

Green Country Workforce Two Year Plan

Executive Summary

For consideration, please prepare a document not to exceed 2 pages that synthesizes the context and strategies developed in the local plan. This should include: a summary of the local workforce development system’s vision, regional context (as appropriate), and system description.

Green Country Workforce is the federally funded WIOA and state designated workforce development board for 11 counties including Adair, Cherokee, Creek, McIntosh, Muskogee, Okmulgee, Osage, Pawnee, Sequoyah, Tulsa, and Wagoner counties. Recently formed through the merger of the former Tulsa and Eastern Workforce boards, Green Country Workforce drives economic development by creating relationships that benefit employers and job seekers by placing talent today and preparing individuals for the jobs of tomorrow. Our vision is growing economic prosperity for our region by being the primary source that connects employers and job seekers. Our team is aligned to one vision and guided by our core values of compassion, innovation, and ownership. The team comes from diverse backgrounds and use their platforms and influence for good. We believe that every day we come to work, we help someone!

Submission guidelines

Submit one (1) signed PDF of the final plan. Supporting documents may be linked or included through an additional link such as Dropbox.

Local Plan Sections & Questions

The local plan should operationalize the strategies developed in the regional plan by creating an action plan for implementation. It is encouraged to support responses in the local plan with links and references to specific policies and processes that exemplify the strategies in action. When a strategy has not yet been implemented, the local plan should identify the action plan for implementation with related information to timeline, ownership, and progress tracking.

A. Local Workforce Development System Vision

1. **Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals to support economic growth and economic self-sufficiency, including:**
 - a. **Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment; and,**
 - b. **Goals relating to performance accountability measures based on performance indicators.**

Green Country shares the vision outlined by WIOA of an integrated service delivery system and a framework through which states and local areas can leverage other Federal, State, Local, and

philanthropic resources to support participants. This means a commitment to providing high quality services beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations, such as pre-apprenticeships or internships, and culminating with a good job along a career pathway, enrollment in post-secondary education, or a Registered Apprenticeship.

Services must be customer-focused and based on the needs of the individual participant. Linking the participant to the Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Individual Service Strategy (ISS) and involving the participant in the design and implementation of service ensures that their voice is represented, and their needs are met.

An initial assessment is made available to all individuals through the American Job Center network. This involves a comprehensive assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy, and English language proficiency, preferred language as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps), and supportive service needs. The result is a determination of the individual's next steps, which may include but are not limited to:

- a comprehensive assessment and the development of an individual employment plan,
- the provision of training or education services
- appropriate referrals based on initial assessments.
- determination of appropriate program enrollment or co-enrollment

Youth are provided an objective assessment which includes a review of basic skills, occupational skills, prior work experience, employability, interests, aptitudes, supportive service needs, and developmental needs. The assessment also considers the youth's strengths, motivations, assets, and unique personality rather than just focusing on areas that need improvement. The purpose of the objective assessment is to identify appropriate services and career pathways that are supported by the assessment and appropriate for the individual participant.

Green Country Workforce's contract measures for the Service Provider ensure that job seekers with barriers to employment are truly being served. GCWDB is an outcomes-based organization. Our contract measures will be closely monitored and observed for trends. Outreach is a function of all GCWDB staff to ensure that recruitment and additional partnerships can quickly be established to meet the needs to overcome barriers to employment.

We also have plans to engage with the other WIOA funded partners to ensure that full system needs are addressed. This will create true partnerships that provide open references, seamless referrals, and co-case management.

2. Describe the strategy to work with entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align resources available to the local area, to achieve the strategic vision and goals.

The Green Country Workforce's goal is to work with each partner to understand their strengths and services and use that understanding to create efficiency and avoid redundancy. We leverage resources to ensure there is no duplication of services. The Green Country Workforce One Stop Operator will be the primary convener to ensure that all stakeholders are heard and that services are provided

consistently and thoroughly. This will occur through the center certification process, the partner memorandum of understanding and infrastructure funding agreement, as well as continual partner meetings.

The Green Country Workforce also has two councils. The Innovative Workforce Opportunities Committee (IWOC), staffed by Green Country Board Members, is comprised of partners and community programs that focus on vulnerable populations and those with barriers to determine opportunities for service, technical assistance, referrals, and co-enrollments. The Youth Committee, staffed by Board Members and other community-based organizations, has a specific focus on Youth issues in the 11-county area we serve. These Committees will create a link and guidance related to the combined strategy for the entire region.

B. Local Workforce Development System Response to Regional Plan.

Section B is not required if LWDB is a single-area planning region but must be completed by local areas who are members of a multi-area planning region. Local areas may base their responses on those of the regional plan but are expected to add additional local context and identify specific areas of focus beyond the regional response.

1. Provide an analysis of the local area’s economic conditions, including:
 - a. Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and
 - b. Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

2. Describe the knowledge and the skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

3. Provide an analysis of the local workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

This data comes primarily from the following documents published by Oklahoma Works:

The Green Country Oklahoma Workforce Development Area Local Area Briefing 2022

Existing and Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors

NAICS	Description	2021 Jobs	Percentage of Total Employment
90	Government	67,000	14.7%
62	Health Care and Social Assistance	65,016	14.2%
44	Retail Trade	54,250	11.9%
31	Manufacturing	47,997	10.5%
72	Accommodation and Food Services	40,999	9.0%
56	Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	31,579	6.9%

23	Construction	24,158	5.3%
54	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	22,586	4.9%
48	Transportation and Warehousing	20,094	4.4%
52	Finance and Insurance	16,575	3.6%

Source: LightCast

There was an estimated 456,695 number of total jobs in the area in 2021. The largest sector was Government with 67,000 jobs. The second largest sector was Health Care and Social Assistance with 65,016 jobs

In analyzing the data, there are four primary industry sectors that rank among the top. These include:

- Government
- Healthcare and Social Assistance
- Retail Trade
- Manufacturing

Existing and Emerging In-Demand Occupations

The Table below shows the top occupations by the total number of jobs in the GCWDA.

Largest Occupations



Occupation	2020 Jobs	2030 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2020-2030)	% Change	2021 Median Hourly Earnings
Retail Salespersons	15,040	14,959	-81	-1%	\$11.11
Cashiers	10,646	10,112	-534	-5%	\$11.11
Customer Service Representatives	10,390	9,272	-1,118	-11%	\$14.00

Registered Nurses	10,326	10,901	575	6%	\$30
Fast Food and Counter Workers	9,794	9,641	-153	-2%	\$9
Stockers and Order Fillers	8,792	10,852	2,060	23%	\$14
Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	8,376	10,670	2,294	27%	\$14
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	7,899	9,304	1,405	18%	\$11
Waiters and Waitresses	7,828	8,794	966	12%	\$9
General and Operations Managers	7,413	10,123	2,710	37%	\$38

* *Largest Occupations - Settings*
Source: LightCast 2023.2

In analyzing the data, it is evident that many of the occupations in the region with the highest existing number of openings fall on the low end of the pay scale, including:

- Retail Salespersons.
- Cashiers.
- Customer service reps.

However, there are two occupations that show high growth projections and high wages for the region, including:

- Registered Nurses.
- General and Operations Managers.

Green Country’s philosophy when placing job seekers into work-based learning opportunities is to ensure that the placements can lead to a self-sustaining wage. Although a client may be placed at a wage below that, it is our expectation that the employers provide opportunities for upward mobility and a benefits package or that the client have a career pathway lined out to achieve the goal.

Green Country has some success at matching the skills of workers that are displaced due to closure or layoff as a similar employer where transferable skills are recognized, particularly in the healthcare, aerospace field or manufacturing.

While in 2020 the overall unemployment rate is low, trends of unemployment were not even. According to the Economic Policy Institute, Oklahoma’s unemployment rate in the 4th quarter of 2020 was 5.9%. According to USA Facts the national rate now remains at 3.7% or just over 6 million people. Year over year the unemployment rates in Oklahoma are also closer to the national average in 2022 compared to 2021, separated by only 0.3 percentage points in October compared to last year’s 1.9% difference.

Unemployment rates continue to decline based on educational attainment. However, college enrollments, largely unchanged from 2010 to 2019 at 41%⁴, are down with two-year colleges taking the largest dip nationally at a 9.5% decline.⁵ Labor force participation rates also remain low. According to the Brookings Institute, the teen labor force participation rate peaked in the 1970s and has declined since that time. In 2021, they found that the rate for teens in the South that are neither in school or

participating in the labor force is 8.5%. Statista cited that if schools resumed in class by January 2021, there would still be approximately 648,000 high school dropouts.

according to <https://sde.ok.gov/student-dropout-report>

State Totals - October 1st Enrollment

Year	Enrollment Grades 9-12	# of Dropouts*	Dropout Rate*
2020-2021	196,492	10,668	5.5%
2019-2020	194,039	5921	2.8%
2018-2019	193,381	4,729	2.4%
2017-2018	191,145	3,549	1.9%
2016-2017	189,850	5,668	3.0%

Due to the increased number of dropouts in Oklahoma since 2020, the GCWDB and other local areas have teamed with the department of education, specifically Alternative Education to help provide resources and workforce services to these individuals and their families.

Paired with labor force participation rates of teens, interventions in disengaged and opportunity youth will need to be enacted.

2. Describe the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the local area, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Analysis of statewide data suggests a skills gap for emerging in-demand occupations. Similar to the State, Green Country Workforce’s area employers will require more job seekers to have earned a post-secondary credential over the next four years, and it is anticipated that this trend will continue indefinitely. There will be more jobs that require a greater skill set and educational level beyond the high school equivalency and basic entry-level skills that are the basic requirements of so many jobs today. This skills gap and educational gap coupled with an aging workforce present a challenge to meet the demands of employers.

Oklahoma Works as a system has partnered with the State Department of Education in the promotion and utilization of OKCareerguide as a resource to aid in-school youth and job seekers in the development of career pathways. This tool provides the educational requirements, on-the-job training, and experience required to meet the skill level and expertise for in-demand occupations. In addition, the State Department of Education implemented the Individualized Career Academic Plan (2019) for all in-school youth beginning their freshman year in 2019. The ICAP is a comprehensive review of student interest, career pathway development, and job shadowing opportunities to assist youth in developing educational attainment goals to prepare for the workplace.

