East Regional Plan

Economic and Workforce Analysis

This chapter must demonstrate how the region has collected and analyzed regional labor market information which must include the local planning requirements. RPCs are encouraged to use the labor market information provided by the State. This will provide consistency in the data used for regional analysis throughout the state.

A. Plans <u>must</u> include an analysis of:

- **Economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations**

The East Region includes the LWDAs of Northeast Tennessee, East Tennessee, and Southeast Tennessee. The East Tennessee Region has the most Metropolitan Statistical Areas (six) of the three regions, possibly due to its mountainous geography, according to the State Plan. The East Region showed the greatest variation in growth rates from 2017 to 2018 among the MSAs, from -2.3 percent in the Cleveland MSA to 1.8 percent growth in the Chattanooga MSA. All MSAs had average employment growth rates below the state average of 1.6 percent, except for Chattanooga. The top five industries in each area include:

- food services and drinking places (which also has the lowest average weekly wage in each area),
- educational services,
- ambulatory health care services,
- administrative and support services, and
- hospitals (except in East Tennessee, where it ranks sixth)

Unique to Northeast Tennessee is the prominence of chemical manufacturing, which employs more than 9,500 people and has the highest weekly average wage. The East and Southeast Tennessee LWDAs both have strong professional, scientific, and technical employment (25,949 and 9,613 employment, respectively) and transportation equipment manufacturing industries. The professional, scientific, and technical industries also have the highest weekly wages in East and Southeast Tennessee. In addition, East and Southeast Tennessee both have significant specialty trade contracting employment, evidence of construction employment in the low interest rate economy. Southeast Tennessee is also notable for its truck transportation industry, employing more than 10,500 workers and with wages in the middle of the pay range for the area.

The East Region will use multiple dynamic data systems to run queries and create tailored workforce development strategies building on national and state labor market information and projections. The following tables provide a current snapshot of occupation conditions, trends and opportunities within the region. The following tables highlight the Top Industries as reported WIRED data provided by TDLWD that defines the East Tennessee Regional projections and opportunities.

East Tennessee LWDA's Top Industries based on Employment		
Industry Title and Industry Code	**Sum of Establishments**	**Sum of Average Employment**
Food Services and Drinking Places (722)	4,514	96,054
Educational Services (611)	625	77,868
Administrative and Support Services (561)	2,740	63,706
Ambulatory Health Care Services (621)	4,037	54,465
Hospitals (622)	110	45,174
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (541)	4,815	35,562
General Merchandise Stores (452)	732	25,961
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (336)	147	25,632
Specialty Trade Contractors (238)	2,121	21,646
Executive, Legislative, and Other General Gov (921)	139	19,570
Truck Transportation (484)	262	10,504

East TN Regional Targeted Industries and Projected Percentage Growth WIRED Quarterly Census of Employers (QCEW)	
Residential Intellectual & Developmental Disability, Mental Health, & Substance Abuse Facilities	116%
Printing and Related Support Activities	108%
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	95%
Grocery Stores	88%
Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores	88%
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	75%
Electronic Shopping and Mail Order Houses	58%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	58%
Home Health Care Services	55%
Private Households	52%
Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction	50%
Activities Related to Real Estate	49%
Employment Services	46%
Office Administrative Services	46%
Commercial & Industrial Machinery & Equipment (except Automotive & Electronic) Repair & Maintenance	44%
Ship and Boat Building	30%
Veneer, Plywood, and Engineered Wood Product Manufacturing	29%
Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	27%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	24%
Building Equipment Contractors	21%
Textile Product Mills	19%
Scientific Research and Development Services	15%
Waste Treatment and Disposal	14%
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	14%
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	13%
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	12%
Offices of Physicians	9%
Elementary and Secondary Schools	6%

The East TN Region will utilize the definition of "in-demand occupations" as outlined in the TN State Plan. The list of the identified Middle Skill Occupations in Demand identified in this State Plan for the East Tennessee Region are shown in the occupational projections below. The East Region and its LWDBs will incorporate this newly defined data into ongoing strategy meetings to further define our region's demand occupation and associated skill demands.

While the East Region will continue to use multiple dynamic data systems to run queries and create tailored workforce development strategies over time, the following tables provide a current snapshot of occupation conditions, trends and opportunities within the region. The occupations in table A.1 shows the highest current demand in the Region according to TDLWD's WIRED data.

Additionally, the East TN Region is committed to the growth of industry clusters and targeted business development efforts as outlined by TN ECD. These clusters represented a strong presence and/or growth potential for TN. From an occupational perspective, the Center for Economic Research in Tennessee (CERT) highlights the following high employer demand occupational groups.

- **Information Technology occupations**
- **Production occupations**
- **Engineering and engineering related occupations**
- **Healthcare occupations**
- **Business and Financial occupations**
- **Transportation and Material Moving occupations**

- **Employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations**

The following charts provide overviews of occupations increasing and occupations decreasing, and how the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the regional economy and the future needs of employers as of May 2020.

Increasing Occupation	% Change
Computer and Information Research Scientists	91.54%
Medical Scientists	56.28%
Bartenders	49.98%
Physicians and Surgeons	47.67%
Driver/Sales Workers and Truck Drivers	37.94%
Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop	35.84%
Cooks	28.78%
Dining Room and Cafeteria Attendants and Bartender Helpers	27.63%
Dishwashers	26.14%
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	26.10%

Decreasing Occupation	% Change
Receptionists and Information Clerks	-60.07%
Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	-47.91%
Securities, Commodities, and Financial Services Sales Agents	-47.72%
Human Resources Workers	-45.71%
Office Clerks, General	-45.52%
Buyers and Purchasing Agents	-42.46%
Human Resources Managers	-41.92%
Elementary and Middle School Teachers	-41.39%
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	-40.20%
Models, Demonstrators, and Product Promoters	-38.31%

- **Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations**

Over 75 employers in the region's target industries, plus several other industry groups provided responses to two regional surveys. In those surveys, employers indicated that, although they were generally able to hire applicants, many applicants lacked a wide variety of skills. Those mentioned most often include soft skills, math and science knowledge; customer service skills; CNC skills; and computer skills, including basic skills.

Employers also responded to questions about skills that existing employees need. A total of 45 skills were listed by the respondents, ranging from critical thinking to specific technical skills. Communication and computer skills were mentioned the most often, but only by four employers. The range of skills listed indicates that workforce development agencies need to be as flexible as possible in tailoring solutions for employers. The great variety also makes it a challenge to develop training programs which need a constant demand to be provided by organizations, such as the community colleges and TCATs that train applicants and employees.

Regional employer surveys indicated that employers need certain knowledge and specific technical skills and soft skills. The top 10 are listed and the exhaustive list is available upon request: 1) one year of work history; 2) basic computer skills/improved computer skills; 3) training in specific skills: industrial sewing, automation mechanics; 4) experience in general and in specific skills in: IIT, Mechanical/Machinist, Programming CNC machines, Allen-Brady programmable controllers, machine design familiar with Solid Works CAD program; 5) workplace math and science; 6) communication skills; 7) critical thinking skills; 8) automation skills; 9) customer service skills; and 10) problem solving.

According to a study published in the *Harvard Business Review*, "nearly half of the new job openings from 2015 through 2020 will be in middle-skill occupations in areas such as computer technology, nursing and advanced manufacturing." Workforce development agencies and training providers need to be prepared for this trend.

A key concern with middle-skill workforce in East Tennessee remains sustaining needed supply of workers. Currently, one in five middle-skill workers in the area is age 55 or over. A large number of middle skill occupations are in short supply of workers. Jobs that are chronically difficult to fill include many in manufacturing, logistics, and healthcare. Technical roles in manufacturing, such as computer-controlled machinery operation, commercial machinery repair, and advanced assembling and setting will be vital to the region's manufacturing backbone. Implications of shortages in middle skill occupations include pressure on wages, loss or delay of business activity or delivery, or impacts on work quality or productivity within existing staffing.
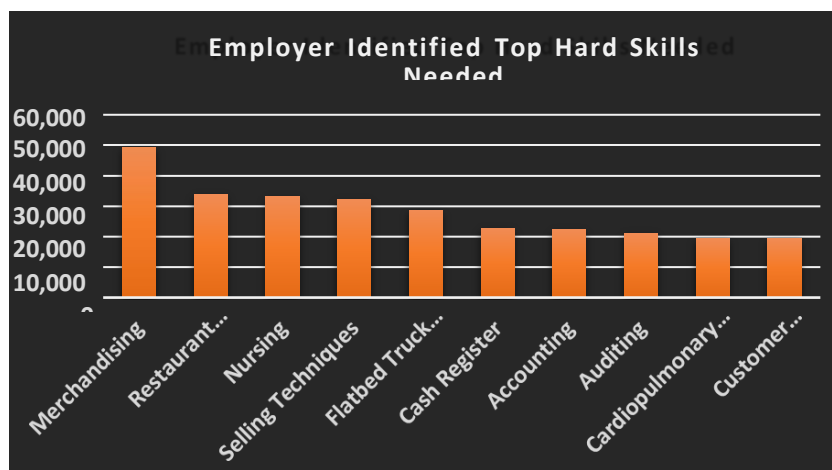
Per the US DOL, the assignment of skills and importance ranking to occupations are based on scientifically designed

employer surveys by occupational analysts. When occupations are growing, the skills in those occupations will be ranked   more highly. Most recently, the five most critical skills required across occupations based on the estimated employment   increases through 2020 include speaking, active listening, social perceptiveness, reading comprehension, and critical thinking. With the growth in the service industry, especially in leisure and hospitality, food service, and customer service   occupations, service orientation has grown in importance. Increased decentralization of production and service processes require workers to take on more decision-making roles. As processes become more complex and specialized,   the need for teamwork and coordination is increasing. As noted in the State Plan, more detailed occupational   projections can be found on the Labor Market Information Section of jobs4tn.gov and on the national website.

The five most critical skills required across occupations based on the estimated employment increases through 2020 include speaking, active listening, social perceptiveness, reading comprehension, and critical thinking. With the growth   in the service industry, especially in leisure and hospitality, food service, and customer service occupations, service orientation has grown in importance.

More detailed occupational projections can be found on the Labor Market Information Section of jobs4tn.gov and on the national website www.projectionscentral.com.

The Report Manager dated July 2019 for short term projections identified employer demand of critical skills in the adjacent graph.

Legend: Speaking | Active Listening | Social Perceptiveness | Reading Comprehension | Critical Thinking | Service Orientation | Monitoring | Judgment and Decision Making | Coordination | Writing

Employer Identified Top Hard Skills Needed

As of the first quarter in 2020, the top hard skills illustrated in the chart to the left have been identified at an overall National, State and Local level   based on the changing population and employer demands.

- **An analysis of the regional 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.**

As of May 2020, the East Region unemployment rate is 13.3% compared to 3.5% in March 2020. During the same timeframe, the unemployment rate for persons with barriers to employment was over 20%. In 2019, 19.3% of persons with a disability were employed. Across all age groups, persons with a disability were much less likely to be

employed than those with no disability. Eight out of 10 individuals with barriers to employment are not part of the labor force.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, labor and work is undergoing a massive shift. The dynamics of the labor market have changed drastically. The skill level that used to be enough to navigate the labor market in the past has become inadequate for the current requirements. The current labor market trends in the region are shown in the chart below:

Current Labor Market Trends
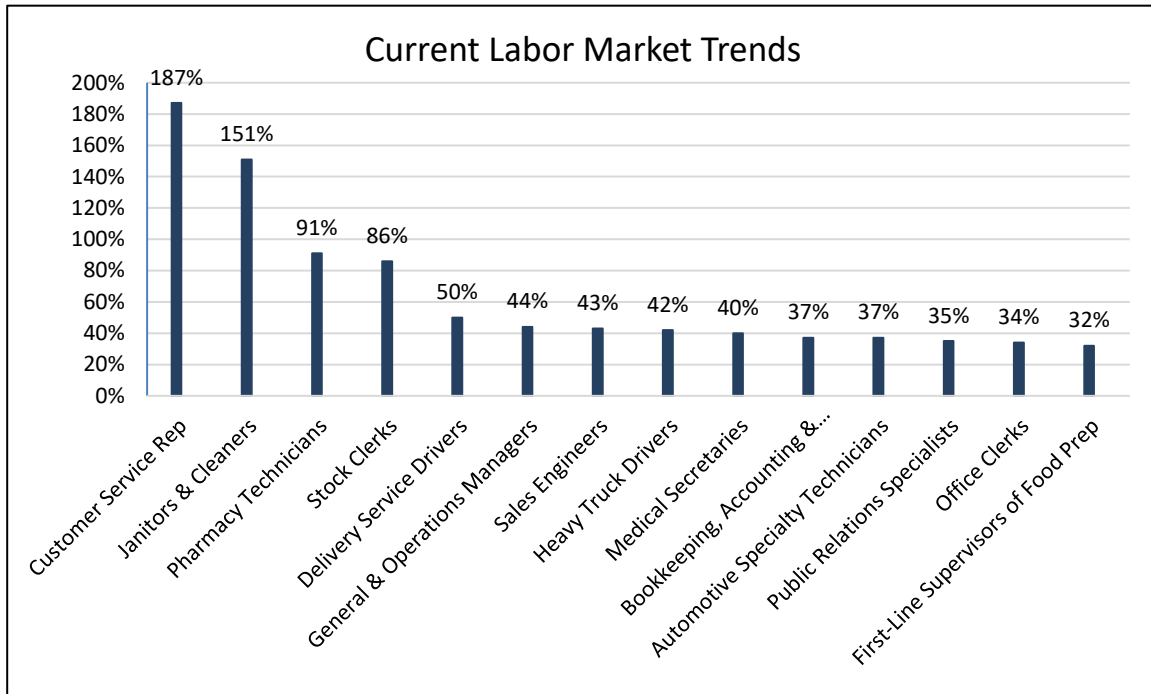
Concerning educational attainment in the region, 14.5% of the selected regions' residents possess a bachelor's degree (4.3% below the national average), and 7.2% hold an associate degree (0.9% below the national average).
In addition, persons with a disability are less likely to have completed a bachelor's degree or higher than those with no disability. Among both groups, those who had attained higher levels of education were more likely to be employed than those who had attained less education.

RPCs must answer all questions when responding to this requirement:
1. **How were all partners involved in providing, analyzing and agreeing on supply and demand data and the targeted sectors/industries/occupations/skills?**
The East Tennessee Regional Planning Council (ETRPC) members took an active role in gathering information from labor market information databases and employers and other stakeholders during public meetings. To ensure that the public had adequate opportunity to provide public comment on the regional plan and to promote community engagement during plan development, the ETRPC held 2 additional meetings to gather input from regional employers, community colleges, TN Board of Regents (TBR) institutions, regional workforce partners and numerous other stakeholders.

