant City Attorney, Pat Dalton