The local boards have partnered with the State Department of Education in promoting the ICAP plan by working with local school system administrators, higher education partners, and career development specialists. This information is shared as a repository of resources and partners for the successful implementation of the program. In addition, representatives from both boards in the Northeast Region participated in EngageOK. EngageOK is a statewide professional development training for all k-12 educators, and in this training, the Executive Director’s presented on Workforce Development, demand occupations, and building business and industry partnerships in the region.

In general, employers are struggling to fill middle-skill jobs, those jobs that require education and skills beyond high school, but not a four-year degree, as illustrated below. Regarding the specific employment needs of the in-demand sectors, or “power” sectors, they follow.

Advanced Manufacturing Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applied Technology ● Automotive Technology ● Computer-Aided Design ● Computer Numerical Control ● Construction Management Technology ● Diesel & Heavy Equipment Technician ● Drafting and Design Technology ● Electronics Technology ● Engineering Technology ● Heating, AC & Refrigeration Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Industrial Technology ● Machine Tool Technology ● Maintenance Technology ● Manufacturing Management ● Marine Technology ● Mechatronics ● Motorcycle Technician ● Quality Assurance ● Supply Chain Management ● Welding Technology
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Aerospace & Aviation Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aerospace Engineering ● Aerospace Security ● Air Traffic ● Aviation Business ● Aviation Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Aviation Management ● Avionics Maintenance ● Energy Management ● Flight ● Technical Services
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Energy Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alternative Fuels Technology ● Computer-Aided Design ● Computer Numerical Controls (CNC) ● Construction Management ● Drafting and Design Technology ● Electronic Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engineering Technology ● Heating, AC & Refrigeration Technology ● Industrial Technology ● Machine Tool Technology ● Mechanical Maintenance ● Mechatronics ● Energy Management
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Healthcare Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Biochemistry ● Biology ● Biomedical Sciences ● Biotechnology ● Business Administration ● Chemistry ● Dental Sciences ● Emergency Medical Services ● Exercise and Sports Science ● Gerontology ● Healthcare Administration ● Human and Family Sciences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Medical Assistant ● Medical Profession ● Nursing ● Nutritional Sciences ● Optometry ● Osteopathic Medicine ● Pharmacy Technology ● Physical Therapy ● Public Health ● Respiratory Care ● Surgical Technology ● Veterinary Sciences
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Information Systems Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business Analytics Computer Programming ● Computer Science ● Database Management ● Desktop Support Specialist ● Electronics Technology ● Graphic Design & Multi-Media Health Information Technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information Systems ● Information Technology ● Mobile Applications ● Network & Server Administration ● Security/Cybersecurity ● Software Developer ● Technology Management ● Web Development
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Professional Services Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Accounting ● Business Administration ● Business Information Technology ● Business Management ● Enterprise Development ● Finance ● General Business ● General Management ● Health Care Administration ● Hospitality Management ● Human Resources Management ● International Business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Management Information Systems ● Marketing ● Office Administration ● Operations Management ● Organizational Leadership ● Paralegal Studies ● Project Management ● Public Administration ● Retail Management ● Small Business Management ● Supply Chain Management ● Technology Management
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Transportation & Logistics Program Competencies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Automotive Technology ● Computer-Aided Design ● Construction Management Technology ● Diesel & Heavy Equipment Technician ● Drafting and Design Technology ● Engineering Technology ● Heating, AC & Refrigeration Technology ● Information Systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marine Technology ● Mechatronics ● Motorcycle Technician ● Process Technology ● Quality Assurance ● Supply Chain Management ● Truck Driving Training ● Welding Technology
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Emerging sectors include Finance and Insurance, Utilities, and Construction. Green Country is actively working with organizations like rural water districts and technology companies to identify opportunities for registered apprenticeships and other work-based learning models. The GCWDB has approved incumbent worker training funds to help businesses upskill current workers and hopefully backfill the entry level positions with WIOA clients.

The local boards and our service providers have access to Lightcast, an economic modeling software, and O*Net to obtain competencies in any occupation found within the power sectors. The boards are committed to utilizing the best available labor market information to make data-informed decisions related to programmatic and systemic policy and procedures to improve the workforce system and be prepared to meet the future demands of the businesses and job seekers we serve.

3. Provide an analysis of the regional workforce, including current labor force employment and unemployment data, information on labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

Unemployment Data and Wage Data

Although Oklahoma had a statewide unemployment rate of 3.1% for January 2023, all but 1 of the counties within our Region exceed that statewide average according to LightCast v. 2023.2. Utilizing the latest available data for unemployment (2023) by county, the Region had counties ranging from a low of 3.1% in Tulsa and to 5.3% in McIntosh County.

	Tulsa	Wagoner	Creek	Muskogee	Osage	Cherokee	Okmulgee	Sequoyah	McIntosh	Adair	Pawnee
Regional Metrics											
Unemployment (Jan 2023)	10,267	1,253	1,113	1,069	757	741	679	612	388	310	
Unemployment Rate % (Jan 2023)	3.1%	3.2%	3.5%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	4.4%	3.6%	5.3%	3.7%	

LightCast v. 2023.2

Labor Force Data by County

Analyzing labor force data at the county level is important to understand the different dynamics across our region. County labor participation rates range from 45.4% at the low end with McIntosh County to 63.5% at the high end with Tulsa County. Overall, most counties fell within the 50-60% range with two counties above 60% (Pawnee and Tulsa) and one county falling below the 50% labor force participation rate (McIntosh).

Increasing the labor force participation is often dependent on a number of factors. Other sections address the challenges associated with dependent care and elderly care that often come into play when an individual is making their own determination of whether to be an active participant in the local labor force.

Total labor force numbers align closely with the population deviations between counties.

Table 10: Labor Force Participation by County

Area	June 2021	June 2022	Total Change
State of Oklahoma	61.4%	61.0%	-0.4%
Adair County	58.1%	58.7%	0.6%
Cherokee County	53.1%	52.1%	-1.0%
Creek County	56.2%	56.5%	0.3%
McIntosh County	46.0%	45.4%	-0.6%
Muskogee County	59.9%	57.1%	-2.8%
Okmulgee County	55.6%	55.0%	-0.6%
Osage County	57.4%	58.3%	0.9%
Pawnee County	60.1%	60.1%	0.1%
Sequoyah County	54.4%	54.3%	-0.1%
Tulsa County	63.7%	63.5%	-0.2%
Wagoner County	59.1%	58.9%	-0.2%

Source: Lightcast- economicmodeling.com- 2022.3

Population Projections

Data for population projections documents provided to each local area published by Oklahoma Works.

Table 1: Projected Population by County

County	2021 Population	2026 Population	Total Change
Adair	21,943	22,298	355
Cherokee	49,142	50,394	1,252
Creek	71,348	70,652	-696
McIntosh	19,610	19,679	69
Muskogee	67,323	66,184	-1,138
Okmulgee	38,513	40,290	1,777
Osage	46,617	46,674	57
Pawnee	16,475	16,990	516
Sequoyah	41,560	41,781	221

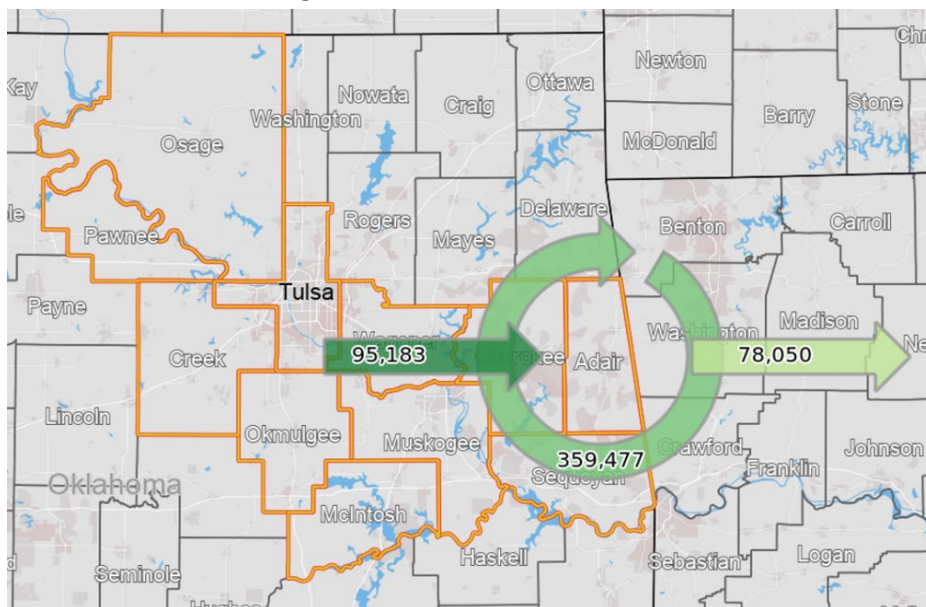
Tulsa	662,171	679,808	17,637
Wagoner	84,344	90,941	6,597
Total	1,119,045	1,145,693	26,648

Source: Lightcast- economicmodeling.com- 2022.3

Historically there was a population decrease in many of our rural areas, which caused the availability of a skilled and qualified labor force to also dissipate. The new data for 2022 indicates only two counties decreasing in population, Muskogee, and Creek County. The increase in populations in all the other counties will allow for Business to find skilled workers, even in the smaller counties. The increased growth rates in mostly urban areas within the region may be in part associated with similar job growth and opportunities in those places.

It is important to look at commuting patterns to fully analyze the labor conditions of the region and the availability of job seekers within communities and within commutable distance of communities. The flow of workers in and out of counties for work-related purposes is addressed in the following table.

Local Area Commuting Patterns



Source: Center of Economic Studies (CES), OnTheMap, 2019

As the commuting pattern table above suggests there are 359,477 individuals that commute within our 11 counties, there are 95,183 commuters from other counties that commute to our 11 counties. There are 78,050 individuals that commute outside our 11 counties for work. In summary, all commuters into our county area and commuters within our area equal 454,660 total commuting workers for our 11 counties.

Additionally, Green Country Workforce will use available data and information to identify ways to better reach underrepresented populations, as well as individuals with barriers to participation, including:

- Veterans and their families
- displaced homemakers;

- low-income individuals;
- Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians;
- individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals with disabilities;
- older individuals;
- Ex-offenders;
- homeless individuals or homeless children and youths;
- youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system;
- individuals who are English language learners;
- individuals who have low levels of literacy;
- individuals facing substantial cultural barriers;
- eligible migrant and seasonal;
- individuals within two years of exhausting lifetime eligibility under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program;
- single parents (including single pregnant women); and
- long-term unemployed individuals;

4. Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including providing the SWOT analysis that indicates how the local area’s service delivery system is prepared to meet the community’s workforce development needs. The local area may add additional information to the regional SWOT analysis that was developed with the regional plan.