Based on information received from regional employers and up-to-date labor market data, the East Region has identified the following sectors as regional priorities: Food and Agriculture; Healthcare and Life Sciences; Rubber, Chemical and Glass; Automotive; Appliances and Electrical; Finance and Tech; Distribution and Logistics; Aerospace and Defense; and Chemicals. The RPC will continue to target available employment and training resources to ensure that the workforce development needs, of the priority sectors, industries, occupations and skills, are met.

The following table shows the regional skills analysis, according to employers, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Hot Skills represent skills needed for jobs with the most growth, Resilient Skills are skills that have grown during the pandemic and Cold Skills show skills most in decline.

Hot Skills		Resilient Skills		Cold Skills	
Skill	Change	Skill	Change	Skill	Change
Research	27.64%	Customer Service	26.25%	Customer Service	26.47%
Communications	27.14%	Communications	24.53%	Purchasing	20.59%
Management	18.59%	Sales	22.85%	Sales	20.59%
Operations	16.58%	Management	21.35%	Coordinating	17.65%
Machining	15.08%	Leadership	14.31%	Detail Oriented	16.18%
Computer	13.07%	Merchandising	13.68%	Negotiation	16.18%
Computer	12.06%	Operations	12.49%	Accounting	14.71%
Data Analysis	11.56%	CDL	8.56%	Auditing	14.71%

2. **How is the region changing in terms of demographics, labor supply, and occupational demand?**

As of 2019, the East Region's population increased by 3.2%, growing by 73,979 since 2014. Population is expected to increase between 2019 and 2024, adding 57,901. From 2014 to 2019, jobs increased by 7.4% in East Region from 1,045,381 to 1,122,971. This change outpaced the national growth rate of 7.3% by 0.1%. As the number of jobs increased, the labor force participation rate increased from 4.8% to 57.1% between 2014 and 2019. With reference to educational attainment, 14.5% of the selected regions' residents possess a bachelor's degree (4.3% below the national average), and 7.2% hold an associate degree (0.9% below the national average).

The East Tennessee Region has a high retirement risk with an expected total of 791,083 residents that are 55 or older. The national average for our size area is 695,912. The counties of the East TN region have a low racial diversity. Our local area includes 169,098 Veterans which roughly 3,000 more veterans than the national average for this region.

The table to the right indicates the number of residents by Population Age. East represents more than half of the demographics in each population age category.

Geographic Area	Population Ages 15-19	Population Ages 20-24	Population Ages 55+
East Region	146,205	159,473	745,721
East	76,106	85,088	377,446
Northeast	30,444	32,810	171,547
Southeast	39,655	41,575	196,728

The new TN WIOA State Plan identified 5 criteria to be utilized to determine Demand Occupations included in the long-term occupational projections through 2026 for the Local Workforce Development Areas. Each criterion was weighted equally, with ratings ranging from 1 to 5. Five was the highest rating. For most LWDAs, only occupations requiring a high school degree or equivalent, postsecondary non-degree award, some college but no degree, or an associate degree   were included as middle skill occupations. The list of the identified Middle Skill Occupations in Demand identified in the   WIOA State Plan for the East Tennessee Region are shown below. The East Region and its LWDBs will incorporate this newly defined data into ongoing strategy meetings to further define our region's demand occupation and associated skill demands.

For a full list of In-Demand Occupations, see TABLE A.2.1 in the attachments.

3. **What are the policy and service implications of the current and projected Labor Market Information?**

The sudden emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic is dealing a severe blow to state economies, businesses and workers. The COVID-19 outbreak is rapidly changing the workplace. Many businesses are offering flexible work arrangements, such as teleworking. The ETRPC and the LWDB's maintain open dialogue with regional and local stakeholders and will be proactive and agile to changing and implementing new practices, WIOA services, and policies in response to employer needs, changes in the economy, and updated labor market information. By aligning services and policies with LMI, the region will be better prepared to address changes in employers' workforce needs now and in the future. The labor market analysis provides the East Region an opportunity to identify industry support needed and evaluate whether training programs are meeting the skills needs of employers. The region will work closely with education partners to

ensure that training programs offered on the Eligible Training Provider List align with the needs of local employers and adjust when necessary. We will also work with K-12 educators to ensure that appropriate programs of study are available and career pathways training includes supports high-demand and emerging industries to create a talent pipeline.

4. **What special populations exist in the region, what is their magnitude, and what are the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals?**

The Tennessee State Plan and shows that the numbers of individuals with substantial barriers to employment are relatively high. Regional AJC partners will target recruitment of special populations that receive a focus for services under WIOA, such as youth and adults with disabilities, low-income individuals, public assistance recipients, veterans, basic skills deficient youth, justice involved individuals, and other populations as identified in federal and state guidance.

Special populations in the East region include single parent families (75,000), individuals living in poverty (387,000), persons with disabilities (220,000), veterans (175,000), at-risk youth (6,000) and justice involved individuals (30,000). The ETRPC and local areas will be proactive in serving special populations and meeting their workforce needs. For example, one model that works well for special populations combines basic education, training for a specific occupation and work-based learning offered concurrently. Integrated Education and Training programs in the jails for those seeking HiSET through our AE and short-term certification programs. Individuals with disabilities will be served in partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation through coordinated outreach and recruitment, braiding and blending of funding and co-enrollment in partner programs as appropriate.

5. **What sectors/industries/occupations/skills are in demand and targets of opportunity?**

a. **What sectors/industries/occupations have favorable location quotients?**

The top five occupations in the East Region with favorable location quotients over 1.0 are:
1. Nuclear Power Reactor Operators
2. Nuclear Engineers
3. Textile Apparel and Furnishings Workers, All Others
4. First Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers
5. Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders

The full table of occupations with favorable location quotients can be found in TABLE 5.a.1 in the attachments.

b. **What sectors/industries/occupations have favorable demand projections based on growth?**

The top five industries and occupations in the East Region with favorable demand projections based on growth are:

Industries:
1. Residential Intellectual & Developmental Disability, Mental Health, & Substance Abuse Facilities
2. Printing and Related Support Activities
3. Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries
4. Grocery Stores
5. Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores

Occupations:
1. Residential Advisors
2. Software Developers, Applications
3. Home Health Aides
4. Massage Therapists
5. Personal Care Aides

The full table of industries with favorable demand projections based on growth can be found in TABLE 5.b.1 and occupations with favorable location quotients can be found in TABLE 5.b.2 in the attachments. The highest number of jobs openings advertised online is found in TABLE 5.b.3.

c. **What sectors/industries/occupations have favorable demand projections based on replacements?**

The East Tennessee Region has a high retirement risk with an expected total of 791,083 residents that are 55 or older. The national average for our size area is 695,912.

The top five occupations in the East Region with favorable demand projections based on replacements are:

1. Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
2. Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
3. Waiters and Waitresses
4. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
5. Janitors & Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners

The full table of occupations with favorable demand projections based on replacements can be found in TABLE 5.c.1 in the attachments.

d. **What sectors/industries/occupations are considered mature but still important to the economy?**

The top occupations that are considered mature but still important to the economy are:

1. Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
2. Waiters and Waitresses
3. General and Operations Managers
4. Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
5. Registered Nurses

The East Region hosts several tourists in Chattanooga, the Ocoee River, the Great Smoky Mountains and has several college towns such as Knoxville and Johnson City. Food Prep and Serving Workers are included in this list due to the large number of workers in these occupations. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted this industry and it will be critical to see these occupations come back strongly as the economy recovers. The other occupations continue to be mature but still important to the economy and are expected to remain strong.

The full table of occupations with considered mature but still important to the economy be found in TABLE 5.d.1 in the attachments.

e. **What sectors/industries/occupations are considered emerging in the regional economy?**

Industry Sectors considered to be in emerging in the regional economy differ in each local area. Northeast is seeing an emergence of Automotive Dealerships, Health Care Stores, Dentists Offices and Construction Related Electrical Equipment Manufacturing and Supply Wholesalers. East has counties rich in farmland and Farmworkers in Crop, Nurseries and Greenhouses are emerging as well as Credit Counselors, Funeral Service Managers, and Fallers. Southeast is unique in the emergence of the Specialized Freight and General Freight trucking, Printing, Foundries and Utility System Construction.

The full table of emerging sectors can be found in TABLE 5.e.1 in the attachments.
A table of the emerging occupations can be found in TABLE 5.e.2 in the attachments.

B. Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region.

RPC must answer all of the following questions when responding to this requirement:

1. **What sectors/industries/occupations/skills are the regional priorities, in order of priority, and how was this determined? Explain how the status of growing, maturing and emerging was factored into the ranking.**

The East Region is committed to the growth of industry clusters and targeted business development efforts. The

regional workforce system will continue to meet the needs of area employers while preparing a skilled labor force that supports the development and expansion of the targeted industry sectors.

The East Region has identified the following sectors as regional priorities:

1. Food and Agriculture	2. Healthcare and Life Sciences	3. Rubber, Chemical and Glass	4. Automotive
5. Appliances and Electrical	6. Finance and Tech	7. Distribution and Logistics	8. Aerospace, Defense & Chemicals

The above sectors were prioritized for the East Region because they represent the broadest base of the economy for the 34 counties in the East Region.

The East Region has identified the following occupations as regional priorities.

1. Food Preparation and Serving Related	2. Transportation and Material Moving	3. Production	4. Management
5. Office and Administrative Support	6. Business and Financial Operations	7. Healthcare Practitioners and Technical	8. Sales and Related

The above occupations were prioritized for the East Region because they represent the top growing occupations and generally align with the top occupation location quotients as well as the largest occupations in the 34 counties. The RPC will   continue to target available employment and training resources to ensure that the workforce development needs, of the priority sectors, industries, occupations, and skills, are met.

The region's largest industry priorities can be found in TABLE B.1:
The fastest growing occupations and regional priorities are shown in the following graphic:
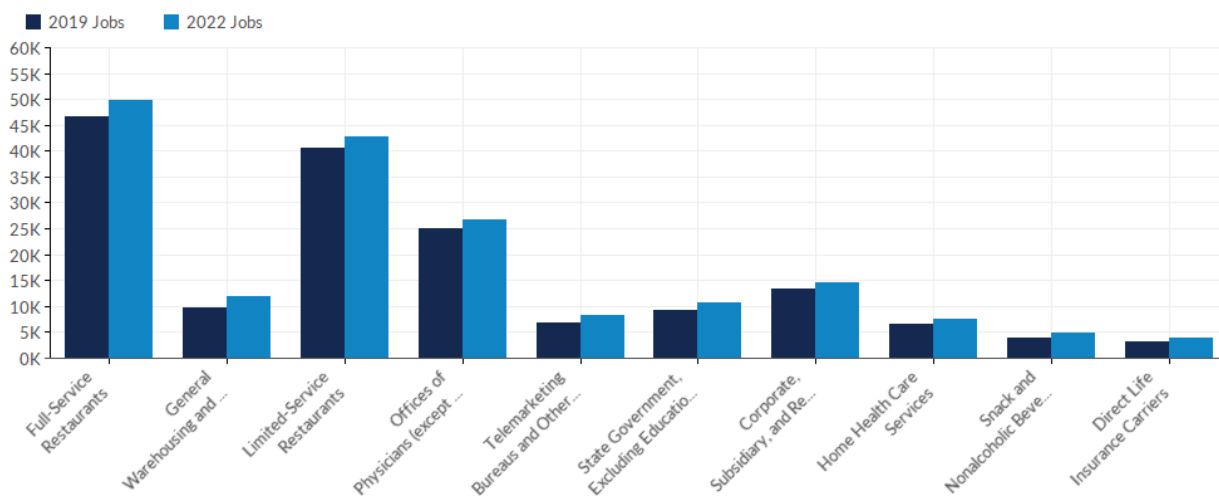
The top skills in the East Region are as follows:
- Customer Service
- Management
- Leadership
- Sales Microsoft Office
- Microsoft Excel
- Public Speaking
- Microsoft Word
- Team Building
- Research

2. Which employers were engaged and what data were used to determine the development of sector strategy?

A strong and varied effort was implemented to engage employers and to develop and access data in order to develop the East Regions' sector strategies. In conjunction with Ernst & Young, the Regional Planning Council

created a workforce survey, attached, to capture information across the region from employers, Chambers of Commerce, and local board members. Survey results did not include names of respondents. Some of the businesses included in the survey distribution and in local/regional strategic planning meetings were: Volkswagen, Denso, La-Z-Boy, WACKER, Huber, Lodge, Resolute, Erlanger, Home Health Agencies, US Express, FedEx, Amazon, Eastman Credit Union, Tennessee Valley Authority, Pals; Master Model Craft, Domtar, United Health Care, Brock Services, Cooper Standard, Nuclear Fuel Services, Eastman, AO Smith, Ceradyne Inc.; Colonial Chemical, Valmont, Kinex Medical, Mueller, U.S. Xpress, Newell Brands – Rubbermaid. Regional data were gathered from the WIRED Unit, ECD, EMSI, and CERT. Each Local Area Board is made up of at least 51% private sector representatives from local businesses representing a variety of sectors, including the East top sectors. These sector representatives give continual feedback on strategy development. Economic development representatives and Chambers of Commerce representatives and members have been invited to and have actively participated in local and regional planning sessions to provide meaningful and strategic input into the development of sector strategies. Business Services Team representatives stay active in our communities by participating in Chamber events, SHRM meetings, speaking at workforce community meetings, making in-person employer site visits, and connecting via email and phone. All of this engagement has produced regular feedback from employers. Strong, pre-existing employer relationships and the survey allowed for creation of this plan during the COVID-19 pandemic. In response to COVID-19 and in an effort to best know how to support manufacturers, the University of TN conducted an assessment that included approximately 30% of Tennessee's 5,700 small and mid-sized manufacturers (SME's) with the goal of using the resulting information to help SME's prevent, prepare-for, or respond to business disruption resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. This assessment and subsequent report will be used to inform and direct strategies relevant to COVID-19's impact on the workplace.

3. **What other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning? This includes community and non-profit partnerships.**
The workforce and economic and community development agencies in the East Region began pursuing a regional partnership decades ago. Partnering with mental health agencies, addiction recovery agencies, Tennessee Department of Correction, and probation and parole representatives has helped in the support of sector strategies especially in strategies planning to serve these target populations. Interagency communication, partnerships with Chambers of Commerce and other economic development agencies will prepare the region for future sectors especially as technology continues to change the nature of work and future jobs. The Tennessee ECD representatives for the region are RPC members and provided input to the plan. Since the input was generated by focus groups with other council members of different organizations, the specific input from the ECD representatives was not specifically recorded. Going forward, ECD representatives will identify skills needed by relocating employers, and in turn regional educators will teach to those needed skills. These numbers will positively impact the regional KPIs.