- a. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities.
- b. Describe the workforce development system’s capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.
- c. Describe the employment needs of employers.

<i>Strengths</i>	<i>Weaknesses</i>
Tribal Relationships	Keeping open lines of communication and avoiding silos
Training partnerships with colleges/universities with a collaborative spirit and a lot of available certifications	Knowledge of partnership services, the gap in cross-training partner staff, and getting to know new partners after the merger
Cost of living and quality of life	Need better marketing of services and brand awareness among jobseekers and employers
The staff represents the programs and the community well	Reaching Youth through School Systems partnerships and enhancing youth programming

Diversity, talent, experience, and leadership of the Board members from a wide array of industries (especially as a combined/merged local area)	The expanse of area and the distance of workforce partners from each other and lack of sector diversity in rural areas
Partners listen to other's ideas and concerns to solve problems	<i>Low Educational Attainment of the current workforce - impacts business attraction, economic development</i>
DE&I focus of the board	Lack of population diversity makes it harder to attract and retain diversity
Building business relationships through business services offering a robust level of services and options	Over-reliance on federal funding
Ability to leverage resources innovatively	Urban vs. Rural Mentality
Opportunities	Threats
Improving rural area access to internet services, technology, and transportation	After Merge there was a Lack of collaboration and partnerships. These issues have improved beginning last quarter of 2021.
Advocacy for Infrastructure rollout	Transportation - Getting services, education, and training to the population that needs it
Uniquely positioned for additional CARES or	Sufficient transportation, childcare, etc.
federal funding in partnership with Federal Tribes; diversify funding	Infrastructure available to support an inclusive/equitable larger workforce
The merger of boards helps with shared experiences and ideas - opportunity to learn more about replication of what works for both urban and rural and implementing best practices for both and rebrand us in the communities we serve	Maintaining quality working relationships with federal and state workforce partners and keeping workforce program funding at necessary levels because private & state funds are limited or non-existent
Changing employer needs may make them more willing to work with justice-involved; more flexibility with hiring practices	Politics and elections - Ensure the importance of workforce and funding is recognized
Expanded economic development opportunities give more opportunity to jobs for the rural population	Automation - adjusting workforce to different (currently undeveloped) skills, technical training gaps
Relocation of the job center - reach more communities (ex. LatinX and Asian)	The skilled and willing workforce is shrinking, and Labor Force Participation Rate needs to go up
Tulsa area brings more diversity to the rural area	Education Funding - access to post-secondary

- Opportunity to educate about other populations and the wealth of culture they bring	that fits industry need and emerging industries
Better marketing and outreach of all programs and services including increased usage of business services	Post Incarceration opportunity - housing, job opportunities

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic occurred more virtual and technical alternative means were implemented to help individuals with transportation issues or those living in isolated areas of our region.

A. Describe the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities.

Strengths

Green Country Workforce actively partners with the Cherokee Nation by co-locating in job centers. In the new program year, Green Country will provide interns in the areas of healthcare and agriculture with the Pawnee Nation.

The region is rich with education and training organizations. There are five Career Techs, two community colleges, and eight public and independent four-year institutions in the Green Country Workforce region. Green Country co-locates with two institutions, has board representation of five, and actively works to partner with those that are headquartered out of the area but serve the region.

Four of the nine staff reside in rural areas. As a result, our community relationships are strong. The Green Country Workforce’s Board mirrors this, with a majority of the members representing rural areas. For many of the staff, workforce development in a workforce board setting is a second career. The primary fields of some staff include aerospace manufacturing, IT, prison and correctional reform, accounting, and retail. The staff and board actively work together with partners and each other to solve problems and make referrals.

In 2020, Green Country Workforce changed the contract measures for their Title I Service Provider to include race, ethnicity, and barrier removal to determine gaps in recruiting and services. There is a focus on accessibility as reflected in the goals for the coming year.

In 2022 Green Country reprocured a new Service Provider and One Stop Operator through the Request for Proposal Process. This allowed for better alignment of services across our 11 counties, with maximum input from the Rural areas.

In 2020, Green Country Workforce established a Business Services Team, which also included a business services strategic plan aligning with the local and regional plan. Previously, this department was outsourced. Within the last year, the Business Services Team increased their business outreach to 75 participants across 27 employers and 23 sectors. The BST has 80 prospective employers. The WEX wages increased from \$12 per hour to \$15.21.

In PY22 the GCWDB Business Services Team has focused on work-based learning opportunities including incumbent worker funding for business and employer events. GCWDB has targeted populations such as justice involved and dropouts. The Business Services representatives have also created a business service team that includes partners to make a more robust impact on the communities we serve. Business is the key to a workforce, without a strong business presence, the workforce cannot grow. In GCWDA we want to

grow our own and keep people working within our area. Communication as well as collaboration between partners and business is the key to our workforce area's success.

Weaknesses

In addition to challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic, the building in which Green Country Workforce's American Job Center was located sold unexpectedly, causing a need to find a new location in a matter of months. This coincided with the merger activity that was on a condensed timeline and the loss of key staff. This created a flurry of activity for all employees and communication suffered.

Green Country Workforce established a weekly cadence of meetings that enables everyone's involvement in topics that matter, including changes or announcements. The One Stop Operator is conducting partnership meetings within the American Job Centers on a monthly basis.

The merger process amplified the need for consistent and timely communication across multiple stakeholders. The process in place not only kept Board staff updated on what they needed to know, it also updated and involved the Board of Directors, Local Elected Officials, and other partners. The effort to keep everyone current has allowed us to make quality decisions quickly and maintaining the process post-merger will help ensure that we continue to do so.

Additionally, Green Country Workforce selected a new WIOA Title I service provider, who has a focus on cross-training among partner staff.

The PY22 activity, which involved the procurement of a New Title 1 Service Provider and One Stop Operator has helped realign operations with the needs of the customers and businesses, allowing for better outcomes.

B. Describe the workforce development system's capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

The region is rich with education and training organizations. There are five Career Techs, two community colleges, and eight public and independent four-year institutions in the Green Country Workforce region. Green Country co-locates with two institutions, has board representation of five, and actively works to partner with those that are headquartered out of the area but serve the region.

C. Describe the Employment needs of employers.

As mentioned in previous sections, the gap in skilled workforce has not closed. Workforce markets have tightened due to COVID-19, an aging workforce who exited at a high rate during the pandemic, lowered college enrollment, and a stable but low labor force participation rate. Employers are recognizing the need to hire based on skill and increased willingness to hire previously hard-to-serve populations, including formerly incarcerated individuals, people with disabilities, and immigrants and refugees.

Green Country actively works with employers to train them in skills-based hiring that includes job description and hiring practices that allow them to reach a wider audience. Skills-based hiring is

designed to eliminate non-essential hiring requirements and focus on the position specific skills. For example, including the requirement of a college degree in a job description eliminates two thirds of the population of Oklahoma. Focusing on technical and soft skills necessary to be successful in a position opens the job pool, while employers get the skill they really need. Skills based practices help employers get the right person in the right seat quicker.

In PY22 the GCWDB Business Services Team has focused on work-based learning opportunities including incumbent worker funding for business and employer events. All the AJCs across our 11 counties are scheduling employer events and include local business and partners. GCWDB has targeted populations such as justice involved and dropouts. The Business Services representatives have also created a business service team that includes partners to make a more robust impact on the communities we serve. GCWDB is working to ensure all business contacts are entered into the state system for performance-based outcomes. All required WIOA partners have permission to gain access to the states online system for business service data entry. Communication as well as collaboration between partners and business is the key to our workforce area's success.

Impact Partnerships.

- Workplace Stability: Kickoff workshop with world renowned author designed to educate, excite, and engage both the community and business leaders about how “Workplace Stability” drives economic success for communities. Kickoff is followed by Workplace Stability train the trainer sessions for partners and Indian Capital Technology Center (ICTC) instructors. Partners: Port of Muskogee, Bridges out of Poverty, ICTC, Advantage TerraFab, Advantage Controls, Griffin Foods, and Custom Seating.
- Construction Apprenticeships Skills for Homebuilding (CASH): Pre-Apprenticeship training including THA, HUD, Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen targeted at public housing residents.
- Central Tech Women in Recovery Welding and CNC Machinist: Second cohort (8) Training program for women in initial phase of re-entry to obtain Welding or CNC certifications.
- Central Tech Bristow Aviation Maintenance Certification: First cohort (8) of local manufacturers training local residents for current in-demand aviation maintenance positions. Partners: Kratos Defense, Go Vertical Aviation, PAS MRO.
- Women Accessing Non-Traditional Trades (WANTT): Construction pre-apprenticeship training with Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen. Currently recruiting for second cohort of women being trained in the construction trade. The first cohort had seven complete and be placed in jobs, with two of the seven accepted into apprenticeship programs.

1. Based on the regional plan’s data analysis, describe the local area’s key workforce development issues and possible solutions to be implemented within the local area.

<i>Key Workforce Development Issues</i>	<i>Possible Solutions</i>
<i>Lack of skilled workers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase programs and outreach related to second-chance programs. This includes information related to bonding and background checks. ● Develop collaborative reentry programs to build pathways to work and supportive services for individuals returning from incarceration. Potentially pursue federal discretionary grants related to reentry. ● Focus on career pathway development in all areas related to training and emphasize the importance of skill development to employers for incumbent workers to meet higher-skilled positions and retain talent. ● More business are willing to be second chance employers to fill positions.
<i>Lack of business and job seeker awareness of regional resources for workforce development</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be more active and intentional in the use of social media and make more resources available on our web pages. ● Collaborate with educational, economic development, and other workforce development programs to cross-promote programming. ● Utilize job fairs to build better relationships with businesses in the region. ● Stronger relations with WIOA system and businesses. ● More work-based learning opportunities to overcome us being known as the best kept secret.
<i>Lack of sector specialization and specific skills needed by employers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Find ways for board members to be more actively involved in educational advisory groups. ● Seek business input through listening sessions to identify skills needed now and in the future. ● Work with high schools to support the development of career pathways projects and career/technical education efforts. ● Incumbent worker training funds can be used to promote current employees allowing for more entry level position openings that require less skills.
<i>Lack of necessary supportive services, especially around Transportation, Childcare, and Mental Health Services. For some job seekers who were previously incarcerated, this list may be even longer and include housing and other supports.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build coalitions between the two workforce development boards to study and respond to these issues. ● Leverage resources across workforce programs (and potentially education, social services, and economic development programs) as allowed by the law to coordinate efforts to meet these demands. ● Pursue additional grants or foundational resources to support these efforts. ● Develop resource lists that can be utilized across the region to help match individuals with the services they need.

C. Local Workforce Development System Description

Describe the workforce development system in the local area by addressing each of the following. List and describe the programs that are included in the system.

- Dislocated Worker Program: National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) provide employment and training services to reemploy laid off workers in response to major layoff events causing significant job losses.
- Youth Programs: We deliver a comprehensive array of youth services that focus on assisting out-of- school youth and in-school youth with one or more barriers to employment prepare for post- secondary education and employment opportunities, attain educational and/or skills training credentials, and secure employment with career/promotional opportunities.
- American Job Centers: American Job Centers, you can get help writing a resume and preparing for interviews, learn about education and training for careers of interest, find state and national resources to help you reach your career goals, and take personal assessments to make sure you find a job that suits your skills and interests.
- Supportive Services: Supportive Services provide participants of WIOA activities with key assistance beyond career and training services necessary to achieve success.
- Work-Based Learning: Registered Apprenticeship is an employer-driven, “learn while you earn” model that combines on-the-job training with job-related instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of industry-recognized skills standards
- Veteran Services: Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service for all DOL-funded job training programs, including WIOA programs.
- Priority Populations: American Job Center staff, when using WIOA Adult funds to provide individualized career services, training services, or both, must give priority to recipient’s certain populations.
- GCWDB has locally established the following as Priority 4 population. a. Any Public Health Program Recipient receiving benefits through DHS Medicaid (Sooner Care), or b. Any Adult/DLW Applicant pursuing an Apprenticeship, OJT, or Incumbent Worker Training who is currently making less than the Self-Sufficient Wage of \$22.00, and an adult must have a qualifying barrier to employment to allow for more customers to be served.

List the location(s) of the comprehensive One Stop Center(s) (at least one) within your local area; and any affiliated or specialized centers (both physically and electronically linked, such as libraries) in the local workforce development area. Identify the workforce system partners who are physically co-located in those centers.

Tulsa American Job Center- Affiliate

14002 East 21st Suite 825, Tulsa, OK 74134

Co located Partners – Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, Oklahoma Department of

Veteran Affairs, Tulsa Responds, Social Security Ticket to Work, Tulsa Job Corps

Sapulpa AJC – Affiliate

1700 S Main Sapulpa, OK 74066

Co located Partners - Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, Oklahoma Department of Veteran Affairs

Muskogee AJC – Affiliate

717 S 32nd Street Muskogee, OK 74401

Co located Partners - Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, Oklahoma Department of Veteran Affairs

Okmulgee AJC – Affiliate

1601 S Wood Drive Okmulgee, OK 74447

Co located Partners - Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, Oklahoma Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of Rehabilitation Services

Sallisaw – Specialty

100 East Choctaw Av. Sallisaw, OK 74955

Co located Partners - Cherokee Nation

Eufaula – Specialty

107 McKinley Eufaula, OK 74432

Co located Partners – Carl Albert Mental Health, District 18 Drug Court, Lake Eufaula Group of Alcoholic Anonymous, McIntosh Coalition for a Healthy Community, Women in Safe Homes, People Inc., Muscogee (Creek) Nation Family Violence Prevention, Muscogee (Creek) Nation WIC, McIntosh County Group of Narcotics Anonymous, Youth Emergency Shelter, Ki Bios Area Transit System

Tahlequah AJC- Comprehensive

1295 Skills Center Circle Tahlequah, Ok 74464

Co located Partners – Oklahoma Employment Security Commission, Oklahoma Department of Veteran Affairs, Department of Rehabilitative Services, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker Program (ORO), Oklahoma Human Services, Adult Basic Education (Tahlequah Public Schools), Disabled Veterans' Outreach Program (DVOP)

Stilwell – Specialty

406A W. Locust Street Stilwell, OK 74960 Co located Partners - Cherokee Nation

Wagoner – Specialty

202 N. Casaver Ave, Wagoner, OK 74467

1. Identify your key strategies for aligning the core programs (WIOA Title I, II, III, and IV programs) as well as all required partner programs within the local one-stop system of comprehensive and affiliate offices by addressing each of the following items. (Include a copy of any completed Process Maps and how they are used to align services and avoid duplication of services).

A. Assess the types and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs are available in all of our One-Stop Center Offices. The service provider designates case managers as subject matter experts for each designated priority population including veteran's and their family members, the disabled, justice involved, the immigrant community, and youth.

If services are not easily accessible to customers, the staff are encouraged to work with the participant to make arrangements to meet job seekers offsite and utilize various forms of technology including Zoom and Microsoft Teams. As a result of this encouragement the service provider staff has created enrollment events and outreach events at partner locations and on-line, which occur at regular intervals. These events allow the public access to the Title I Adult, Dislocated, and Youth programs.

To continue the progress of more access to employment and training activities in the area, Green Country Workforce will continue to host system partner meetings and continue participating in regional planning meetings to:

- complete gap analysis and identify key services;
- complete process mapping; and
- discuss infrastructure cost sharing.

The Green Country Workforce will continue to partner and build relationships with community partners to encourage collaboration and continuous improvement of the one-stop delivery system.

Examples of employment and training service found within the local area include:

- Resume Workshop
- Interviewing Skills Workshop
- Disability Training completed by Core partner
- Dress for Success
- Career Management
- Work Experience
- On-the-Job Training
- Individual Employment Plans
- Comprehensive Assessments
- Pathful Explorer

The Green Country Workforce is continuously working towards fully implementing WIOA. Below are a few of the education and training activities that we have implemented and are working towards

implementing:

- Financial Literacy
- Entrepreneurship Training
- Integration with Dept. of Rehabilitation on youth participants, and
- Work Experience and internships

B. Provide an explanation of how the local board addresses local rapid response activities.

The Green Country Workforce delivers solutions for all stages of the business cycle. When employers find themselves downsizing or closing, Business services develop customized plans to educate employees on the processes to help them transition to the next phase of their life. Services like unemployment benefits, COBRA health insurance, new career exploration and preparation.

Describe how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Green Country Workforce staff continually communicate with our secondary and post-secondary education partners to develop, design, and implement strategies to fill the workforce needs of today and tomorrow. GCWF's relationship with the business community allows us to give workforce demand signals to our training partners. The collaborative relationships we have built allow us to both brainstorm new ideas and leverage services that already exist.

C. Describe how the local board, in coordination with the One Stop operator, maximizes coordination, improves service delivery, and avoids duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the delivery system.

Collaboration for increased customer access to services: Maintain the Partner Memorandum of Understanding on a continual basis adding partners as needed and implementing improvements to ensure each partner's capabilities are fully recognized, and referrals are individualized to the job seeker. The One Stop Operator must go beyond collaboration to become an integrator of services which requires them to operate with a high level of trust and independent of any single provider to ensure equity in decision making for the system.

All customers, regardless of location, (employers and job seekers) will receive prompt and uniform high-quality service: By integrating the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce's Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities International's (CARF) Standards Manual Supplement for One-Stop Career Centers, and Green Country Workforce's plan for Center Certification, the One Stop Operator will have optimal guidance to ensure that the GCWDB brand lives up to the expectations of the Board and our communities.

In PY22 GCWDB implemented an online application process for customers and businesses for a quicker turnaround time in enrollment. The board reviews the application reports on a weekly basis, at minimum, to ensure 24-to-72-hour contact with customers and enrollments are maximized.

Overseeing a standard process across the entire GCWDB region ensures that all participants enrolled receive orientation concerning integrated services, project goals and training conditions, including: (1) attendance and punctuality standards; (2) training and other services which will be made available; (3) other project expectations. This orientation will take place during the participant's first visit to a workforce center or can be done virtually. Customer feedback surveys, monthly monitoring, and ongoing continuous improvement projects will help quickly identify any issues that require intervention.

The One Stop Operator will collaborate with the Director of Business Services to: (1) Develop, offer and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy; (2) collaborate with system partners to facilitate and participate in special projects such as job fairs, business driven workshops, rapid response events; and (3) be responsible for communicating employers' needs to the Oklahoma Works staff.

Development of innovative programs for job seekers, employers, and incumbent workers: Green Country Workforce's goal is to work with each partner to understand their strengths and services and use that understanding to create efficiency and avoid duplication of services. As an example, the former service provider for the Tulsa area has job readiness training. However, a person who is enrolled in one of the Mental Health of Oklahoma's workforce programs has already completed a job readiness component that is specialized for that population. The One Stop Operator's relationship with each partner allows them to understand how a person qualifies for MHATOK's program and avoid the redundancy of using another program that may not be optimal for that individual. WIOA allows for assessments and information to be shared and utilized to reduce the hardship on customers.

Similarly, the One Stop Operator regularly convenes partners to identify gaps in the system and innovate solutions that appropriately maximize federal dollars and leverage the strengths of our partners. As we consider the opportunities that exist across the entire 11-county region covered Green Country Workforce, the role of the One Stop Operator becomes the primary convener to ensure that all stakeholders are heard and that services are provided consistently and thoroughly.

Meet State and federal performance measures: The Center Certification process for GCWDB focuses on self-assessments that will be conducted annually for Center Certification utilizing the following tools to ensure compliance with state and federal policy:

1. *Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors* Developed by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce in partnership with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.
2. *Checklist for Compliance with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended* from the U.S. Department of Labor.
3. *Integrated Business Services Self-Assessment Tool* from the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development.
4. *Physical Site Accessibility Checklist* from The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation

Services (OKDRS).

5. *Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors* Developed by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce in partnership with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.
6. *Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors* Developed by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce in partnership with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.
7. *Checklist for Compliance with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended* from the
U.S. Department of Labor.
8. *Integrated Business Services Self-Assessment Tool* from the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development.
9. *Physical Site Accessibility Checklist* from The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS).
10. *Technical assistance with Service providers at a minimum of twice annually on issues identified during the monitoring process.*
11. *Weekly review of applications and enrollments. 100% monitoring being completed for all programs. Federal performance reports ran and shared with service provider on a monthly basis.*

Efficiency through technology (including paperless systems): GCWDB uses the state mandated system to eliminate double entry by career navigators. If it is not in the system it does not get reported properly for performance. This process will allow us to eliminate duplication of services, ensure consistency of processes and reporting, and quickly identify systemic issues that require attention.