There are many other sector-based initiatives in the region that are either led by local areas or with which Local Workforce Boards and system partners collaborate. A variety of public-private partnerships will support sector strategies from planning through long-term implementation. The RPC facilitates engagement with groups/organizations such as Economic Development, Chambers of Commerce, CTE Directors, Department of Corrections, the Work Ready Community Initiative, local small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors to identify high-wage and high-growth occupations. Local educational and training institutions provide a critical link between employers and individuals with the ability and desire to participate in the workforce. The regional partners also work with businesses to assess and improve the effectiveness of regional educational and training opportunities in meeting the skills that are in demand in the region.

In addition to these partnerships and initiatives, regional partners will work together, with technical support from the state when necessary, to address how to fully mainstream special populations into sector-based career pathways. In conjunction with other data collection efforts, the regional workforce partners will identify data sources and techniques for collecting, analyzing, and utilizing data to determine the extent to which special populations are already involved in existing career pathways.

4. **How well do the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses?**
   Nearly two-thirds of the nation's jobs require some postsecondary education. Currently, 51.3% of the East Region   residents have no postsecondary background; 35% of that total has only a high school diploma. Feedback from   employers indicates that job seekers generally do not have the advanced skills necessary to do the job particularly in   technically related manufacturing jobs.

   Industries in the region are facing the challenge of recruiting and retaining talent with academic, technical, and soft   skills. This presents both education and workforce systems with the opportunity to better meet talent supply needs.   Businesses are engaged in the regional planning process so that the region can better understand the skill needs of   employers within their respective sectors, to coordinate WIOA regional strategies with economic development plans,   and to leverage this experience to develop program models such as career pathways and talent pipelines.

   Ongoing planning will include improved communications between employers and education and training providers to   align programs to employer needs. Strategies include working across education systems and direct employer   participation to improve job seeker skills that match to employer needs.

5. **Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be   targeted.**
   Future strategy development will be employer-driven and will promote systemic change that benefits workers of all   wage and skill levels, the industry, and the community at large. The impact of technological, demographic and socio-   economic changes will impact the employment landscape and skills requirements. Also, the current National crisis will   result in uncertain future labor demands. The region will identify sectors using economic, industry, and labor market   data collection and analysis. The use of traditional and real-time LMI and workforce planning information will identify   specific skill needs, level of demand, and area education and training program gaps within target industries.

   Over the long term, labor demand decisions by employers will be critical to the workforce system and its ability to meet   local and regional skill needs. Future sector strategies must be defined by regional business and industry for   workforce development agencies to provide employment and training programs that will improve employment   opportunities for job seekers and the competitiveness of industries.

   Collaboration across partners and the Region will continue to focus strategies around Regional partners engaging with   small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations. Work with community colleges will   continue to focus around industry sector talent development especially where industry-recognized credential   attainment is necessary. The expansion of RAs and implementation of a Regional IRAP Intermediary will also contribute   to the introduction of new sectors particularly if training curriculum can be developed rapidly to meet new sectors'   training needs for the regional workforce.

   The East Region will continue to analyze and incorporate LMI to further develop strategy development for future   sectors. This strategy development includes, but is not limited to:
   - Expanding Career Pathways focused on the primary targeted industry sectors. Pathway creation for the   secondary targeted industry sector will also be explored. These pathways will contain multiple entry and exit   points to connect individuals of varying abilities with realistic and meaningful opportunities.
   - Expanding Apprenticeships (both RAs and IRAPs) & Earn and Learn opportunities by leveraging the   relationships between economic development partners and employers in the targeted industry sectors.   Integrated business services will be developed so that employers can access training resources from all   relevant partners.
   - Expanding Talent Pipeline Solutions that reengineer the concept of education and training design with the   employer at the center. The region will further develop the already existing programs.

6. **Describe how the areas will work together to ensure regional businesses are served across LWDAs.**

One of the major strengths of workforce development in the East Tennessee region is the strong relationships between agencies and individual staff. For example, the core partners in the comprehensive centers are co-located, some even before June 2000. The area directors of the different agencies meet on a regular basis, share training and network with other workforce development agencies.

The East Region will undertake the following strategies to engage employers in workforce development program:

- Work with the region's economic development organizations to identify employers (large and small) throughout the region from the identified demand and emerging sectors.
- Establish opportunities for employers to participate in functional teams designed to:
  - Identify existing career pathways in the identified industry sectors.
  - Explore development of career pathways in those industry sectors that do not currently have one.
  - Explore the establishment of talent pipelines in the regions identified growth sectors.
- Partners from education, workforce development, and economic development will create a common message to market these functional teams to targeted employers and seek their participation.
- Through a collaborative effort, partner agencies will investigate the viability of developing employer-led initiatives to create and market apprenticeship programs in the manufacturing, healthcare, transportation, and construction sectors and other identified sectors.

The East Region will undertake the following strategies to meet the needs of regional employers through incumbent worker programs; on-the-job and customized training programs; industry and sector strategies; career pathway initiatives; effective business intermediaries:

- Work with business service teams to promote existing work -based learning initiatives to regional employers.
  Updates on progress will be reported by the OSOs during the RPC's quarterly meetings.
- Support sector strategies by evaluating and adjusting the region's current career pathways.
- Support sector strategies by evaluating and adjusting the region's current talent pipelines.
- Develop strategies that reduce program silos to promote employer services.
- Partners in the region will provide cross training on the programs and services that they offer to employers. Cross trainings will be conducted during quarterly AJC staff meetings to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable regarding all WIOA programs. OSOs will provide updates on progress during the quarterly RPC meetings.
- Develop consistent messaging and marketing of business services using BST.
- Promote entrepreneurial skills training by connecting interested individuals with the local Economic Development Corporations, Chamber of Commerce's, and Small Business Development Centers.

The RPC, in partnership of multiple employers within the region, will work closely with education, economic development, and community organizations to identify and collaboratively meet the workforce needs of businesses within the regional labor market. The RPC will focus on building regional talent pipelines, addressing skill gaps, and creating meaningful career pathways for a range of workers in regional industries. Regional sector approaches serve the dual purpose of aligning education, training, and support services to the needs of employers in an industry sector, while ensuring that those services are accessible to a range of workers. Sector strategies will complement and strengthen the service strategies of the region.

Strategies for Service Integration

This regional component of the plan must describe the regional service strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery strategies.

Provide an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training, in the region.

This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and the capacity to provide workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.

COVID-19: As of this writing, over 433,123 Tennesseans have filled unemployment insurance claims according to the U.S. Department of Labor. While it is believed that many of these individuals will eventually return to their jobs, it is also clear that a number of job seekers in the East Region will grow substantially as a result of current and future business closures.   While states are opening venues including personal services, dining, and retail, some business owners are realizing and publicizing that they cannot turn a profit and will just stay closed if they are forced to reduce capacity to 50% of pre-pandemic capacity. More alarming, other business owners, realizing the same profit dynamics, are choosing to close permanently.

*A 27 April-4 May 2020 Washington Post-*Ipsos national poll found 77% of furloughed workers expect to be rehired by their previous employer once the stay-at-home orders in their area are lifted. Nearly 6 in 10 say it is "very likely" they will get their old job back according to the poll. Yet a 7 May 2020 poll from the Becker Friedman Institute at the University of Chicago predicts 42% of the recent layoffs from the pandemic will result in permanent job losses because of two big issues. First, many companies are going bankrupt or shutting down permanently, so they won't need employees. Second, even after parts of the economy reopen, many people will be hesitant to shop, travel, and go out to eat as they did before. Businesses operating at one-half capacity or switching to online or takeout don't need nearly as many workers. Writes Betsey Stevenson of the University of Michigan, "Even if a miracle cure falls out of the sky in July, it's going to take demand a while to pick back up. There's no way travel and retail look the same and brings everybody back."

Unemployment benefits that provide an extra $600.00 a week through a federal pandemic stimulus package are set to expire the end of July.   While some economist expects economic growth to return during summer 2020, no one expects the job market to reach the same lofty levels of the first months of 2020. Moody's Analytics reported Friday 8 May 2020 that it did not expect the country to make up all the jobs it had currently lost until 2023. Economists from the ADP Research Institute and the Federal Reserve— using data from the private payroll firm ADP--reported 7 May 2020 that 40% of the nation's lost jobs so far are in companies that appear to have stopped operating amid the crisis.

Complicating this from a workforce development standpoint, a cohort of these dislocated workers—e.g. small business owners, healthcare employees, airlines employees, and business services workers—are highly skilled and may have difficulty finding fulfilling work that pays comparable wages. Too, the workforce development service delivery network may be strained—in human and financial capacities— to serve the expected rise in job seekers, customers seeking training or re-training, and employers seeking workers as business and industry return to full employment.

The current cessation due to COVID-19 of workforce development services through the bricks and mortar American Job Center model lays bare weaknesses in the delivery of workforce services across the state and in the East Region. A lack of tools to successfully intersect with virtual online learning has prohibited existing customers from continuing their education, while new customers—both job seekers and business-- have been unable to be determined eligible for WIOA services or utilize the human resource function of the American Job Center, respectively.

Several Federal, state, and local organizations have increased the provision of resources to businesses and individuals during the novel coronavirus and COVID-19 infections:
1. Federal Government: through the CARES ACT, Congress and the Administration have pushed out over three trillion dollars to assist individuals, businesses, and state and local governments address the negative impacts of the pandemic
2. State government:

- Office of the Governor: https://www.tn.gov/governor/covid-19/economic-recovery.html
- Tennessee Department of Health: https://www.tn.gov/health.html
- Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development: https://tnecd.com/
- Tennessee Department of Labor & WF Development: https://www.tn.gov/workforce.html
3. County and city governments:
    - Washington County: http://www.washingtoncountytn.org/node/440
    - Hamilton County: http://health.hamiltontn.org/AllServices/Coronavirus(COVID-19).aspx
    - Chattanooga: https://connect.chattanooga.gov/covid/
    - Knox County: https://www.knoxcounty.org/health/
4. Community and Faith-Based Organizations
    - The American Association of Chambers of Commerce have provided a website compiling information for local chambers and business and industry at https://resources.acce.org/crisismanagement
    - Local Chambers of Commerce across East Region have provide e-newsletters to members across East Region, e.g., https://www.blountchamber.com/coronavirus/ https://www.chattanoogachamber.com/   and http://www.kingsportchamber.org/
    - Goodwill Industries: https://www.goodwill.org/covid-19-frequently-asked-questions-faq/
    - Tennessee Association of Human Resource Agencies: https://tnhra.org/services/nutrition/
    - East Tennessee History Center: http://www.easttnhistory.org/

The above four groupings of regional resources are a representative sample; page restraints in this document prevent an expanded listing of other resources. However, all partners in East Region subscribe to the Vanderbilt University *Disability Pathfinder*, an online resource offering a statewide database of services by county including everything from social service agencies to low income medical clinics to recreational programs: https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/pathfinder/.

Weaknesses and Strengths of the East Region American Job Center Service Delivery Network

Weaknesses
Pipeline Development Activities: While several AJC partners utilize JOBS4TN, not all AJC partners and no community- or faith-based partner utilize JOBS4TN for customer referral. Relying on verbal or digital referrals is ineffective and leads to inconsistencies. For example, an experience career specialist who is aware of workforce development services and is partnering with other agencies is likely to refer job seekers to appropriate services. New staff, however, may not be aware of all services, partners, and processes that a job seeker can tap into and thus may not refer him/her to the full suite of services available. The need exists for more consistent cross training among staff and partners to eliminate this challenge.

Outcome Visibility—Clear Data/Reporting (TDLWDA Goal): Across the state and the three LWDAs in East Region, January 2019 data validation revealed significant deviations from the norm in the development and recording of customer case notes in VOS. Errors found across all areas include but are not limited to failure to upload documentation, cases allowed to exit by system closure, lack of substance in case notes, date mismatches, and missing supplemental wage documentation.

Strengths
Rural Economic Development: In autumn 2019, Governor Lee announced his Rural Initiative focusing attention and resources on the distressed and at-risk Tennessee counties. Tennessee's rural citizens face challenges unique to their geography that require a unique response. His Rural Initiative State Reserve Funding complements the workforce development service delivery system in East Region by expanding WIOA activities to special populations—e.g., justice involved individuals, Pre-Employment Transition Services, and career and technical education students—as well as providing addition support services such as transportation to eligible customers.

Clear Connection to Current Industry/Employers:

1. All three local workforce boards use On-the- Job-Training (OJT), Registered Apprenticeships, internships and work-experiences to provide the skills needed for job seekers to be successful in the workplace. In addition, all the community colleges coordinate internships, on-the-job-training, apprenticeships, and incumbent worker training within the Region. Efforts have begun to better connect adult education students to these opportunities. Overall, these types of programs are an opportunity for growth under WIOA.

2. Career Pathways: Workforce development and education partners in the region are increasingly developing Career Pathway programs to prepare individuals to be successful in secondary and post-secondary education as well as help individuals enter or advance within a specific occupational cluster. Community colleges offer stackable credentials in many sectors, providing a pathway approach for adult learners, who can complete one credential and advance to the next credential.

3. Sector Strategies: The East Region provides an extensive array of sector-based workforce development services for its customers including business-driven partnerships, many funded through competitive grants such as the Governor's Investment in Vocational Education (GIVE) grants, discussed in a subsequent section of this document-

The East Region plan addresses how the East RPC fosters strategic alignment, delineates a clear connection to current employers and industries, responds to the economic needs of the local workforce development area, and builds a sustainable worker pipeline for business and industry. The plan outlines how the East RPC's, through their governing boards, make regional decisions regarding the investment of workforce resources to improve the lives of its citizens and residents. These decisions are always guided by efforts to reduce duplication, maximize financial and human resources, and support regional and rural economic development.

RPC must address all of the following questions when responding to this requirement:
1. **How well do existing training programs in the region and LWDAs prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses?**

Workforce development is a critical element in maintaining a prosperous regional economy. To that effect, East region coordinates regularly with both public and private educational institutions, economic development agencies, industry associations, chambers, local municipalities, one-stop partner agencies, and community-based organizations to stay aware and informed of the most in-demand skills and occupations. The East RPC is a partner in region-wide initiatives targeting common goals that will continue to ensure that the three local workforce areas provide a well-trained workforce resulting in quality lifestyles and prosperity to its residents and businesses.

Training services must be linked to high demand employment opportunities in the region or geographic area in which the adult or dislocated worker is willing to commute of relocate. The selection of training services should be conducted in a manner that maximizes customer choice, informed by performance or relevant training providers, and coordinated—to the extent possible—with other sources of assistance (WIOA § 134(c)(3). East Region limits individual training accounts to programs included on the Eligible Training Provider list; most eligible providers offer programs that lead to a credential in a period of two years or less.