Recent continuous improvement projects leveraged technology to automate the enrollment process (expanding accessibility while still maintaining COVID-19 safety protocol), simplify and streamline on-line information for job seekers, and expand the number and variety of strength/interest assessments available for use by Career Navigators.

D. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II, including how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II.

The local board will continue to foster its partnership with Title II Adult Education, Literacy programs and the library system. In the Green Country Workforce area, there are multiple recipients of Title II Adult Education and Literacy funding. They hold GED classes at access points located throughout the 11-county area and we coordinate with Career Tech and the Cherokee Nation Career Services for the administration and services in the rural areas.

In order to integrate and improve service delivery, the Board practices the following:

- Coordinate referrals of potential customers in an efficient and effective manner
- Provide ongoing communication pertaining to mutual customers.
- Provide qualified personnel to educate each entity's staff on programmatic and eligibility information as needed, including a liaison to serve as a resource and to address questions from customers.
- Ensure quality customer service and customer-centered focus and collaborate links to education, employment, and training services for eligible customers.
- Keep each entity apprised of any services that will benefit eligible customers.
- Leveraging resources to ensure no duplications of services occurs.

The Board works with Adult Education providers to collaborate with local businesses for career pathways. The Board will continue to work with Adult Education providers and continue to identify career pathways in targeted occupations where training is needed. A reverse referral process is used to identify potential customers for Information regarding local business needs which is provided by the Business Services Team. Information is also available to potential customers via the Board's social media applications.

The Board and board staff will review all proposals received under Title II, except those that present a potential conflict of interest. The local application review process will ensure alignment with WIOA requirements and board plan activities, consistent with WIOA §§107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA §232. Once reviews are completed, a recommendation is submitted to the requesting authority.

e. Describe and assess the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, and provide an identification of successful models.

The Youth committee identifies issues with youth throughout the 11 counties including those with disabilities. This committee is tasked with identifying solutions and resources for all youth. Best practices are shared and solutions for overcoming gaps in services and resources are identified. All AJCs are equipped with an accessibility tool kit for individuals with disabilities to use while in the centers. The Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS) also provides services and collaborates with partners to ensure the needs and barriers of clients are met.

2. Describe how the local board will work with entities carrying out core programs to accomplish the following outcomes:

a. Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.

The One Stop Operator is responsible for creating and maintaining a comprehensive network of support for the handling of participant situations. Utilizing a strength-based case management approach, staff recognizes that the goal goes beyond just accessing services and extends to creating opportunities for growth, education, and skill development. The strengths-based case management model recognizes the value of community services, family, and cross-agency partnerships. Participants take the lead in identifying their own needs, take control over the search for resources

and services to address those needs, and are encouraged to view the community as a resource rather than a barrier to success.

By working closely with participants to develop robust IEP's and ISS's that identify their interests, strengths, and opportunities for improvement, we can identify what training would create maximum value and place the job seeker on a path to financial stability.

b. Facilitate the development of career pathways*. Provide a list of the career pathways, and for each include.

- **The phase of development (conceptual, in initial implementation, being sustained, or, expanding);**
- **Workforce Demand (need) – Describe the business workforce need being addressed by the strategy. Indicate the industry(s) and occupations being represented, how the need was determined, and the occupational skills to be addressed;**
- **Relevance – Indicate the connection between the demand and the priority(ies) for the region;**
- **Strategy – Identify the sector partners and the role of each; o Funding – Describe available resources that will support the strategy; o Unfunded Critical Elements – Identify any critical elements for the identified strategy that must be done for the success of the strategy that cannot be met with available resources. This may include: the expansion of an existing strategy, in any phase, from one LWDA to others in the region; the need to procure new training vendors; planning sessions involving multiple partners; training of One-Stop staff; and development of regional data collection systems.**

Flourish Tulsa – Skilled Immigrant and Refugee Project Initial Implementation

GCWDB is a founding member of Flourish Tulsa, with technical assistance by the World Education Service. It was formed to address the significant number of skilled immigrants and refugees whose educational attainment does not translate to US standards. Career pathways guides are in work for engineering, education, and mental health professionals. Green Country shared the engineering guide with business and education representatives for their feedback. The Flourish Tulsa project is not formally funded. It began as a technical assistance grant from the World Education Service that connected the team with other national organizations. The partnership is between the City of Tulsa, the YWCA, Tulsa Community College, and Green Country Workforce. This project has been completed.

Centers of Excellence – The Centers of Excellence were supported by the workforce boards. We are in contact with each of them on a regular basis to further express and offer support for the efforts.

The Northeast Regional Plan highlights specific action steps related to further development of pathways. These include:

Strategy	Action Steps and Tactics
Selection and prioritization of career pathways aligning with in-demand industries and occupations for the Region.	Identify best practices regarding development of new and existing career pathways for the Region, including best practices focusing on industry, public, and private sector partnerships that create customized workforce solutions and work-based training opportunities.
Identification of barriers to participation in selected and prioritized career pathways and identify resources to help individuals overcome these barriers to participation.	<p>The Region will work together to collectively identify key barriers to participation in career pathways among job seekers and workers.</p> <p>The Region will work together and collectively identify key barriers to participation in career pathways among employers and regional and local industry sector partnerships.</p> <p>The Region will develop a comprehensive resource list of supportive services and workforce, education, and social assistance programs that can assist the region’s jobseekers to achieve success.</p>

3. Describe how the local board will implement the goals and strategies of Oklahoma’s Unified State Plan and the Regional Plan.

Green Country Workforce, through our Northeast Regional Plan, parallels the Oklahoma State Plan and brings the voices of the workforce system partners to the table to create a unified regional plan that is specifically created to respond to the needs of industry and job seekers and will align the resources of each workforce system partner. Each local workforce system is an active partner in the development and implementation of the regional efforts.

The Northeast Planning Region, through the collaboration of the Northeast and Green Country Development Boards, follows the goals and strategies identified in the Oklahoma Unified State Plan through the process of aligning and connecting, data analysis, partnerships, and resources.

Alignment

The Northeast Planning Region is focused on aligning and connecting the education and training pipeline with the needs of the regional economy. Our future efforts are focused on the coordination of strategic priorities across the education and workforce system with business as the driver behind these conversations.

To deliver integrated services, case managers must not feel constrained by the services available in one program but must have the training and ability to offer customers the services they need from multiple programs. To move toward integrated service delivery, the boards of the Region are establishing integrated intake systems with “no wrong door.”

and with multiple entry points for customers with the understanding that all partners share responsibility for the customers and will match services to their needs. A “One Workforce” (TEGL 13-20) approach supports an integrated workforce staff, so that any customer who walks into any AJC can be served seamlessly by any staff member.

Data

The Northeast Planning Region utilizes data to build a robust workforce system that is focused on wealth-generating occupations. Future plans of the Northeast Planning Region will incorporate workforce and economic development data to integrate policy, track progress, and monitor success.

Partnerships

The local areas within the Northeast Planning Region understand and value system partnerships. The Region is committed to nurturing partnerships between regional businesses, education, and workforce partners to build a stronger workforce system throughout the region. As these partnerships are strengthened, opportunities will grow for job seekers and businesses. These regional partnerships will occur as the Region is fully structured and begins to align strategies that are responsive to the challenges of the region.

Resources

The objectives of the Region include the optimization of resources available throughout the region. Through the efforts driven by the Region and core partners, the Region will work to identify and recommend creative, cross-agency, and cross-sector funding models.

Strategies and action steps related to these four items include:

Strategy	Action Steps and Tactics
<i>Coordination of workforce development activities locally and regionally</i>	<p>The Region will work to align partner programs, required and optional one-stop partner programs, and other resources available in the Region by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● coordinating workforce development activities across planning regions and local areas; ● inventorying and coordinating of services across the local area to maximize service delivery for job seekers, workers, and employers; and researching and identifying technological resources that will support the integration of supportive services and the participation in career pathway programs by job seekers, workers, employers, and industry sector partnerships.
<i>Technology integration at the one-stop and technology expansion to reach more job seekers and businesses and coordinate services with partners.</i>	<p>The Region will continue to work to integrate technology across all plan partner programs and other required and optional one-stop partner programs to improve data sharing that provides time data necessary to initiate services across one-stop delivery system programs, assess service delivery, and meet performance-reporting requirements.</p> <p>The Region will seek to expand the use of technology to reach more job seekers, businesses, and to improve the coordination of partner program services to customers.</p>

<i>Policy development</i>	All plan partners will work individually and collectively to develop local-level policies that support program and technology alignment and collaboration.
<i>Cross training and technical assistance</i>	The Region will support and assist all plan partners and other required and optional one-stop partners as they work individually and collectively to develop and implement local-level cross training regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● workforce system initiatives; ● Technology; ● program policies; ● program eligibility, services, and terminology; ● program performance; ● best practices; and ● other workforce development activities.
<i>Data integration and data-informed decision making</i>	The Region will use data-informed decision making to help with continuously improving the one-stop delivery system. The Region will make more data available to the public and to the workforce partners to better analyze performance metrics to identify areas that present an opportunity for improvement. Customer satisfaction data from employer and career seeker surveys will also be analyzed at least quarterly. The Region urges workforce system partners to utilize available technology, analytics, and labor market information to proactively plan for future workforce, industry, and educational needs within the local area.

4. Describe how the local board will coordinate local workforce development activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

Green Country Workforce staff actively work with chambers of commerce and economic development organizations. In some areas, we are re-establishing those relationships. With the improved Business Services activities, the region is pulling the Green Country Workforce into projects. We actively meet with the Muskogee Chamber and Port, with Cherokee Nation, the Tulsa Regional Chamber, Owasso Chamber, the Pawnee Economic Development Corp, Sandstone Hills, Okmulgee Economic Development Corp, and the Northeast Oklahoma Regional Association.

For example, the Sandstone Hills area (Osage, Pawnee, and Creek) has a program called Create Bridges. The program is designed to assist small main street businesses with their business needs. Green Country Workforce helped identify training that the collective businesses expressed. The Indian Nations Council of Government (INCOG) actively seeks Green Country Workforce staff input into their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for their five-year plans. These plans are translated to the US EDA for grants that help businesses and grow infrastructure for supporting businesses.

The GCWDB will continue to strengthen the relationship with the Cherokee Nation, which has

employment services programs in their 14-county reservation, which overlap with the 11-county GCWDB area. Co-enrollments with the Cherokee Nation will be included in our new service provision processes, to leverage resources, not duplicate services, and to serve as many clients as possible.

5. Describe how:

- a. The local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system in order to meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers.**

The workforce development system established under WIOA emphasizes informed customer choice, system performance, and continuous improvement. GCWDB is dedicated to reaching these goals by strategically implementing State and Local Eligible Training Provider (ETP) processes that ensure the accountability, quality, and labor-market relevance of the approved programs on Oklahoma's virtual ETP List.

Training providers must first be determined by the State ETP List Administrator to be eligible to receive WIOA Title I funds to train adults and dislocated workers. The local ETP List Coordinator serves as a liaison between the applicant/ETP and the State ETP List Administrator during the initial application process and beyond. Once the State approves an ETP, the ETP is able to submit programs on Oklahoma's virtual ETP List for Local Area consideration. The Local ETP List Coordinator collaborates with other Local Area ETP List Coordinators as necessary and, more often, works closely with the State ETP List Administrator who makes the final determination for program approval. Once a program is approved both at the Local and State level, it becomes available for the public to view/research on Oklahoma's virtual ETP List. The local ETP List Coordinator assists existing ETPs with the management of their programs in relation to Federal, State, and Local requirements for initial and continued approval.

In line with informed customer choice, WIOA Service Provider Staff work directly with eligible participants to help them plan and process their Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) using Oklahoma's virtual ETP List as a resource, as an online catalog of approved programs. Factors participants are encouraged to consider when choosing a provider/program include length of training program, cost of training program, current skill level and ability to complete, educational background, class schedules, transportation, and childcare. GCWDB has determined that funds for ETP programs must be prioritized for use with local ETP's first, out-of-area ETPs second, and lastly, with Executive Director approval only, out-of-state providers. Adequate information supporting the selection of out-of-area and/or out-of-state ETPs/programs is required to justify that the selection is consistent with supporting the participants' successful completion of training and local economic development.

WIOA Service Provider Staff must utilize the Training Provider Approval Request (TPAR) process to verify a selected program's status as an approved program before the ITA can be approved or processed. The TPAR process consists of the WIOA Service Provider Staff obtaining the Training Program information from Oklahoma's virtual ETP List, e-mailing the information in a clear and legible format to the Local ETP Coordinator at ETPR@greencountryworks.org, receiving an approval e-mail from the Local ETP List Coordinator, and including the approval e-mail in the ITA request documents. The TPAR must be uploaded to Oklahoma's online case management system with all of the ITA documents.

Dedicated GCWDB Staff develop and maintain collaborative relationships with our area employers, education partners, and training providers to ensure the availability of in-demand training by supporting

the continuous performance improvement of existing programs and the employer-driven development of training programs linked to our area's in-demand industry occupations. An online pool of resources, Eligible Training Provider (ETP) Resources, is available on GCWDB's website to assist with orienting and supporting applicants/ETPs throughout the process, but they are encouraged to reach out directly to the Local ETP List Coordinator for assistance with ensuring that required program information and performance data entered for programs on Oklahoma's virtual ETP List is accurate, the most current available, and compliant with Federal, State, and Local guidance and policy.

b. Entities within the One Stop delivery system, including system/center operators and partners, will comply with section 188 of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

Under Green Country Workforce, the One Stop Operator will maintain operational plans and quarterly goals for the following:

Accessibility:

The One Stop Operator will be responsible for maintaining the operations in a manner that encourages interaction with priority populations. This includes:

- Providing and maintaining specialized accessibility equipment
- Ensuring translation services are available by each partner.
- Coordinating with Green Country's Quality Performance Trainer to ensure professional development addresses specialized populations.
- Coordinating efforts among the partners to reach and maintain "Proactive" Star Accessibility status.
- Maintaining ADA Compliance

The Center Certification monitoring process to identify where areas of improvement is needed in the Green Country Workforce area will continue and expand this process. Self-assessments will be conducted annually for Center Certification utilizing the following tools to ensure compliance with state and federal policy:

1. *Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors* Developed by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce in partnership with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies. This toolkit draws on nationwide feedback, refines a list of critical success factors for One-Stops, and provides guidance on what needs to be in place to successfully deliver services. It also provides guidance on real-world factors that impact service delivery across the nation and ways that external local areas are addressing these factors.
2. *Checklist for Compliance with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended* from the

U.S. Department of Labor. This tool will serve as a guide to identify areas for continuous improvement in serving clients and empowering staff through intentional and thoughtful affirmative actions that support accessibility, diversity, inclusion, and equity in organizational processes.

3. *Integrated Business Services Self-Assessment Tool* from the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development. This team-driven self-assessment tool will challenge staff and the local area to be more responsive to businesses and to make changes to support system-wide improvement. This toolkit focuses on designing a framework for staff to address challenges collaboratively within the local area and with external Oklahoma stakeholders.
4. *Physical Site Accessibility Checklist* from The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS). This self-assessment tool directly aligns with OKDRS processes for accessibility monitoring within Oklahoma Works offices and locations as well as 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design from the U.S. Access Board. This easy-to-follow checklist provides staff with a tool to self-assess accessibility at physical site locations.

6. Describe how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce development activities with the provision of transportation, childcare, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Include a copy of a completed Job Seeker Wrap Around Services service matrix.

Transportation

Prior to the pandemic, a study was conducted on rural transportation improvement. In 2019, the Oklahoma State Legislature passed a 20-year Oklahoma Public Transit Policy plan that will align transit strategy among state agencies, local governments, and transit systems. Green Country Workforce actively participates in discussions with State legislators and local representatives to expand service areas into our rural counties.

Tulsa Transit and Pelivan, a regional transit service, teamed up to create a new Highway 169 corridor that extends to several industrial parks. Green Country staff and Board members were on the planning and feasibility study teams to implement the corridor.

The Region also works closely with Modus, a transportation organization that enables people to get to their social service and medical appointments, and ensures they know how to use the city's transit system. The curb-to-curb transportation service, Modus Drive, allows social service agencies to focus on their core services and ensures everyone gets the services they need, while ModusEd trains every high school student at Tulsa Public Schools to use the city's transit system. Together, Modus Drive and ModusEd increase youth transit use, reduce agency spending on inefficient transportation, and increase access to healthcare and social services.

Most of our rural counties do have some access to local transportation. We are actively promoting usage through supportive services and referrals.

Childcare

Childcare is often cited as a major issue in our region. The supply of childcare facilities is severely limited, and options are often cost prohibitive.

As identified in Green Country's Regional Plan, a commitment between the regional boards has been made to:

- Build coalitions between the two workforce development boards to study and respond to these issues.
- Leverage resources across workforce programs (and potentially education, social services, and economic development programs) as allowed by the law to coordinate efforts to meet these demands.
- Pursue additional grants or foundational resources to support these efforts.
- Develop resource lists that can be utilized across the region to help match individuals with the services they need.

7. Provide the executed cooperative agreements* which define how service providers will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local One Stop system. This includes cooperative agreements between the local WDB and other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

Since the transition and completion of the merger into Green County Workforce Development Board, our 11-county area has gotten a new Service Provider as of February 01, 2023, Dynamic Workforce Solutions (DWFS). There is a signed contract as a result of the request for proposal process and they are responsible for providing all WIOA programs and services to our area. The GCWDB also completed the request for proposal process for a new One-Stop Operator (OSO) contact effective October 01, 2023. Northeastern Workforce Board was awarded the contract for GCWDAs 11 counties. The OSO is responsible for the system oversight at our five American Job Centers and the four Specialty centers, as well as cross training partner and holding monthly partner meetings. All required WIOA partners are working to strengthen relationships and share resources to serve our clients without duplication of services. We have an online referral system for partners to use to send Title 1 referrals to GCWDB. Since all partners are not on one state system, it is impossible to share information as needed quickly and efficiently. All partners work together and collaborate to provide wrap around service to our like customers. If partners are co-located, a warm hand off from one partner to another is the best practice used in our centers. Our Tahlequah Comprehensive Center has the following partners co-located: Department of Human Services (DHS), Oklahoma Employment Security Commission (OESC), Adult Basic Education, Title 1, Migrant & Seasonal Farmworker Program, Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), Disabled Veterans Outreach Program, and Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs.

8. Identify the local:

Fiscal agent
Rosaland Rathbun, COWIB
3813 N Santa Fe Ave, Suite 135
Oklahoma City, OK 73118
rosalandrathbun@cowib.org
405-622-2026 x 306

One Stop Operator(s)

Nicole Cue
14002 E. 21st St, Ste 825
Tulsa, OK 74134
918-770-1466
ncue@greencountryworks.org

Service Provider(s) for Adult and Dislocated Worker WIOA Title I Basic and Individualized Career Services

Donna Weese, Project Director, Dynamic Workforce Solutions
14002 E 21st St, Suite 825
Tulsa, OK 74134
936-223-1978
dweese@greencountryworks.org

Service Provider(s) for Youth WIOA Title I Services

Donna Weese, Project Director, Dynamic Workforce Solutions
14002 E 21st St, Suite 825
Tulsa, OK 74134
936-223-1978
dweese@greencountryworks.org

9. Describe the competitive process used to award the subgrants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

All procurement transactions are conducted in a manner that promotes full and open competition consistent with the standards of the Uniform Guidance 2 CFR 200.319 and Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development (OOWD) State Policy for competition. This process ensures objective contractor performance and eliminates any unfair competitive advantage. We utilize the following methods for subcontracts and contracts:

Methods of Procurement

Each sub-recipient shall maintain a written procurement policy that adequately describes the procurement methods and procedures, which it will use. Such procedures shall promote free and open competition.

The following methods are recognized to be appropriate.

Non-Competitive Procurement Purchases

Each sub-recipient shall minimize the use of non-competitive procurements to the extent practicable and any such procurement shall be justified. Purchases may be made with no price or rate quotations when the purchase is made at off-the-shelf or catalogue prices, and the purchase in the aggregate is less than \$10,000.00.

If a purchase is made that does not exceed \$10,000.00 in the aggregate no contract is necessary. If the procurement is for a participant related cost, the non-federal entity must solicit a minimum of three (3) quotes regardless of the purchase price.