The East RPC has implemented the following ongoing strategies and initiatives to ensure not only that job seekers are prepared to enter and to retain employment but also that regional business needs are met:
- Provide training to target middle skills occupations that will increase the wages of participants while meeting employers' skills needs.
- Collaborate with business and industry to further promote the value and applicability of industry-recognized credentials.

- Develop, implement, evaluate, and replicate proven short-term prevocational services that are recognized and valued by business and industry, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, soft skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills, and professional conduct in order to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment.
- Work in partnership with the network of educational institutions such as K-12, career and technical education, and post-secondary education to expand best practices and provide career pathways for jobseekers.
- Work with WIOA Title II partners in the region to implement integrated education programs that promote the attainment of multiple postsecondary credentials while customers simultaneously are working toward passing the high school equivalency test, HiSET. To serve regional businesses, the curriculum promoted in these classes is adapted concurrently and contextually to provide workforce preparation and training for the purposes of education advancement and career entry and advancement.
- Apprenticeship State Grants are currently operating in the following high demand sectors/occupations in East Region: manufacturing, chemical processing, building construction, and hospitality. During this plan, additional Registered Apprenticeship opportunities will be underwritten with State-dedicated and area formula funding.

It is noted here that as the time of this writing, data regarding completion and other performance criteria of eligible training providers is being housed at various state agencies, and policy regarding performance metrics and collection/reporting of data is in development. Preliminary information indicates that annual performance information by educational providers will, in the future, be submitted to the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development and will address how providers, by program, are performing in completion rates and placement rates. These two criteria—coupled with credential attainment, employment, earnings, and retention—will, during this plan, be considered annually as a gauge of program effectiveness.

Prioritizing learning opportunities in rural counties, Governor's Investment in Vocational Education (GIVE) grants were awarded November 2019 to eleven East Region post-secondary education institutions. GIVE focuses on regional partnerships to develop work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities for secondary and post-secondary learners. Nearly $10 million in workforce development and training is being invested in East Region as a result of GIVE awards to postsecondary partners in 2019. Examples of training and work-based experiences include STEM, healthcare, electrical/HVAC, and apprenticeship-based mechatronics. A table showcasing the awarded institutions, grant amounts, and programs is included in the Attachments section.

2. What existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on a promising return on investment (ROI)?
ROI can vary tremendously based on population being served, cost structure, resources available for each program, industry trends, and/or economic conditions for a given LWDA or region. Traditionally, disadvantaged groups, such as low-income and ex-offenders, yield the highest return on investment. The higher ROIs are largely tied to savings from public assistance, as participants become employed and self-sufficient. Positive returns on workforce investment programs could potentially create a multiplier effect resulting in an even greater impact on the economy. While earnings increase alone are not always enough to compensate for program costs, in some programs savings from public assistance benefits and increases in future tax payments outweigh program costs.

Targeting disadvantaged groups will increase the return on investment by helping more individuals with barriers to employment. Moving toward that goal, East Region will concentrate on expanding the following service strategies:
1. Streamlining the delivery of supportive services: East Region, during this plan, will examine the benefits and feasibility of adopting a regional, holistic supportive services policy.

2. Enhancing services and opportunities for justice-involved citizens: The East Region has identified reentry as a targeted plan element and, during this plan, East Region will launch a synchronized, integrated workforce service delivery plan for returning talent including but not limited to the following:
   a. Establish a specialized American Job Center in—at minimum— one Tennessee Department of Correction maximum security prison;
   b. Outreach to JII in local detention centers, jails, and community corrections;
   c. Provide workforce services by WIOA Title I and II staff in local courts, including but not limited to Vet Courts, juvenile courts, child support courts, and drug courts;
   d. Implement workforce services orientations within state probation and parole facilities;
   e. Provide job search assistance/job club at the TDOC Day Recovery Centers in the region;
   f. Offer workforce prep services—from job readiness to FAFAS/financial aid assistance--delivered to alternative high schools serving juveniles who have been either in trouble in school or who are in the juvenile justice system;
   g. Continue to provide training opportunities—from adult education to post-secondary completion—to eligible inmates in local jails
   h. Promote the Work Opportunity Tax Credit to local employers interested in hiring JII individuals; and
   i. Expand the nascent collaboration with Tennessee Child Support Employment and Parenting Program (TCSEPP) to provide legal/re-entry issues and chemical dependency and substance use disorder issues with JII customers.
3. Improving skills and credentials by expanding vocational education and workforce development programs: 1) Mentioned earlier in this document, the three local workforce areas in East Region are collaborating with eleven Tennessee Board of Regents institutions in providing supplemental funding for GIVE grantees. 2) New directives from TDLWD direct local areas and regions to establish specialized American Job Center in Tennessee secondary schools. One local area is opening an AJC in a local high school career and technical education center in August 2020; the region will examine best practices emanating from this outreach to adolescents and build plans for expansion.
4. Supporting regional and rural economic development strategies: In light of the devastating economic effects on rural economies that the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought—both current and future— the East Region will work with the TDLWD to not only determine the relevancy of its existing Rural Initiative activities but also to secure additional funding to augment funding for workforce development in rural communities. East Region has more counties in distressed and at-risk designation than the other two Tennessee Grand Divisions.
5. Leveraging data and partnerships to inform strategies and drive performance: East Region—through its East Tennessee Local Workforce Development Area partner—plans to employ an individual whose primary job responsibilities will be to extract, comprehend, interpret, analyze, and report data from a suite of sources in order to drive continuous program improvement in East Area and East Region.
6. Expanding employment opportunities for youth: In spring 2020, TDLWD pushed out Youth Demonstration grants to the three local areas in East Region. Because local education agencies across the state shuttered soon after the release of funds by TDLWD, the funding sat idle. It is hoped TDLWD will extend this program—a program filled with the potential to expand youth employment opportunities—for PY 2020-2021.

3. What new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising ROI?
The regional planning council conducts a comprehensive analysis of labor market information in the region when targeting training opportunities for job seekers that leads to employment in local sector strategies. When looking at educational service delivery, the focus has been primarily—and will continue to be—on those education and training programs showing potential pipeline growth in the target sectors. The region is involved in ongoing and regular expansion of sector partnerships that provide information addressing the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to populate the pipeline for workers in high demand industry sectors and

occupations.

An ongoing goal of the regional planning council is to identify the credentials and competencies required by employers. In order to accomplish that goal, East Region, with guidance and assistance from the TDLWD WIRED Division, will develop and implement semiannually, during this plan, a poll of key regional workforce stakeholders for the purpose of identifying regional education and training needs. Further, the regional planning council will continue to utilize networks and relationships with education partners and industry experts to mine and interpret a broad spectrum of input to ensure that applicable occupational training programs are available for the key industry sectors. The regional planning council is instrumental in a.) assisting with decisions addressing sector-based strategies b.) convening employers to understand fully skill-set gaps and c) identifying non-traditional, accelerated training opportunities in order to fill the pipeline gaps existing in the region. The regional council and local areas will have to identify alternative, reliable means of collaborating more closely with education, workforce, economic development, and partner agencies as the COVID-19 pandemic has altered traditional methods of collecting information from stakeholders. Ongoing polling is seen as one tool to use to gather reliable, valid data.

The relationship between workforce development practitioners and Tennessee Board of Regents institutions in East Region is fully integrated. TBOR institutions are able to create, in a remarkably short amount of time, short-term courses of instruction leading to industry-recognized certificates. An example of the nimbleness of TBOR institutions in responding to critical workforce needs is seen in the region in one institution's creation of a COVID-19 mitigation training program to train *and certify* custodians in pandemic mitigation techniques.

During the course of this plan, the regional planning council will work with its TBOR partners to address the lack of technical and computer skills, an issue that has been raised as a barrier to employment because of the changing nature of many jobs and the increased use of technology across sectors. This has a particularly deep impact on dislocated workers—who may need to upgrade their skill sets to re-enter the workforce—because their skills may have become outdated. A technology skills mismatch exists between the qualifications of the labor force and the requirements for the available positions, especially in the manufacturing industry There also exists an opportunity in the region to expand WIOA Title II beyond a post-secondary credential preparatory course. In one local area, a TBOR institution offering dual enrollment in high school equivalency exam prep and licensed practical nursing. Successful completers of the program graduate with a high school equivalency diploma and a nursing certificate.

Registered Apprenticeships in East Region will expand during this plan. RAs are anchored by a clear connection to current industries and employers, provide a means to improve job seekers skills and credentials, and foster closer relationships between LWDAs and their secondary and post-secondary partners.

Over the life of this plan, East Region will collaborate with the TDLWD to expanding the capabilities of virtual workforce development service delivery:

1. During the life of this plan, the three LWDAs in the East Region will develop—with State assistance and possible grant funding—infrastructure, content, training, and maintenance activities to support an online portal for the purpose of managing virtual resources through a single, comprehensive, electronic interface. Developed for workforce professionals, partners, and stakeholders including businesses, the online portal allows stakeholders to readily access policies, best practices, and program information including eligibility criteria. As envisioned at this time, the portal may offer team rooms for front line staff to discuss service delivery and to coordinate workforce activities through online calendars. Additionally, the portal may offer business tools that include but are not limited to Virtual Job Fairs, online fillable forms for customers and stakeholders, WebEx or other suitable online meeting capability utilized by stakeholders to conduct webinars and online meetings, and capabilities to facilitate electronic, secure signature services.
2. East Region is piloting *Career Ready*, an online software portal providing the knowledge and skills deemed to be essential for success in the workforce, especially for youth customers.
3. East Region welcomes the launch of ZenDesk capabilities and will dedicate funding for training career specialist and supporting the launch of ZenDesk in East Region.

As mentioned earlier, East Region will also work with the TDLWD to redefine the spending priorities identified in the three LWDA's Rural Initiative grants expiring 30 September 2021. Rural Initiative budget line items were crafted in autumn 2019 and may not reflect today the optimal use of these funds in the COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 economy.

It is noted that the Youth Demonstration grants for Q4 PY 2019-2020 will be renewed for Q1 and Q2 PY 2020-2021 and will constitute a promising service strategy for serving youth across East Region.

a.   What existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal ROI?

Given the recent restrictive funding environments across partner programs, training programs are being evaluated to determine the costs and benefits. Due to actual and anticipated limited resources and state budget reductions, service delivery strategies must be re-considered and flexible in order to adapt to the changing economy. The investment in training programs will be compared to outcomes such as employment projections, potential earnings and credential attainment. Partners will be reviewing programs to determine what to modify, add, or eliminate moving forward to become more streamlined and demand-driven in the fluctuating state of the economy. Supportive service and needs-related payments are being re-evaluated to determine what supports are most likely to improve participant outcomes and yield the best returns.

Job-search only enrollments require career specialists to provide a participant one-on-one assistance with the development of her/his job search activities and career counseling. Participants are provided information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations, including information regarding nontraditional and emerging employment opportunities. In addition, Career Specialists assist with job search plans, preparation of resumes and employer contacts. Staffing costs are being evaluated to determine if the outcomes justify the costs.

The local areas and regional planning council are analyzing the ROI of brick and mortar locations in comparison to access points.

The local areas are evaluating partner referral and co-enrollment strategies because of a lack of unified policies across programs and funding streams. As mentioned earlier in a discussion of weaknesses, there also exist challenges with co-enrollments to include the lack of a universal adoption among AJC partners of technology to track referrals and co-enrollments. Co-enrollments will be evaluated through an informed process—where customers are made aware of the partner's services—and through assessment to determine that customers are appropriate for those services.

East Region will eliminate, at the first opportunity to procure, single source youth providers in each local workforce area. Following guidance in TDLWD Workforce Services Policy—Youth Program Service Design and Framework, local area will identify eligible youth contractors by awarding contracts on a competitive basis on the recommendation of the youth standing committee.

The Region will eliminate technology limitations that lead to process ineffectiveness. This will manifest itself in a number of ways. In order to promote customer persistence in post-secondary education, East Region will eliminate the barrier, revealed by COVID 19, that customers who have no access to computing hardware face when education and training institutions switch to digital delivery of instruction. East will explore with the state the opportunity to develop/utilize system interfaces, data entry bots, optical character technology, and matching technology.

With the ability in the near term to analyze performance metrics of education and training providers approved for the Eligible Training Provider List, East Region will use these data to prohibit ineffective education providers from receiving WIOA training dollars.

b. What steps will be taken to support the state strategies and goals to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development?

The regional planning council coordinates regional strategic planning to support the state strategies and goals to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development through the following strategies:

Strategic Goal 1: Clear connection to Current Industries and Employers
- Objective: Employ WIRED data such as detailed industry and occupational analyses, labor market information, emerging industries identification, growth in key competitive sectors, et.al.to not only develop responsive incumbent worker training courses but also inform talent pipeline development.
- Objective: Identify and approve WIOA-approved training programs based on in-demand occupations and employer input.-

Strategic Goal 2: Clear Pipeline Development
Objective: Engage education and training partners, at the secondary and post-secondary levels, to develop programs of study for adults and youth in order to supply a work-ready clientele for the region's employers.
- Objective: Integrate the delivery of enhanced career services resulting in individualized plans addressing how to reach career goals based on career and skill assessments and identified barriers requiring support services.
- Objective: Identify and implement credentials for student pathways that are industry recognized and stackable so that participants are able to advance into better jobs in their chosen industry and occupation.

Strategic Goal 3: Clear Integration with Economic Development
- Objective: Nurture existing strong relationships at the local and regional levels with economic development agencies to include TNECD, development districts, Chambers of Commerce, and regional and local economic development agencies for the purpose of directing and enhancing workforce development service delivery systems, especially those in rural counties and communities.
- Objective: Align and integrate business services with those offered by state agency core partners.

Strategic Goal 4: Clear, Precise Data Reporting
- Objective: Develop and deploy tools and reporting systems and procedures to capture, interpret, analyze, and report success variable sets relative to workforce development initiatives and interventions.
- Objective: Develop and implement methods and tools to benchmark existing partnerships and to evaluate success of partnerships.
- Objective Encourage and assist AJC partners with using the VOS case management system across applicable core programs to allow data sharing and interpretation of data among multiple service providers and programs.

Strategic Goal 5: Support Employer-Driven Regional Sector Initiatives
- Objective: Work with education, workforce and economic development in establishing and managing partnerships to achieve and promote economic growth and economic advancement, especially in rural counties and communities.

c. What formal and informal cooperative procedures will the core partners and other required partners establish to align services and coordinate delivery?
The Agreements, MOU, and contracts for OSO and CSP can be found in Attachments.

Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with required WIOA partners identify procedures for aligning services and coordinating workforce service delivery. The memoranda of understanding agreements, letters of support, local plans, and partnerships across agencies establish the formal cooperative framework and

corresponding procedures within the local areas and the region.