Micro-Purchases

Procurement by micro-purchase is the acquisition of supplies or services, the aggregate dollar amount of which

does not exceed \$10,000. To the extent practicable, the non-Federal entity must distribute micro-purchases

equitably among qualified suppliers. Micro-purchases may be awarded without soliciting competitive quotations

if the non-Federal entity considers the price to be reasonable.

If the procurement is for a participant related cost, the non-federal entity must solicit a minimum of three (3)

quotes regardless of the purchase price.

Small Purchases

Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services,

supplies, or other property that does not cost more than the Simplified Acquisition Threshold. If small purchase

procedures are used, price or rate quotations must be obtained from qualified sources (unless a lesser number is

justified in the procurement file) to ensure reasonable competition. A purchase in excess of the small purchase

limitations shall not be split in order to circumvent the small purchase limit. Criteria other than cost may be

used, but must be provided in the local entity's procedures.

If the small purchase price is greater than \$10,000.00 but less than \$25,000.00 the non-federal entity must

solicit at least three (3) quotes.

If the small purchase price is greater than \$25,000.00 but less than \$50,000.00 the non-federal entity must

solicit at least ten (10) quotes.

Note: When small purchases are made, an agreement must be entered into between the provider of services or

goods and the recipient outlining the delivery and payment provisions of such services or goods.

Competitive Procurement

Sub-recipients shall use a formal and competitive method of procurement for the purchase of goods or services

in excess of \$50,000.00. If the procurement is for a fixed-price contract the non-federal entity may issue a

Request for Quotes (RFQ) to solicit sealed bids. RFQs are appropriate for the following conditions:

1. A complete, adequate, and realistic specification or purchase description is available;
2. Two or more responsible bidders are willing and able to compete effectively for the business; and
3. The procurement lends itself to a firm fixed price contract and the selection of a successful bidder can

be made principally on the bases of price.

If RFQs are used, the following requirements apply:

1. Bids must be solicited from an adequate number of qualified sources, providing them sufficient response time prior to the date set for opening the bids, for local, and tribal governments, the invitation for bids must be publicly advertised;
 2. The invitation for bids, which will include any specifications and pertinent attachments, must define the items or services in order for the bidder to properly respond;
 3. All bids will be opened at the time and place prescribed in the invitation for bids, and for local and tribal governments, the bids must be opened publicly;
 4. A firm fixed price contract award will be made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder. Where specified in bidding documents, factors such as discounts, transportation cost, and life cycle costs must be considered in determining which bid is lowest. Payment discounts will only be used to determine the low bid when prior experience indicates that such discounts are usually taken advantage of; and
 5. Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason.
- For contracts that are based on cost-reimbursement proposals the non-federal entity must issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) and solicit sealed proposals. If RFPs are used, the following requirements apply:
1. Requests for proposals must be publicized and identify all evaluation factors and their relative importance. Proposals must be solicited from an adequate number of qualified offerors. Any response to publicized requests for proposals must be considered to the maximum extent practical;
 2. The Non-Federal entity must have a written method for conducting technical evaluations of the proposals received and making selections;
 3. Contracts must be awarded to the responsible offeror whose proposal is most advantageous to the non-Federal entity, with price and other factors considered; and
 4. The Non-Federal entity may use competitive proposal procedures for qualifications-based procurement of architectural/engineering (A/E) professional services whereby offeror's qualifications are evaluated and the most qualified offeror is selected, subject to negotiation of fair and reasonable compensation. The method, where price is not used as a selection factor, can only be used in procurement of A/E professional services. It cannot be used to purchase other types of services though A/E firms that are a potential source to perform the proposed effort.

Sole Source Procurement

Sole source procurement occurs when one of these circumstances apply:

1. The item or service is available from only a single source.
2. An emergency situation that will not permit the time required for a competitive solicitation exists.
3. After solicitation from a number of sources, competition is determined inadequate.

Procurement by sole source may be used only when the award of contract is infeasible under small purchase

procedures (any procurement under \$10,000.00 does not require a competitive process), or

competitive

proposals and one of the above circumstances apply.

Poor planning on the part of the sub-recipient shall not qualify as an emergency. Procurement may be handled

as an emergency if the following occurs:

1. A public calamity requires the prompt purchase of items to provide for public needs or preserve property;
2. The item is necessary to preserve or protect the public health or safety of residents; or
3. The item is made necessary by unforeseen damage to public property.

When hiring Board Staff without following a competitive procurement process, procedures must be established

which includes advertising the position and the qualifications required, conducting interviews of the applicants

and a system for rating and selection of the individual or individuals.

The Board staff does not have to be an employee of the Fiscal Agent or the LWDB, however, when this occurs

arrangements must be made for an employer of record.

The cost of professional and consultant services rendered by persons or organizations that are members of

particular professions, or possess a special skill, are allowable if charged in accordance with Professional Service

costs in the entity's appropriate OMB Cost Principles Circular.

When writing On-the-Job Training (OJT) and customized training contracts, the sole source method of

procurement may be used.

Individual Training Accounts (ITA)

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) are the primary method to be used for procuring training services under

WIOA for Title I Adult and Dislocated Worker services. A contract for training services may be developed instead

of an ITA when at least one of the circumstances below applies, and if the local area has fulfilled the consumer

choice requirements of 20 CFR 680.340. Training services may be provided pursuant to a contract for services in

lieu of an individual training account if:

1. Such services are on-the-job training, customized training, incumbent worker training, or transitional employment;
2. The local board determines there are an insufficient number of eligible providers of training services in the local area involved (such as in a rural area) to accomplish the purposes of a system of individual training accounts;
3. The local board determines that there is a training services program of demonstrated effectiveness offered in the local area by a community-based organization or another private organization to serve individuals with barriers to employment;
4. The local board determines that (i) it would be most appropriate to award a contract to an

institution of higher education or other eligible provider of training services in order to facilitate the training of multiple individuals in in-demand industry sectors or occupations; and (ii) such contract does not limit customer choice; or

5. The contract is a pay-for-performance contract. Payments are made from ITAs for training services in demand occupations as defined by the LWDB. Payments can only be made to an Eligible Training Provider. [Sections 134(c)(3)(G)(i) and 20 CFR 680.410]. Payments may be made in a variety of ways, including the electronic transfer of funds through financial institutions, vouchers, or other appropriate methods. Payments may also be made incrementally—through payment of a portion of the costs at different points in the training course. [20 CFR 680.300]

ITAs may be used in lieu of competitive procurement for youth ages 16-24, per 20 CFR 681.550. Use of an ITA allows youth to utilize the Eligible Training Provider List in choosing a training provider and course of training. Training for youth that is not provided through the use of an ITA must be competitively procured with the process documented in the most recent state Youth policy found at <http://oklahomaworks.gov/policy-center/>. Contracts for services may be used instead of ITAs only when the exceptions described in 20 CFR 680.320 apply, and when the LWDB has fulfilled the consumer choice requirements of WIOA Sec. 134(c)(3)(G), 20 CFR 680.340 and current State policy. The determination of when training needs to be provided by contract in lieu of an ITA is made by the LWDB based on factors including, but not limited to, an insufficient number of eligible training providers in the area, the availability of a training program of demonstrated effectiveness already offered in the community, and/or the facilitation of training for multiple individuals in in-demand occupations at an institution of higher education. Local boards must develop policy and procedures for when contracts will be used in lieu of ITAs, describing the factors used to support the policy. ITAs are not utilized for on-the-job training (OJT), customized training, incumbent worker training or transitional jobs.

WIOA Consumer Choice:
Training services must be provided in a manner that maximizes informed consumer choice in selecting an eligible training service provider in accordance with the goals and objectives outlined in the participant's individual employment plan. The LWDB, through the local one-stop center, must make available to customers

the State and local lists of eligible training providers as required in WIOA Section 122(d).

Eligible training providers include:

- Post-secondary education institutions;
- Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs;
- Other public or private providers of training, which may include joint labor-management organizations

and eligible providers of adult education and literacy activities under Title II if such activities are provided in combination with occupational skills training (Category 3 training provider in the State plan);

- Local Boards, if they meet the conditions of WIOA sec. 107(g)(1); and
- Community Based Organizations or private organizations of demonstrated effectiveness that provide training under contract with the Local Board.

Selection of Service Providers

Youth Service Providers:

All youth service providers must be selected by a competitive process as outlined in this policy, the exception to

this would be if the Grant Recipient/Fiscal Agent elects to provide the Summer Employment opportunities

element of the local youth program, service for intake, objective assessment and the development of individual service strategy.

Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Providers:

The WIOA Regulations state a LWDB (this includes Board Staff) may not directly provide career or training

services, or be designated or certified as a One-Stop operator, unless agreed to by the Chief Elected Official and

the Governor. The State of Oklahoma requires all Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Providers of career and

training services must be selected by a competitive process as outlined in this policy. This means before the

Grant Recipient/Fiscal Agent can be a service provider of career and training services for the Adult and

Dislocated Worker programs they must also compete in a competitive process.

An Adult and Dislocated Worker Service Provider/Sub-recipient cannot be selected based solely on demonstrated experience to meet or exceed the Federal WIOA Performance Measures. Local factors or

outcomes must be developed and included in the evaluation criteria.

Duplication of Services—No funds shall be used to duplicate facilities or services available in the area (with or

without reimbursement) from Federal, State, or local sources unless it is demonstrated in writing that

alternative services or facilities would be more effective or more likely to achieve the local workforce area's

performance goals.

10. Describe the local levels of performance negotiated with the State.

On August 13th, 2021, Green Country Workforce re-negotiated the following measures with the Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development. These measures combine past performance levels as well as goals that positively affect outcomes that are in line with the goals of the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act.