Core partners participate in quarterly meetings to promote employer initiatives, communicate new developments, and share information. Business services teams, which include core partners and business services professionals across agencies, will continue to collaborate regionally to provide services to education providers and the businesses who employ workers. Expanding those opportunities will be a strategy employed by partners across targeted industry sectors.

B. Describe how transportation and other supportive services are coordinated within the region.
The region is committed to providing a comprehensive approach to supportive services to give participants in the workforce system greater opportunity for success. The three local workforce boards of the East Tennessee Region partner with transportation, housing, childcare, and mental health providers to develop sustainable solutions for customers.
Most of the urban areas in the region have public transportation systems that provide the general public with affordable transportation options. Some locations, including most rural areas, lack efficient, dependable transportation systems. There is more demand for transportation than supply of providers. Lack of transportation is a significant and often-identified barrier for participants in attending training or commuting to/from work, and transportation barriers limit customers' employment opportunities. The regional council coordinates with core partners to effectively use limited resources to help alleviate transportation barriers. Programs typically offer transportation assistance in the form of stipends, bus passes, or gas cards for participants attending training programs. Service providers are utilizing shared ride services, such as Uber and Lyft, in rural areas. Participants can connect with transportation via websites or mobile apps on smartphones and payment arrangements can be made through service providers.

One promising model for expansion of transportation services is the *Job Access Reverse Commute* program. During this plan, the regional planning council will examine the pilot project operating in one local area—underwritten by funding from the Rural Initiative to provide dependable, affordable transportation in rural counties—to determine if it can be replicated across East region.

Supportive service payments—whether for adult, dislocated worker, or youth participants—are intended to enable WIOA-enrolled customers to participate in workforce-funded programs and activities to secure and retain employment. Based on individual assessment and availability of funds, supportive services, such as transportation and needs-related payments, may be awarded to eligible participants on an as-needed basis. To enhance the provision of transportation and other supportive services, the regional planning council will ensure the sharing of best practices for possible replication among the three LWDAs.

 Additionally, East region continues to maximize funding available for supportive services by coordinating services through partner and community programs. Through collaboration with other organizations offering supportive services, the region maximizes customers' access to services not available through the AJC. For example, East region partners with agencies offering transportation or childcare services on behalf of customers in need to coordinate schedules, arrange services, or to potentially fund such services for both individuals and groups. Each local area maintains policies and procedures for administering and coordinating support services to ensure funds are spent in a manner that avoids redundancy. The regional planning council continues to provide oversight and guidance regarding the need for additional support services, policies, and procedures.

RPCs must answer the following questions when responding to this requirement:
 1. What regional organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services?
Regional organizations that currently provide supportive services include Tennessee Department of Human Services, (e. g., Smart Steps Program); Tennessee Department of Human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; TDLWD (SNAP E&T, TAA, etc.); Tennessee Human Development Agency (i.e., CSBG, LIHEAP, commodity distribution, self-sufficiency programs, etc.); Community Service Centers; First Tennessee Human Resource Agency, Appalachian Regional Coalition on Homelessness; Area Agency on

Aging;, TANF/Families First program; Trio and Upward Bound Programs; PDAM Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment coalition; Keystone Dental Service;, Area United Way organizations; local food banks/warehouses (e.g. Second Harvest Food Bank); Niswonger Foundation; local areas' Housing Authorities; Eastern 8 Community Development Corporation; Appalachian Community Federal Credit Union; The Refuge, Insight Inc.; faith-based organizations (i.e., Holy Friendship Coalition, Salvation Army, Shepherd's Corner); Frontier Health; Ballad Health Project Employment Hope; local areas' community colleges (i.e., specialized child care grant, food distribution, etc.); local areas' Job Corps; Rural Community Health Collaboratives (i.e.., RAM People, Inc.); Senior Nutrition Assistance; local areas' Legal Aid of Tennessee; Regional Public Health office and Departments of Public Health; Chattanooga Room in the Inn; Grace House; local areas' Human Resources Agency (e.g. SETHRA and ETHRA); Tri-County Center; Goodwill Industries; Coordinated Charities; Meigs Ministries; Sweetwater Area Ministries; Lion's Club; Helen Ross McNabb; and local and regional hospital corporations.

In addition, East Region has several rural public transit services. These services, listed below, provide public transportation to rural residents of all ages, giving first priority to elderly, handicapped and economically disadvantaged with medical needs while providing deviated, fixed route, and demand-response service. It is funded by the Federal Transit Administration, TN Dept. of Transportation, TN Commission on Aging, fares, local revenues, and in-kind contributions.

1. Van Pool: The Rural Commuter Van Pool Program provides 8-and 15-passenger vans for commuters for transport to work and job-related training in addition to being available for rent to the general public when vans are available. Anyone with a valid driver license and proof of insurance is eligible to lease short-term or long-term.
2. New Freedoms Transportation/Mobility Training: A barrier for many people is transportation and the ease in getting from one place to the other. The Travel Training program assists those who are disabled and unsure of riding with the public transit system.
3. TennCare Transportation: TennCare Transportation is approved by the TennCare Bureau. TennCare pays for medically related trips such as those to the doctor, the drug store, and other medical services.
4. Job Access Reverse Commute: Provides clients transportation to destination such as job sites and education/training facilities. The program also allows for transporting client's children to and from day care facilities.
5. Driver's Education: Drivers' Education classes are available with state certified driver instructors teaching individuals ages 15 through adulthood the skills needed to become a safe and responsible driver. (Note: many high school-aged children, especially those from low income families, are unable to drive because most Tennessee high schools have eliminated driver's education instruction.)
6. Enterprise Rentals features *Commute with Enterprise*, a program promoting the sharing of a ride to work with co-workers who live nearby. Enterprise provides a recent-model SUV, crossover, or van, and commuters split the cost and driving duties.   This program is operating in East Region.

Additionally, fixed-route bus systems are in place in four of the major metropolitan areas in the region: Johnson City/Kingsport, Morristown, Knoxville, and Chattanooga. These services accept supportive services payments for fares.

2. What policies and procedures will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery?
The three local workforce boards of East Region are committed to providing supportive services to give workforce system customers greater opportunity for success. The regional planning council coordinates with transportation, housing, childcare, and mental health providers to develop solutions for customers. These ongoing conversations include TANF, Adult Education, Vocational Rehabilitation, and other agencies that serve populations with barriers in order to identify, promote, and replicate common strategies, streamline funding, reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts, and foster clear data reporting that

advances predictive analysis.

The current environment for delivery of services in an atmosphere influenced by the COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted a continued and revived need for coordination of supportive service delivery for workforce customers. One avenue to better coordination of supportive services delivery is to leverage access to AJC partners' programs and services through co-enrollment. East will re-double efforts to assist customers in coordinating essential supportive services including but not limited to transportation, child care, food security, healthcare, and education stipends and tuition vouchers from partners including DHS/Title IV; area human resource agencies; SNAP; TANF; TAA; TBOR/US Department of Education; WIOA Titles I, II, and III and a host of community- and faith-based organizations. Maximizing customers' supportive service coverage among partners minimizes the impact of each customer's 'draw' on finite training funds and eliminates waste in the provision of supportive services.

Training that addresses local, regional, and state resources that support customers' persistence in their achievement of self-sustaining employment will be held quarterly for AJC staff, AJC partner staff, and regional and local partnering agencies. Training in the understanding and effective use of the Tennessee Disability Pathfinder will be a focus in PY 2020-2021. For more information on the Pathfinder, see https://vkc.mc.vanderbilt.edu/vkc/pathfinder/ for more information.

To date, East Region has discussed coordination of supportive services delivery through alignment of local workforce area supportive services policies. It will continue these discussions and sharing of evidence-based practices in workforce service delivery. During PY 2020-2021, East will convene a regional working group of local board members (business community) and representatives from economic development (ECD), WIOA Titles I-IV practitioners, community- and faith-based organizations, supportive services providers (transportation, child care, legal, et.al.), and education and training institutions to develop additional policies and procedures in support coordination of supportive services. East will report outcomes of this working group on a quarterly basis.

C. Describe the coordination of services with regional economic development services and providers.
The three LWDAs collaborate to coordinate services with regional economic development services and providers. The LWDAs participate in planning meetings and regional economic development events. The economic development organizations provide strong leadership within their respective geographic areas of service to meet the needs of business and grow their local economies. LWDAs use WIRED data, analysis, and reports from economic planners to ensure services and expenditures are coordinated with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development, other service providers, community-based organizations, and local and regional economic development agencies.

RPCs must answer all of the following questions when responding to this requirement:
1. What economic development organizations or businesses are actively engaged in regional planning?
Due to the large size and unique geography of East Region—and the smaller scope of many economic development entities at the county level—much of the coordination with economic development services and providers happens at the local level rather than region wide. For example, in many of the local areas, the local economic development department or authority has a seat on the Local Workforce Board and is included in policy making decisions and a range of activities. Through the local boards, economic and community development has a voice in local activities that can also influence the Region.
The following list identifies the economic development and business member organizations actively engaged in regional planning:
- TN Department of Economic and Community Development's Center for Economic Research (CERT)
- Networks Sullivan Partnership
- Northeast, East, and Southeast Area Economic and Community Development Organizations
- Three Development Districts (First, East and Southeast)
- Regional Industrial Development Boards
- Chambers of Commerce

- Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development
- Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development/WIRED
- Tennessee Board of Regents
- University of Tennessee Center: Boyd Center and Center for Industrial Studies
- Tennessee Higher Education Commission
- East Tennessee Economic Council
- East Tennessee Chambers of Commerce
- Tennessee Valley Authority
- Knoxville-Oak Ridge Innovation Valley
- Local Education Agencies (K-12) CTE Comprehensive Needs Assessments

2. What economic development organizations or businesses were invited to participate but declined?
No organization that was invited to participate in the planning process declined.

3. What input was provided by regional economic development organizations and businesses?
Regional economic development organizations assist with identifying regional assets and sector partnerships that are already in place. TNECD participated with analysis of the Labor Market Information and other data to determine the selected demand industries and occupations. Data provided by regional economic planning and development organizations helped to provide an overall roadmap of the economic strengths and weaknesses in the region. As a result, input provided by economic development organizations and businesses was incorporated into this plan. Businesses participated by reviewing data, by identifying competencies, and by revealing skills needed in workers. Companies also provided input on preferred training programs.

The East Regional Plan relied upon the TN Department of Economic and Community Development's Center for Economic Research in Tennessee (CERT) database to identify labor market resources and challenges that could be applied at the local county level or aggregated at the regional level. CERT provided workforce maps that included occupational-specific information which fed the development of the East Regional Plan. Additional data from the website of the TN School Board Association were utilized to reinforce sectoral/cluster analytics related to creation of pipelines and career pathways.
Other economic development entities provided data analytics and related input, including Networks Sullivan Partnership, East Tennessee Development District, the Northeast TN Regional Economic Partnership, regional Industrial Development Boards, and Chambers of Commerce. In addition to data mining of these organizations' databases, additional data were collected from the TN Department of Economic and Community Development, multiple private sector businesses and industry representatives (both large and small employers), discrete employment sectors, specific apprenticeship programs, non-profit and other community-based partners, and elected officials. When aggregated, data gleaned from these sessions guarantee and reinforce the level of involvement of business and economic development entities in the strategic planning and decision-making process. Results from this multi-pronged approach are available in the labor market study, *Strengthening the East Tennessee Region 2020*, and from the published results of local planning sessions which are available on each local area's website. In summary, this labor market research blueprint relies upon economic development organizations at both the state and local level, interfaced with specific employers, to identify sectors as well as specific occupational strategy recommendations for each local area and for the region as a whole.

Additional resources provided by economic development organizations include but are not limited to *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), LEAP 2019: In-Demand Occupations,* Academic Supply and Occupational Demand Report, Tennessee Education and Workforce Maps, County Profile Tool, *Academic Program Inventory,* Chamber economic development reports, TVA Interactive Workforce Tool, and LEA Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

4. What input provided by economic development and businesses was incorporated into the regional plan?

The information listed in #3 above, which was provided by regional economic development organizations, has been incorporated into the regional plan.

D. Describe the coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.

Coordination of administrative cost arrangements, including pooling of funds for administrative costs, are agreed upon through the Infrastructure Funding Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding among AJC partners/MOU. IFAs are developed with onsite partners in the AJCs in order to establish methods of cost sharing. IFAs are updated quarterly and reviewed by partner leadership for accuracy and monitoring of shared costs and expenditures. The fiscal staff for the local board invoices partners monthly to ensure timely payment of shared costs. Program funds are also braided with other Federal and State programs, such as Trade Adjustment Act, TN Promise, TN Reconnect, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Employment and Training (E&T), TANF, Senior Community Services Employment Program (SCSEP), Disabled Veterans Outreach Programs, and Re-Employment Services Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) in order to eliminate duplication and leverage dollars to maximize resources and services.

AJC partners also enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) in order to leverage resources, eliminate duplication of services, and improve effectiveness, thereby decreasing administrative and program costs. Current MOUs and IFAs reflect the sharing of infrastructure costs among partner programs, based on proportionate use of the AJCs and relative benefit received. Under the guidance of the regional planning council, the local areas in East TN will also consider utilizing cost sharing arrangements when appropriate, for administrative costs such as the development of a.) regional plans, b.) outreach materials, c.) regional Annual Report, d) seeking, regional technical assistance, and e.) applying for regional grant funding.

Vision, Goals and Implementation Strategies

The East Region Planning Council (RPC) will coordinate the regional workforce, education and economic development   activities with regional activities that are carried out in the local areas and support the state workforce development   plan and regional economic growth. Business, education and workforce development stakeholders have provided input   and are in agreement with the plan.

A. **Describe the strategic vision to support state, and regional economic growth.**

The East TN Region's Workforce System Vision is to increase the competitive position of East Tennessee businesses   through the development of a highly skilled Workforce. The East Region envisions a regional system that:

- Is employer-centric and built on the collective efforts of economic development partners with strong industry   partnerships
- Is holistically focused on the industry sectors that are recognized as regional sector strategies
- Uses current, available labor market data to understand both the supply and demand sides of the regional   economy, including the talent needs and qualifications of employers and the effectiveness of the education and   training systems in meeting those needs
- Builds on educational opportunities throughout the region to identify and create career pathways for all on- ramps within targeted industry sectors and associated occupations
- Advances opportunities for all job seekers including low skilled adults, youth, individuals with disabilities,   veterans, returning talent, and other individuals with multiple barriers
- Creates a system of workforce, education, and economic development partners to meet the needs of businesses   and individuals while growing a vibrant and robust regional economy.

The East Region Planning Council agreed upon the following three key strategies that align with the state plan:

    1. Aligning Local Workforce Board strategies for Regional Success

2. Implementing East Region's Initiatives, and
3. Monitoring Progress for East Region's Workforce Development System.

The East Region WIOA partners will work collaboratively to deliver a workforce development system that provides opportunities for career growth for the Region's jobseekers and workers as well as ensures a skilled workforce to meet the needs of businesses.

The Region's workforce development system will be responsive to changes in the economy, including changes in dominant industry sectors, technology-based impacts and changes, and changes in the skills and education needed for jobs. The workforce development system will assist the Region's workers and jobseekers to advance along career pathways and will effectively collaborate with educators and economic development agencies to provide an aligned system for the Region's stakeholders. Specifically, the One-Stop delivery system shall provide a true "One-Stop" experience, at which any employer, worker or job seeker can access the programs and resources they need, whether in- person or electronically.

Finally, the workforce system will utilize ongoing evaluations to assess programmatic success and deficiencies, providing for continuous system improvement. Specifically, the RPC will assess training-related job places after participant earns a postsecondary credential. Training-related job placements will be considered successful data points. A review of the total number of new RAPs, new paid work-experience, and new secondary work-based learning opportunities will be part of the assessment.

B. **Describe the goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment).**
The East Region will prepare an educated and skilled workforce by aligning and integrating partner programs and services. This alignment will include programs that focus on employer needs for a skilled workforce while working to improve access to sector-based education and training services to those facing barriers to employment. The region will use a diverse array of models to achieve training goals such as expanding career pathways for the region's targeted sectors, expanding apprenticeships and other earn and learn opportunities, and expanding talent pipeline solutions that ensure the concept of education and training design with the employers at the center.

The East Region's Workforce System goals are designed to increase the competitive position of East Tennessee business through the development of a highly skilled Workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.
The following are the East Region's major strategic goals:

1. Create a Clear, Responsive Connection from the Regional Workforce System to Current Industry/Employers
   o Determine employer needs, including the needs of emerging businesses and businesses facing closures or layoffs (temporary or permanent) as a result of COVID-19; disseminate the results to workforce agencies, training providers, secondary and postsecondary schools and community leaders to refine/develop programs to meet employer needs.
   o Improve and expand Regional sector partnerships that increase the focus on critical in- demand occupations in key sectors; these partnerships will take the form of RAPs and other work-based learning strategies
   o Expand career pathway opportunities, including work-based training models and integrated programs of study, that lead to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings; the secondary schools will begin industry exposure to first, second and third grades in order to tie education to career pathways at a much younger age.
   o Expand workforce opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to career advancement through improved career services, career pathway programs and expansion of bridge programs; the RPC will ensure that bridge programs can contextualize the classroom training with work experience either paid or unpaid

- Build on the strong partnerships with the CTE Directors in the three local areas by addressing the outcomes of the Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment and obtain feedback regarding regional plan development to address local needs
- Develop regional approaches for defining and implementing/funding work-based learning and career pathways, including youth-focused programs, as well as pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships for adults and youth; this item will remain on the RPC's quarterly meeting agenda until a plan of action is agreed upon
- Provide responsive Incumbent Worker Training Programs; market-responsive training will address employers' hard skill needs as they may change over time due to technological advances or other factors
- Support responsive talent acquisition programs, including utilization of the Tennessee Talent Exchange System by training AJC staff to utilize the program for COVID-19 pandemic job losses on www.Jobs4TN.gov;
- AJC staff will connect job seekers who are out of work because of the pandemic to in-demand jobs such as stocking shelves in stores or contributing to the supply chain
- Develop and support strategies that respond to changing economic conditions so that services are customized for employers; responding to the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to employers' needs will be an evolving process and some employers will not be as negatively impacted by the pandemic as others.
  Meeting UI needs first, the next phase will include providing access to new talent, if applicable, when re- hiring begins
- Promote educational attainment and credentials that meet employer hiring needs; the local boards and the RPC will enforce the sector strategies for the region for training existing and potential workers; assessment of the sector-based enforcement will be made in by 2022 to determine regional success

Each WIOA program partner will evaluate existing programs with respect to the goal of preparing an educated and skilled workforce. For programs under Titles I and II, this may mean a review of the current curriculum funded within the targeted industry sectors. Programs under Adult Education will expand contextualization of curriculum around workforce and academic readiness also referred to as integrated education and training. As a region, partner programs will review current assessment processes and tools and develop, to the extent possible, common assessment practices that address the needs of the targeted industry sectors.

2. Create a Clear Pipeline Development Infrastructure
   - Develop a regional strategy to work with employers and training providers to develop/update needed training and equipment, especially targeted short-term training as well as pre-apprenticeships and apprenticeships.
   - Promote an increase in training-related job placements; assess current regional training-related job placements and identify where improvements must be made
   - Pathway Processes (training/education to work) to include K-12, Adult Education, Re-Entry, Dislocated Worker/Re-Employment (Unemployment Insurance/Workers Comp), Military Transition and Post- Secondary.
   - In addition to high schools, promote work-based learning experiences for elementary and middle schools; assess the number of new work-based learning experiences for elementary and middles schools by 2022
   - Promote transition from adult education to postsecondary education and employment through career pathways by providing adult education instructional services that are contextually related to workforce training and the needs of employers.
   - Promote middle skill training and training-related job placement; assess TCAT training-related job placements in the region and report on skills and occupations
   - Utilize proven, innovative Re-entry programs that support incarceration-to-employment opportunities in order to reduce recidivism and increase long-term re-entry success; at a minimum, engage incarcerated participants six (6) months prior to release date in order to

create a detailed plan for re-entry which may include training (i.e., soft skills training, hard skills training, etc.)
- o Deepen partnership between workforce development and Career Technical Education in order to increase the successful transition percentage of CTE students moving from secondary education into post-secondary and/or employment.

3. Create a Clear Integration of East Region Workforce Development with regional partners
   - o Assist the local board partners to help establish, know, and support regional efforts.
   - o Foster communication and cooperative efforts between partners and agencies including expanded use of virtual meetings
   - o Convene an Education to Employment Summit (annual)
   - o Convene quarterly cross-partner metrics reviews including KPIs with follow-up and follow-through of identified improvement processes.

4. Expanding Service Access
   - o Extend the reach of the AJCs by utilizing technology and the Mobile AJC to connect with individuals throughout the region.
   - o Promote workforce development services and resources, with emphasis on the Mobile AJC and virtual services as they are made available.
   - o Work with transportation planning agencies such as TDOT and MPO's to identify and develop expanded transportation options.
   - o Regional staff training with emphasis on expansion of remote/virtual services.

5. Regional Metrics Attainment
   - o Regional Council quarterly analysis of local performance metric's impact on regional outcomes.
   - o Follow-up and follow-through of identified performance improvement processes.

6. Increase Youth Services and Services to Individuals with Barriers to Employment
   - o Promote workforce development services and resources to youth and individuals with barriers to employment via youth services providers including Job Corps and YouthBuild where applicable
   - o Expand the use of Jobs4TN.gov to secondary schools by having AJC Access points in all the region's high schools
   - o Identify best practices in service provision among the three East Region LWDA's and implement those best practices regionally.
   - o See Attached WIOA Populations with Barriers plan that includes identification of barriers and planned solutions for the following populations: displaced homemakers, low income individuals, Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians, individuals with disabilities including youth who are individuals with disabilities to include physical, sensory, behavioral/mental health, and cognitive disabilities, older individuals, ex-offenders/re-entry, homeless individuals, youth who are in or have aged out of foster care, English language learners, individuals with low levels of literacy, individuals facing substantial cultural barriers, eligible migrant and seasonal farmworkers, single parents including single pregnant women, and those with universal barriers to access.
   - o Ensure educational goals for persons with barriers are appropriate and provide the necessary supports for success.
   - o Coordinate services with the TN Department of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program with emphasis on apprenticeship and Work-Based Learning.
   - o Actively engage students with disabilities while in secondary school to ensure smooth transition to postsecondary school and/or the workforce.
   - o Increase emphasis on provision of Youth 14 Elements to include development of new process

and form to ensure youth awareness of availability of these services.

C. **Describe the strategies relating to the performance accountability measures based on performance indicators to include State and Local Measures (Key Performance Indicators).**
The KPI targets were collaboratively developed by TDLWD and the three local areas based on annualized regional and state KPIs. East Region RPC collaborated with each of the three local areas to develop quarterly targets. The East Region utilized each area's three-year average to weight regional targets. In addition to goals for the core partner programs, the developed KPIs also include goals for target populations such as veterans, RESEA, SNAP E&T, MSFW, and re-entry populations. In order to help meet the KPI goals, outreach, enrollment, and co-enrollment efforts will focus on priority populations. The CSP is contractually required to serve priority populations or individuals with barriers to employment and the KPIs are a part of the contract. The One Stop Operator will be responsible for managing the KPIs and reporting to the Board quarterly.

The OSO also has a role in monitoring performance. To report on how well the AJC system is meeting negotiated performance measures the OSO must:
- Write a plan to address how the AJC system will support the Local and Regional Plans,
- Facilitate maintenance and sharing of data within Jobs4TN,
- Report monitoring and compliance using Jobs4TN on topics such as performance metrics and cost per participant,
- Report to the local board on operations, performance, and continuous improvement recommendations, and
- Make available other activities and programs carried out under their program direction or authorizing law.

The KPI Dashboard by LWDA can be found at https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1V_E-ttEAKIBvYKzV2QwfOqMwsHH2qMys2NI7g3hVtT0/edit#gid=614189524

How the RPC will work with each LWDA to achieve the negotiated measures to include established procedures.
The East Region Planning Council will develop a Performance Committee comprised of One-Stop Operator (OSO) staff and the Performance persons from each local board. The East Region Performance Committee will work with the three local areas to achieve the negotiated measures to include the following established procedures:

- Quarterly KPI achievement and strategy review to include follow-through of identified performance   improvement processes.
- Sharing of best practices from areas that achieve or exceed KPI.
- Support of implementation of best practices locally and regionally.
- Coordination with Regional Partners for coordinated efforts for KPI achievement.
- Improved and expanded regional sector partnerships, which increase the focus on critical in-demand   occupations in key sectors.
- Expanded career pathway opportunities, including work-based training models and integrated programs of   study which lead to industry-recognized credentials and improved employment and earnings.
- Expanded workforce opportunities for populations facing multiple barriers to career advancement through   improved career services, career pathway programs and expansion of bridge programs. *(See attached WIOA Populations with Barriers chart.)*
- East Region will meet or exceed its Key Performance Indicators

How the measures will be monitored, and progress tracked towards meeting those regional measures.
It will be the function of the OSO staff to monitor and track progress towards meeting state and local performance measures. The OSO staff will convene monthly meetings with the Executive Directors, Regional Directors and Assistant Regional Directors. Reports will be given to the full Regional Planning Council (RPC) in

quarterly meetings prior to the local workforce development board meetings. This provides opportunity for the partners of the RPC to provide input on actions needed to improve performance, including strategies, innovation and best practices. The OSO staff are tasked with executing the actions with partners in the system to ensure that state and local KPIs are met or exceeded. When necessary, the OSO will provide technical assistance to mitigate poor performance and ensure KPI achievement.

How the RPC will focus efforts on serving priority populations to help meet the negotiated measures.
The East Region collaborated with the TDLWD and the three local areas to develop quarterly targets including services to priority populations. The East Region utilized each area's 3-year average to weight regional targets. In addition to goals for the core partner programs, the developed KPIs also include goals for target priority populations such as veterans, RESEA, SNAP E&T, MSFW, and re-entry populations. In order to help meet the KPI goals, outreach, enrollment, and co-enrollment efforts will focus on priority populations. The CSPs in the region are contractually required to serve priority populations or individuals with barriers to employment and the Key Performance Indicators are a part of the contracts. The One Stop Operators will be responsible for managing the KPIs and reporting to the Board quarterly.

East TN RPC will focus efforts on serving priority populations to help meet the negotiated measures. Focus on priority populations will be ensured through:
- o   Adherence to the Local Priority of Service Policies which align with the state priority of service policy,
- o   Identify priority customers via the Initial Assessment completion provided by Welcome Function,
- o   Continued partnership with VR and coordinated service provisions,
- o   Emphasizing service provisions for youth to include both in-school and out-of-school youth,
- o   Emphasizing priority of services to Veterans and eligible spouse,
- o   Strengthening partnerships with state and county correction and probation services for returning talent opportunities,
- o   Recruitment of talent from four priority groups to enroll in career pathway programs: justice-involved individuals, youth including individuals with disabilities transitioning from secondary school to the workforce, Title II program participants; and other individuals prioritized by the Priority of Service Policies,
- o   Recruitment of industry experts, regional employers, and education/training providers to advise the development of career pathway programs,
- o   Identification of employment tracks appropriate to career pathway work characterized by clear and attainable entry and advancement requirements,
- o   Recruitment of employers and local educators as active partners in career pathways development,
- o   Connection of local area high schools with employers for development and expansion of internship programs, work experience, or apprenticeships,
- o   Supporting expansion of entrepreneurship training delivered by schools, community colleges, and small business development centers to build new pathways for workers whose next career steps may include launching their own business or improving entrepreneurial skills.
- o   Placing emphasis on improving services to youth with disabilities, promoting career pathways, and increasing attainment of recognized credentials and postsecondary certificates or degrees
- o   Contractually requiring the regional CPSs to serve priority populations

D. Provide a description of the regional and local strategies that will achieve the vision and goals. This must   include a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the regional planning areas:
1. **To facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations**.
East Tennessee's investment of its resources to develop strategies that fit individual industry sector needs, particularly the high-growth sectors of the economy, is a priority. The East TN RPC implemented rigorous local   and regional planning elements and requirements to drive high-quality career pathways and strategies. Locally   and regionally based sector partnerships have been formed to provide a mechanism for establishing sector   strategies throughout the Eastern Region. Workforce services have to tie most of

its resources for training workers to those industry sectors that drive existing and emerging economy while partnering with the education system developing the curriculum necessary for building these skills.

- o Northeast LWDA has a regional Education to Employment Summit (E2E) designed to bring together K-12 and postsecondary educational leaders, business and industry leaders, economic and workforce development professionals, and government leaders to discuss each party's role in developing the workforce pipeline.
  Local business and industry leaders share what they need to be successful and how K-12 and post-secondary can help them.
- o Southeast local workforce development area developed work-based learning opportunities at Hamilton County High Schools in conjunction with an industry partner Gestamp, a top tier automobile production   supplier. The partnership allows high school students an opportunity to work a full day and gain on-the-job   training while seamlessly earning their high school diploma and postsecondary credit.
- o Continue to expand and replicate these innovative, successful models of operation throughout the East   Region.
- o Develop a better understanding of employers' needs by a coordinated regional outreach, including hosting   feedback sessions, holding one-on-one conversations, using local board task forces, and communicate these   needs to training providers.
- o Support new approaches to training, such as a regional work-based learning summit for workforce agencies,   organizations and employers, determine the gaps in training across the region and develop a regional strategy to fill the gaps, develop career pathways on a regional basis, as well as apprenticeships, work-based learning and other new methods, including delivery of training via technology.
- o Use resources effectively by agreeing on regional priorities for using the two Mobile AJCs and by developing   a regional plan to promote the Mobile AJCs.
- o Engagement of employers will be accomplished through WIOA programs such as OJT, IWT, and ATG. These   programs are provided to small and in-demand employers in the region.