Program	Performance Metric	Performance Goal
Youth	Credential Attainment	60.0%
Youth	Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	72.0%
Youth	Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	68.5%
Youth	Measurable Skills Gain	60.0%
Youth	Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$3,600
DW	Credential Attainment	74.0%
DW	Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	75.0%
DW	Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	70.0%
DW	Measurable Skills Gain	68.0%
DW	Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$8,700
Adult	Credential Attainment	75.0%
Adult	Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	70.5%
Adult	Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	70.0%
Adult	Measurable Skills Gain	63.0%
Adult	Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$5,900

PY 22 Performance

Performance Metric	Program	2022 - 2023 Negotiated
Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	Adult	73.00%
Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	Adult	70.30%
Median Earnings	Adult	\$ 5,900.00
Credential Rate	Adult	75.00%
Measurable Skill Gains	Adult	61.00%
Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	DW	73.30%
Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	DW	70.00%
Median Earnings	DW	\$8,361
Credential Rate	DW	73.00%
Measurable Skill Gains	DW	67.00%
Employment 2nd Quarter After Exit	Youth	72.00%

Employment 4th Quarter After Exit	Youth	72.00%
Median Earnings	Youth	\$3,700
Credential Rate	Youth	61.30%
Measurable Skill Gains	Youth	56.00%

11. Describe the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high performing board.

In previous years, the focus of monitoring was not always objective in nature and did not always address root causes through systemic and lasting solutions. The efforts taken to address deficiencies identified within these reports include:

- Focus on the development of positive working relationships and open lines of communication for all staff members to elevate issues without fear of repercussion.
- 100% monitoring of participant files
- Monitoring responses both to the service provider and to the Oklahoma Department of Workforce Development that provided a clear narrative of systematic issues.
- Monitoring directives that supported additional actions, documentation provisions, and clearly defined objectives of corrective action that needed to be implemented. Technical Assistance with the service provider a minimum of twice per year.
- All policies were updated and approved in the fall of 2022 to ensure they were aligned with WIOA compliance.
- Regular communication with Oklahoma Department of Workforce Development staff for local area technical assistance and for training.
- Focus on supportive service provision and viewing participants as clients who need real-time support to succeed. This shift has created a difference in how we identify and solve root-cause problems. Removed the cap on supported services related training.
- Focus on outcome measures related to Equal Opportunity, diversity, and inclusion which have helped drive needed changes to our contractual expectations with vendors and our outcome measures for participants.
- Focus on customer outcomes to increase performance with wraparound services.

Additionally, the Green Country Workforce places a heavy emphasis on training. For example, Green Country Workforce focuses on three areas of employee training:

- Compliance training includes all mandatory training as Employer of Record and training related to WIOA and other regulatory requirements.
- Process training includes courses or training material tied specifically to job duties, as well as all-employee sessions covering internal processes such as timekeeping, system utilization, program enrollment, or continuous improvement.
- Personal development training includes any discretionary training agreed upon by managers and their direct reports for the purposes of leadership preparation, cross-training, or addressing performance or skill gaps.

Board and Staff training will focus on delivering content that is applicable to real-time issues the local area faces, create opportunities for professional development, and empower diversity, inclusion, and equity. Board and

Local Elected Official meetings will focus on training, information sharing, metrics and data analytics, and continuous improvement.

12. Describe how training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including, if contracts for training services will be used, how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts, and how the local WDB will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.

The Green Country Workforce Development Board is dedicated to maximizing informed customer service by ensuring that enough quality programs are made available to all the population groups we serve. While there are no plans to contract directly with training providers, training services and the quality of those services are managed through the Eligible Training Provider List process. All WIOA regulations and policies are followed, as well as 100% monitoring by the board staff to ensure no disallowed costs. Technical assistance is provided to staff as needed.

13. Describe how One Stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA.

OK Job Match is the state dedicated system for the American Job Centers. Utilizing a single source for data tracking and reporting as required by the Department of Labor. This procedure helps performance by not having to enter information several times in different systems. This eliminated duplication and ensures consistency of processes and reporting, and quickly identify systemic issues that require attention.

Recent continuous improvement projects leveraged technology to automate the enrollment process (expanding accessibility while still maintaining COVID-19 safety protocol), simplify and streamline on-line information for job seekers, and expand the number and variety of strength/interest assessments available for use by Career Navigators. The use of technology allows for virtual services and enrollments. To date this policy is still in effect, which helps overcome barriers like transportation in rural areas of our 11 counties.

14. Describe the direction given to the One Stop center operator to ensure priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient.

Collaboration for increased customer access to services: Maintain the Partner Memorandum of Understanding on a continual basis adding partners as needed and implementing improvements to ensure each partner's capabilities are fully recognized, and referrals are individualized to the job seeker. The One Stop Operator must go beyond collaboration to become an integrator of services which requires them to operate with a high level of trust and independent of any single provider to

ensure equity in decision making. Service provider staff go out into the communities to see customers where they live, i.e., libraries, courthouses, career techs, Tribal offices, etc.

All customers, regardless of location, (employers and job seekers) will receive prompt and uniform high-quality service: By integrating the Corporation for a Skilled Workforce's Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors, the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities International's (CARF) Standards Manual Supplement for One-Stop Career Centers, Green Country Workforce's plan for Center Certification, and the One Stop Operator will have optimal guidance to ensure that the GCWDB brand lives up to the expectations of the Board and our communities.

Overseeing a standard process across the entire GCWDB region ensures that all participants enrolled receive orientation concerning integrated services, project goals and training conditions, including: (1) attendance and punctuality standards; (2) training and other services which will be made available; (3) other project expectations. This orientation will take place during the participant's first visit to a workforce center or can be done virtually. Customer feedback surveys, monthly monitoring, and ongoing continuous improvement projects will help quickly identify any issues that require intervention.

The One Stop Operator will collaborate with the Director of Business Services to: (1) Develop, offer and deliver quality business services that assist specific businesses and industry sectors in overcoming the challenges of recruiting, retaining, and developing talent for the regional economy; (2) collaborate with system partners to facilitate and participate in special projects such as job fairs, business driven workshops, rapid response events; and (3) be responsible for communicating employers' needs to the Oklahoma Works staff.

Development of innovative programs for job seekers, employers, and incumbent workers: Green Country Workforce's goal is to work with each partner to understand their strengths and services and use that understanding to create efficiency and avoid waste. As an example, the former service provider for the Tulsa area has job readiness training.

However, a person who is enrolled in one of the Mental Health of Oklahoma's workforce programs has already completed a job readiness component that is specialized for that population. The One Stop Operator's relationship with each partner allows them to understand how a person qualifies for MHATOK's program and avoid the redundancy of using another program that may not be optimal for that individual.

Similarly, the One Stop Operator regularly convenes partners to identify gaps in the system and innovate solutions that appropriately maximize federal dollars and leverage the strengths of our partners. As we consider the opportunities that exist across the entire 11-county region covered Green Country Workforce, the role of the One Stop Operator becomes the primary convener to ensure that all stakeholders are heard and that services are provided consistently and thoroughly.

Incumbent Worker:

Continue to promote Incumbent Worker Training (IWT): Designed to increase the competitiveness of businesses by developing a highly skilled workforce, resulting in increased financial viability, stability, competitiveness, and productivity. Up to 20 percent of our combined total of Adult and DLW allocations can be used for IWT.

- Completed process for Creek Country District 2 CDL driver which will result in 50% efficiency

- gain because equipment operator will be able to drive to the worksite.
- Expand this approach with other County districts through our commissioner outreach strategy.

Meet State and federal performance measures: The Center Certification monitoring process focuses on incentivizing staff to use performance assessments that are thorough and easy for staff to identify areas where improvement is needed. The Green Country Workforce will continue and expand this process. Self- assessments will be conducted annually for Center Certification utilizing the following tools to ensure compliance with state and federal policy:

1. *Guide to Improving One-Stops through Benchmarked Critical Success Factors* Developed by Corporation for a Skilled Workforce in partnership with the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, National Association of Counties, U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the National Association of State Workforce Agencies.
2. *Checklist for Compliance with Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, As Amended* from the U.S. Department of Labor.
3. *Integrated Business Services Self-Assessment Tool* from the Oklahoma Department of Commerce, Oklahoma Office of Workforce Development.
4. *Physical Site Accessibility Checklist* from The Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitation Services (OKDRS).

15. Describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into the development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, education, and labor organizations. The required public comment process is outlined in section 108(d) of WIOA.

The Public Comment period, June 1st through June 30th, met the requirements outlined for submission. The plan will be published on the website, emailed to the Board and Local Elected Officials and GCWDB partners. All comments will be reviewed to make improvements to the plan. The plan will be reviewed and approved during the Executive Committee and Board Meetings, both subject to the Open Meetings Act.

Assurances:

Provide a statement indicating the local workforce development board will agree to the following assurances:

- The Local Workforce Development Board assures it will establish fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure the proper disbursement of, and accounting for all funds received through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.
- The Local Workforce Development Board assures it shall keep records that are sufficient to permit the preparation of reports required by the Act and shall maintain such records, including standardized records for all individual participants, and submit such reports as the State may

require.

- The Local Workforce Development Board assures it will collect and maintain data necessary to show compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Act.
- The Local Workforce Development Board assures funds will be spent in accordance with the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, regulations, written Department of Labor Guidance, written Oklahoma guidance, and all other applicable Federal and State laws.
- The Local Workforce Development Board assures that veterans will be afforded employment and training activities authorized in the Jobs for Veterans Act and 20 C.F.R. Part 1010.
- The Local Workforce Development Board assures it will comply with any grant procedures prescribed by the Secretary which are necessary to enter into contracts for the use of funds under WIOA, but not limited to the following:
 - General Administrative Requirements – Uniform Guidance at 2 C.F.R. Part 200 and 2 C.F.R. Part 2900.
 - Assurances and Certifications – SF 424B – Assurances for Non- Construction Programs;
 - 29 C.F.R. Part 31,32 – Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Assurance (and Regulation);
 - 29 C.F.R. Part 93 – Certification Regarding Lobbying (and Regulation);
 - 29 C.F.R. Parts 94 and 95 – Drug Free Workplace and Debarment and Suspension; Certifications (and Regulation).

Oklahoma's 4-Year Local Plan

Workforce Development Area: Green Country Workforce Development Board

Chief Local Elected Official: LEON WARNER

WDB Chair: Tim Thompson

WDB Executive Director: Christi Y. Porter

Signatures for the Local Plan

The following signatures attest that:

- They submit this local plan on behalf of the local WDB and Local Elected Officials in the area;
- The planning was done with leaders within the community and represents the collective thinking of those local representatives;
- The information contained herein is true and accurate to the best of their knowledge;
- The local plan represents the local board's and local elected officials' efforts to maximize resources available under Title I of WIOA and to coordinate these resources with other State and Local programs in the local area;
- They will operate the local system in accordance with the local plan, and, applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies and rules; and,
- All assurances within this template have been met.

WDB CLEO Typed/Printed Name: Leon Warner

Signature [Signature] Date 7.1.2023

WDB Chair Typed/Printed Name: Tim Thompson

Signature [Signature] Date 7.1.2023

Executive Director Typed/Printed Name: Christi Y. Porter

Signature [Signature] Date 7.1.2023