2. **To support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the LWDA.**
   Under WIOA, the local workforce system improves services to employers and promotes work-based training.   The local workforce programs contribute to economic growth and business expansion by ensuring the workforce   system is job-driven, matching employers with skilled individuals. There is a plethora of services available to
   employers in the local area including: 1) multiple job fairs hosted by partners and stakeholders; 2) 24/7 access   for employers who are hiring and job postings via Jobs4TN.gov; 3) access to AJC space for recruitment, assessments, screening, and hiring; 4) training grants for new hires and existing employees; 5) tax credits where   appropriate; and 6) Rapid Response.

   The East Region's Workforce System goals, as stated previously in this plan, were developed to support a local and regional workforce development system that meets the need of businesses in the LWDA and across the   region. The East TN RPC coordination and communication are the backbone of this system. The RPC will meet on a quarterly basis to revisit existing service delivery activities that implement the strategies and to track progress   on expanding, streamlining or eliminating services.

   Activities include:
   - o Hosting job fairs/hiring events
   - o Providing employer services and coordinated Business Services Teams that meet employer needs
   - o Improving communication through website links and coordination teams
   - o Improving services to targeted populations
   - o Offering effective staff training
   - o Participating in economic development activities, including recruiting
   - o Marketing, including a coordinated marketing strategy, marketing materials, and regional website/links

- o Meeting with workforce development partners, employers, and training providers to understand and identify short- and long-term employer needs
- o Working with secondary education systems to develop career pathways and work-based learning
- o Supporting regional efforts to promote economic and workforce development
- o Integrating partner services and pursuing efforts to eliminate duplication

3. **To better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development.**
   Workforce professionals and ECD representatives are at the table together with the employer when discussing training needs due to expansion or relocation to the region. The team provides a customized approach to meet the employers' needs. In addition:
   - o ECD staff sit on the LWDA Boards and participate in strategic planning
   - o ECD and Workforce Development co-coordinate the annual Education to Employment Summit (East TN).
   - o ECD and Workforce Development partner to implement secondary school career exploration events, such as CareerQuest.
   - o ECD and Workforce Development are working together to implement the Rural Initiatives Grants
   - o ECD and Workforce Development will work together for a coordinated utilization of the National Dislocated Worker Grant for COVID-19 economic/workforce recovery.

4. **To strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.**
   - o Access to Jobs4TN.gov via the AJC resource room with meaningful assistance from staff.
   - o Local Rapid Response teams coordinate with State Level UI staff for RR Orientation meetings.
   - o Title III staff utilization during UI crisis situations to provide direct UI assistance.
   - o Regionally coordinated Unified Contingency Plan during crisis situation, specifically COVID-19.

5. **To promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services**
   - o Increased emphasis on entrepreneurial skills training (EST), especially for youth services (14 elements) by requiring youth service providers to implement EST in the local areas
   - o Utilization of virtual training opportunities for participants interested in entrepreneurialism/microenterprise
   - o Promotion of small business loan option relative to COVID-19 emergency support through AJC signage
   - o Development and implementation of unique/hybrid OJT opportunities to increase percentage of employees returning to small and locally owned businesses after crisis has passed
   - o Increased promotion of Jobs4TN.gov entrepreneurial skills training resources (Alison)
   - o Encouragement of local business growth and entrepreneurship, especially in rural areas, with festivals and local tourism attractions.
   - o Small businesses, with less than 10 employees, comprise nearly 64% of the businesses in the region totaling over 63,000 businesses which may require entrepreneurial training and support.
   - o Provision of One-Stop assistance to future entrepreneurs by means of counseling, training, research, and advocacy for new ventures and existing small businesses or via referrals to local business development centers.
   - o Regional Small Business Development Centers, part of the Tennessee and America's Small Business Development Centers Network (SBDC), https://americassbdc.org/small-business-consulting-and-training/find-your-sbdc/
   - o The SBDC network positively impacts the region by strengthening the business community, creating and retaining new jobs, and encouraging new investment

6. **To implement initiatives such as apprenticeships, incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers. Include information obtained through the**

comprehensive needs assessment adopted in the *Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century (Perkins V) Act* proposal.

The East TN RPC seeks to meet the needs of regional employers through utilization of initiatives such as listed above. Through the efforts in Career and Technical Education (CTE), academic and technical skills training program completers will acquire the core academic and technical learning skills they need to be lifelong learners, readily adapting to the changing needs of the workplace. They will possess specific technical (or occupational) skills in the career field for which they are prepared. Just as important, program completers will understand the value that employers place on essential employability skills such as the ability to communicate; manage information responsibly; think and solve problems; demonstrate a positive attitude; work with others; assume personal responsibility; and portray resiliency. Both locally and regionally, the workforce development system will, through collaborative efforts with CTE, seek to strengthen the transition process from secondary school to post-secondary and/or workforce through the following:

- Active cross-program participation such as board membership, meeting attendance, support and participation in CTE workforce related events.
- Leveraging of local and regional funding sources for CTE related programs
- Promotion of AJC services to CTE students and parents.
- Partner to support local career exploration events such as CareerQuest.

Each local board has developed policies and procedures in order to expand or enhance local workforce development through OJT, IWT, CT, career pathways and sector strategies that are focused on strengthening the regional workforce skill sets and that ultimately lead to increased economic development. Employer outreach for these initiatives includes local and regional partners and stakeholders including, in part, ECD partners and Chambers of Commerce.

E. **Describe the steps that will be taken to support the state key objectives to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development including:**
1. **Create an integrated intake system to efficiently deliver services**
    The RPC will convene quarterly to ensure an integrated intake system is in place. First, the RPC must review each of the three local area's intake assessment/forms. Then, either the RPC chooses the intake form and process that is most effective and efficient. This intake system will be adopted by the Region. The action items are as follows:
    - RPC review of current local intake systems to seek areas for integration to increase efficiency of service delivery and consistency throughout the region.
    - Identify points of system that need revision.
    - Implement identified revisions with follow-up assessment and implementation of improvement processes.

2. **Create a shared vision for supporting Tennesseans with the greatest number of barriers to enter the workforce.** The East RPC is dedicated to supporting Tennesseans with the barriers to employment. Through identification of barriers and support options, each local area and the region as a whole are prepared to support those with the greatest need. See Attached WIOA Populations with Barriers. It is important to note that through KPI monitoring and

    best practice implementation, the East Region will support each local area in KPI attainment, which ensures that those with the greatest barriers receive services.

    During the 2018 planning cycle, East and Southeast local areas identified reentry as a new planning element. Northeast chose to work with individuals on public assistance. However, the three areas do share a common goal to serve the same reentry population as all three areas are actively working on approaches to serve the returning talent and to scale the services in order to reach greater numbers. Northeast and Southeast both utilize the evidence-based Correctional Career Pathways work release program in Greene and Grundy Counties respectively.

Southeast applied for the U.S. DOL Pathway Home grant to expand the CCP program in the area. East has at "TCAT Behind Bars" and has demonstrated success in enrolling the returning talent.

3. **Create a trained workforce to meet current industry needs**
   One of the functions of the East Region's three local boards is to facilitate its various business activities. For example, employer engagement requires partners to first work with employers, industry associations, and unions to determine local hiring needs, and then design responsive training programs and services to meet those needs. It also seeks employer commitments to provide work-based learning opportunities to adults, dislocated workers, and youth (both ISY and OSY) and to hire program graduates. The Business Services Team works with employers to create a tailored approach that addresses their workforce needs. The team offers employers a full range of services to assist in the development and retention of a quality workforce with a major emphasis on work-based learning. Employers in the East Region have been vocal about skills gaps in the workforce. They recognize work-based learning as the ideal model for hands-on learning while simultaneously providing new hires with enculturation experience regarding the employer's expectations and company policies.

   The East Region continues to provide work-based learning opportunities through the OJT, work experience, Registered Apprenticeships (RAP) and IWT programs. Support for RAP may include both WIOA-funded OJT, IWT, and/or ITAs. These activities reinforce the work-based learning model with employers and, as a result, employers are now embracing the model for ongoing utilization to meet training and on-the-job learning needs for newly hired employees. Three of the East Regions' community colleges offer apprenticeship programs, two community colleges are college-sponsored RAPs.

   Each local area has a rigorous process via standing committees for the workforce boards to identify training programs that must propose in-demand occupational training and meet performance criteria prior to being approved to be added to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Once the institutions' programs are approved, each year the programs must meet the performance criteria. This rigorous process results in thoughtful, data-driven decisions by the committees and ensures the providers will meet the industry needs of the region.

   Through needs assessment, dissemination of needs assessment reports, and regional cooperation among partners   and other stakeholders, the East TN RPC will ensure the creation of a trained workforce that meets the needs of current industry specifically through implementation of the following:
   o Geographical assets mapping,
   o Comprehensive, demand-driven, work-based learning training methods,
   o Assess and prepare learners before they start training including assessment of soft skills,
   o Data-driven and employer-driven analysis of industry needs

4. **Create new dashboards to measure the effectiveness of the integrated workforce strategy**
   Currently each area has its own dashboard to show program progress, relevant activities, and outcomes. East TN RPC will create a regional dashboard to include data currently posted on each of the areas existing dashboards. These data include Business Services Team (BST) activities such as IWT, Rapid Response, and OJT. IWT and OJT data identify the number of grants awarded, number of participants trained, and dollars invested. RR data include employees impacted, closures, and temporary layoffs. Other data include AJC traffic by location, two-year comparison of AJC traffic by location, unemployment rate by county, reasons individuals visit the AJCs, Title I enrollments and all KPIs, Title II education summary and quarterly HiSET diplomas earned, Title III activities (i.e., individuals registered in VOS, distinct individual services, job orders created, mobile AJC visits, RESEA appointments, etc.), Title IV quarterly number of individuals receiving job assistance services, and Title V number of clients per month, clients' job placements, and TANF referrals to the AJC (when not co-located). The regional dashboard may also include recognized best practices and success stories for priority of service populations such as reentry job placements or training graduations. These results will be reported quarterly during the RPC quarterly meetings and may also be reported at each of the three local areas' board meetings if time allows. The East Region dashboard will serve as valuable performance accountability

assessment tool that will demonstrate to the RPC and stakeholders that the region is meeting its performance benchmarks or that the region needs performance improvement to address data point that is not performing. The RPC quarterly meetings will serve as a formal platform for monitoring and quality control of regional performance. The dashboard will not only provide relevant regional data but will also serve as the primary indicator of how well integrated the public workforce system is operating with data such as co-enrollments, WIOA partner referrals, cross trainings, regional trainings, etc. The East Region's dashboard will be developed no later than January 2022 and will be updated bi-annually and disseminated to all partners and stakeholders.

5. **Create a simple and effective engagement experience for all candidates**
   Creation of a simple and effective engagement experience for all candidates begins with a review of the current experience. Each local area's OSO has or is currently in the process of completing a customer service survey. Survey results will be compiled, analyzed, and acted upon through development of improved processes where needed. A specific area of engagement development that is currently underway is engagement via virtual means. Each local area and the region are working diligently to provide quality remote and virtual access to services.

TABLE A.1 – East Region Occupations in Demand

SOC Code	East Tennessee Regional Occupational Titles in Demand Source: Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development QCEW	Expected Growth (10 year)
39-9041	Residential Advisors	55.1%
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	49.1%
31-1011	Home Health Aides	44.1%
31-9011	Massage Therapists	42.3%
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	40.1%
21-1011	Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	38.2%
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	37.8%
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	36.1%
15-1122	Information Security Analysts	35.6%
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	34.4%
29-1131	Veterinarians	33.9%
15-1143	Computer Network Architects	33.8%
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	33.5%
29-1071	Physician Assistants	33.2%
15-1134	Web Developers	32.8%
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	24.3%
25-1011	Business Teachers, Postsecondary	20.8%
13-2071	Credit Counselors	18.9%
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	18.0%
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers	17.9%
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	15.3%
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	15.2%
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	14.9%
29-1141	Registered Nurses	14.9%
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	13.2%
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	12.2%
45-4021	Fallers	12.2%
39-3031	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers	11.5%
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	10.9%
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	9.7%
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	8.4%
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants	8.4%
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	6.5%
41-2011	Cashiers	5.8%
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	5.1%
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	4.6%
17-2161	Nuclear Engineers	4.0%
17-3029	Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	4.0%
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	2.3%
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	2.2%
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	1.9%
51-2092	Team Assemblers	1.7%
51-6062	Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	0.9%
51-6099	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other	0.9%

TABLE A.2.1 – East Region Occupations in Demand

Market Research Analysis and Marketing Specialists	Glazers
Business Operations Specialists, All Other	Sheet Metal Workers
Software Developers, Applications	Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, except for line installers
Web Developers	Security and Fire Alarm System Installers
Database Administrators	Bus and Truck Mechanics and Diesel Engine Specialists
Computer User Support Specialist	Mobile Equipment Mechanics, except Engines
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians	Recreational Vehicle Service Technicians
Electro-Mechanical Technicians	Control and Valve Installers and Repairers, except Mechanical Door
Chemical Technicians	HVAC
Life, Physical and Social Science Technicians, all other	Home Appliance Repair
Clergy	Maintenance Workers, Machinery
Secondary School Teachers, except Special and Career/Technical Education	First Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers
Physical Therapists	Fiberglass Laminators and Fabricators
Respiratory Therapists	Metal Refining Furnace Operators and Tenders
Registered Nurses	Welding, Soldering, and Brazing Machine Setters, Operators and Tenders
Telecommunications Equipment Installers and Repairers, except for line installers	Extruding and Forming Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Synthetic and Glass Fibers
Radiologic Technologists	Stationary Engineers and Boiler Operators
Surgical Technologists	Plant and system Operators, All Other
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders
Occupation Therapy Assistants	Excavating and Loading Machine and Dragline Operators
Physical therapy Assistants	Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers

TABLE 5.a.1 – Occupations with Favorable Location Quotients

SOC	East Region Target Occupations – ER Location Quotient Over 1.0
51-8011	Nuclear Power Reactor Operators
17-2161	Nuclear Engineers
51-6099	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers
51-6063	Textile Knitting and Weaving Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
51-6062	Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
51-9011	Chemical Equipment Operators and Tenders
17-2041	Chemical Engineers
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse
25-1011	Business Teachers, Postsecondary
39-3031	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers
53-4011	Locomotive Engineers
45-4021	Fallers
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers
13-2071	Credit Counselors
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
29-1071	Physician Assistants
29-1131	Veterinarians
15-1122	Information Security Analysts
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses
41-2011	Cashiers
21-1011	Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
31-9011	Massage Therapists
29-1141	Registered Nurses
41-2031	Retail Salespersons
31-1011	Home Health Aides
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives

TABLE 5.b.1 – Industries with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Growth

East TN Regional Targeted Industries and Projected Percentage Growth	
Residential Intellectual & Developmental Disability, Mental Health, & Substance Abuse Facilities	116%
Printing and Related Support Activities	108%
Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries	95%
Grocery Stores	88%
Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores	88%
Computer Systems Design and Related Services	75%
Electronic Shopping and Mail Order Houses	58%
General Medical and Surgical Hospitals	58%
Home Health Care Services	55%
Private Households	52%
Highway, Street, and Bridge Construction	50%
Activities Related to Real Estate	49%
Employment Services	46%
Office Administrative Services	46%
Commercial & Industrial Machinery & Equipment (except Automotive & Electronic) Repair & Maintenance	44%
Ship and Boat Building	30%
Veneer, Plywood, and Engineered Wood Product Manufacturing	29%
Motor Vehicle Parts Manufacturing	27%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	24%
Building Equipment Contractors	21%
Textile Product Mills	19%
Scientific Research and Development Services	15%
Waste Treatment and Disposal	14%
Colleges, Universities, and Professional Schools	14%
Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals	13%
Services to Buildings and Dwellings	12%
Offices of Physicians	9%
Elementary and Secondary Schools	6%
WIRED Quarterly Census of Employers (QCEW)	

TABLE 5.b.2 – Occupations with Favorable Demand with Expected Growth

SOC Code	East Tennessee Target Occupational Titles with Expected Growth	Expected Growth (10 year)
39-9041	Residential Advisors	55.1%
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications	49.1%
31-1011	Home Health Aides	44.1%
31-9011	Massage Therapists	42.3%
39-9021	Personal Care Aides	40.1%
21-1011	Substance Abuse and Behavioral Disorder Counselors	38.2%
39-5012	Hairdressers, Hairstylists, and Cosmetologists	37.8%
29-1171	Nurse Practitioners	36.1%
15-1122	Information Security Analysts	35.6%
31-9096	Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers	34.4%
29-1131	Veterinarians	33.9%
15-1143	Computer Network Architects	33.8%
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse	33.5%
29-1071	Physician Assistants	33.2%
15-1134	Web Developers	32.8%
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	24.3%
25-1011	Business Teachers, Postsecondary	20.8%
13-2071	Credit Counselors	18.9%
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	18.0%
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers	17.9%
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	15.3%
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	15.2%
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	14.9%
29-1141	Registered Nurses	14.9%
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	13.2%
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	12.2%
45-4021	Fallers	12.2%
39-3031	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers	11.5%
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	10.9%

TABLE 5.b.2 – Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections Continued

SOC Code	East Tennessee Target Occupational Titles with Expected Growth	Expected Growth (10 year)
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	9.7%
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	8.4%
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants	8.4%
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers	6.5%
41-2011	Cashiers	5.8%
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	5.1%
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	4.6%
17-2161	Nuclear Engineers	4.0%
17-3029	Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other	4.0%
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic	2.3%
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	2.2%
17-2041	Chemical Engineers	1.9%
51-2092	Team Assemblers	1.7%
51-6062	Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders	0.9%
51-6099	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other	0.9%
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers	0.4%
WIRED Quarterly Census of Employers (QCEW)		

TABLE 5.b.3 – Occupations with Highest Number of Job Opening Advertised Online

East Tennessee Region Highest Number of Job Openings Advertised Online	Job Openings
First-Line Supervisors of Food Preparation and Serving Workers	674
Registered Nurses	499
Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	492
Cashiers	359
Retail Salespersons	354
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	321
General and Operations Managers	236
Cooks, Restaurant	234
Customer Service Representatives	219
Physicians and Surgeons, All Other	208
Source: Online advertised jobs data as of 04/15/2020	

TABLE 5.c.1 – Occupations with Favorable Demand Projections Based on Replacements

SOC Code	Occupational Title	Education Level
East Regional Occupations - Top Replacements Projections to 2026		
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food	No formal educational credential
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	No formal educational credential
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses	No formal educational credential
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	Postsecondary non-degree award
37-2011	Janitors & Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	No formal educational credential
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	No formal educational credential
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers	High school diploma or equivalent
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	High school diploma or equivalent
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives	High school diploma or equivalent
41-2011	Cashiers	No formal educational credential
41-2031	Retail Salespersons	No formal educational credential
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	Some college, no degree
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	High school diploma or equivalent
51-2092	Team Assemblers	n/a
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	High school diploma or equivalent
WIRED Quarterly Census of Employers (QCEW)		

TABLE 5.d.1 – Occupations Considered Mature but Still Important to the Economy

Mature Occupational Titles for the East TN Region	
35-3021	Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food
35-3031	Waiters and Waitresses
11-1021	General and Operations Managers
53-3032	Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
29-1141	Registered Nurses
37-2011	Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
43-5081	Stock Clerks and Order Fillers
41-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
43-4051	Customer Service Representatives
41-2011	Cashiers
41-2031	Retail Salespersons
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks
43-9061	Office Clerks, General
51-2092	Team Assemblers

TABLE 5.e.1 – Industries Considered Emerging in the Regional Economy

Industry Code	Emerging Industries in the East Region WIRED Quarterly Census of Employers (QCEW
Northeast	
441100	Automobile Dealers
446100	Health and Personal Care Stores
621200	Offices of Dentists
423300	Lumber and other Construction Materials Merchant Wholesalers
335300	Electrical Equipment Manufacturing
444200	Lawn and Garden Equipment and Supplies Stores
623900	Other Residential Care Facilities
621100	Offices of Physicians
812100	Personal Care Services
332200	Cutlery and Hand Tool Manufacturing
East	
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse
25-1011	Business Teachers, Postsecondary
13-2071	Credit Counselors
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers
45-4021	Fallers
39-3031	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers
17-2161	Nuclear Engineers
17-3029	Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic
17-2041	Chemical Engineers
51-6099	Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers
Southeast	
48-4200	Specialized Freight Trucking
48-4100	General Freight Trucking
32-3100	Printing and Related Support Activities
33-1500	Foundries
23-7100	Utility System Construction
42-3500	Metal and Mineral Merchant Wholesalers
48-5900	Other Transit and Ground Passenger Transportation

TABLE 5.e.2 – Occupations Considered Emerging in the Regional Economy

SOC Code	East Region Emerging Occupations
45-2092	Farmworkers and Laborers, Crop, Nursery, and Greenhouse
25-1011	Business Teachers, Postsecondary
13-2071	Credit Counselors
11-9061	Funeral Service Managers
45-4021	Fallers
39-3031	Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers
39-3091	Amusement and Recreation Attendants
47-4041	Hazardous Materials Removal Workers
17-2161	Nuclear Engineers
17-3029	Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other
51-4011	Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic
17-2041	Chemical Engineers
51-6062	Textile Cutting Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders
51-6099	Textile, Apparel, and Furnishings Workers, All Other
45-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Workers
	WIRED Quarterly Census of Employers (QCEW)

East Regional Plan Public Comments

2. The plan analyzes the employment needs of employers in existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupation
- C. Russell: The chart for this section is also used for the first section and it does not address employer needs. Some of the information in the following section could supplement this section well.
- DOL QCEW data (July, 2019) chart copied/pasted from section 1 as response. Specific employer needs not addressed; however, survey data is described later.
- This section does not provide analysis of current employer needs. Instead, it repeats the table of top industries based upon employment that was already included on Page 1. This section should highlight the types of skills that are in demand and will be essential in the future. Additionally, it should provide insight into the challenges/needs of organizations as a result of COVID-19 and identify services that would help alleviate these challenges.

4. The plan includes an analysis of the regional 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.
- C. Russell: This section contains some good data but lacks information regarding the individuals with barriers to employment. This section could also benefit from the addition of workforce demographic data.
- DOL QCEW data (July, 2019) chart copied/pasted from section 1 as response. Specific employer needs not addressed; however, survey data is described later.
- This section does not provide analysis of current employer needs. Instead, it repeats the table of top industries based upon employment that was already included on Page 1. This section should highlight the types of skills that are in demand and will be essential in the future. Additionally, it should provide insight into the challenges/needs of organizations as a result of COVID-19 and identify services that would help alleviate these challenges.

5. The plan describes the involvement of all partners in providing, analyzing and agreeing on supply and demand data and the targeted sectors/industries/occupations/skills.
- This section needs information regarding the targeted sectors, industries, occupations, and skills that were identified in each region.
- The plan names partners involved but is weak in describing how they were involved in providing and analyzing data and agreements.
- Need to expand to include partners who participated; how often/# of meetings, etc.
- This section should provide a more detailed explanation of the different types of partners that were included and what their role was in data analysis. Currently, it focuses primarily on the role of the RPC and their meeting agendas

7. The plan indicates the policy and service implications of the current and projected Labor Market Information.
- Region will ID support needed and evaluate whether training programs are meeting employer needs. Region will work with K-12 educators to build pipeline. Plan does not indicate how the region plans to change programs yet.
- Answer was in general and did not specifically answer the question.
- Last sentence....what does a "regular analysis of economic trends" entail? Intent?
- This section provides a very generic response that doesn't detail any actual implications to policy or services that resulted from the Labor Market Information. This section should include examples

of regional policies that address these implications and training opportunities or services that are in higher demand in the current and projected labor market (i.e. Virtual Working, Unemployment)

8. The plan identifies special populations that exist in the region, including their magnitude, and the policy and service implications to meet the needs of these individuals.
- Students/youth with disabilities is not identified. Describe how the region will coordinate with VR to provided translation services for students/youth with disabilities.
- JII sentence repetitive; last sentence is incomplete. One model is noted. However, need to expound more on policy/service implications

10. The plan identifies sectors, industries, and occupations that have favorable location quotients.
- Despite listing a group of occupations in demand, there was not any research included that identifies opportunities with favorable location quotients. The occupation list provided for this section was duplicative to the one included in criteria #9 and was not prioritized.

15. The plan defines what sectors, industries, occupations, and skills that are regional priorities, in order of priority, including how this determination was made and how growing, maturing, and emerging factor in.
- Please indicate the priority order and which industries are high priority because of growing, maturing, and emerging.
- first paragraph under section 1 there is a typo.   Second sentence should read…The clusters represent a strong (not ad strong)

There are a few different sources (i.e. ECD, CERT) that provided in-demand sectors, but there is no prioritization of these sectors or any explanation of how they were determined. Additionally, there is no insight provided on the types of skills that are important in the region. This section should be complimented with data and provide a more detailed explanation of the key sectors, occupations, and skills that are of highest priority moving forward for East TN. Finally, consider removing the graphic on Page 17 because there is no context to how those industries were identified.

16. The plan identifies which employers are engaged and data used in the development of sector strategies.
- This section does not outline what employers are engaged in the development of sector strategies.
- It was mentioned at a high level; no specific employers are mentioned. I don't know if you asked for specific companies.
- Need more specifics on the which employers are engaged names or business/industries.
- Does not Identify employers
- Plan does not ID specific employers that are engaged; only identifies data sources
- Notes what state agencies used to determine the development of sectors but does not address the question as to which employers were engaged.
- Does not identify ERs that were engaged

- This section included a few data sources (i.e. WIRED, ECD, EMSI and CERT), but provided no explanation of the data they collected from employers or how they fueled specific strategies. Additionally, outside of the surveys, they did not gather any feedback directly from local businesses.

17. PASSED -
The plan identifies other public-private partnerships exist in the region that could support sector strategies and what is their role in planning. The response includes community and non-profit partners.

* Consider providing examples of successful partnerships in the region that have increased opportunities for different populations (i.e. Justice Involved, Youth) and highlight how public/private partnerships could support future strategies

18. The plan describes how well the existing skills of job seekers match the demands of local businesses.

* Consider providing more insight into the desired skills of local businesses and whether the current population possesses those skills

19. Passed –
The plan details the plans for future strategy development for future sectors.

* This section and criteria #18 likely should connect to each other. In criteria #18 they mention existing skill levels do not match current employment needs, but this section states that employer needs will drive future strategy development. In order to address the needs of employers, there should be additional context here around how they plan to develop educational opportunities to meet those needs and identify more employment opportunities for participants.

21. The plan describes the regional service strategies, including use of cooperative service delivery strategies.

- Regional service strategies are not outlined.
- First Sentence...Tennesseans have filed (not filled)
- *The information included in this section that covers COVID-19 would be valuable to include in the Economic/Workforce Analysis section, specifically the notable statistics that will remain relevant following the effects of COVID-19

22. The plan provides an analysis of workforce development activities, including education and training in the region.

- Regional development activities are not outlined.
- p.22 Education and training described needs to address the occupational and sector priorities identified in the first section.
- notes the training and education needs but does not indicate any specifics as to what types of education level or specific training.

23. PASSED –
The plan indicates the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities and capacity to provide the workforce development activities to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers.

- there is a strike through on the number 3 that doesn't need to be there.

- Although this section covers the strength and weaknesses of current activities, there should be more focus on how they are addressing the education and skill needs of individuals with barriers to employment
- * There is no feedback included here from employers with regards to their employment needs
- * Serving populations in rural counties was listed as a challenge in the previous year plan but is now listed as a strength. There likely needs to be more supporting evidence (i.e. quantitative data) that explains how this has become a strength in East TN and the which programs/services have contributed to this success
  * The weaknesses in this section could be accompanied by potential solutions (i.e. cross-training) that could address current pain points

24. The plan describes how well existing training programs in the region and local areas prepare job seekers to enter and retain employment with regional businesses. - Good strategies. Need to be specific on industries and have data on outcomes. - Plan describes how programs prepare jobseekers to enter/retain employment. No metrics/data are provided to measure how well they are doing. - does not include data on effectiveness of past programs, number completed and placed, etc. - This section should reference in-demand sectors and occupations included in the Economic/Workforce Analysis section and provide examples of training programs that can help individuals gain employment in those industries
25. The plan identifies what existing service delivery strategies will be expanded based on promising return on investment (ROI). - It would also be helpful to include the actual ROIs. The actual metrics and numbers were not provided. - Especially good on strategies for justice involved individuals. - No ROIs were identified in this section. - Specific ROI data not included. - p. 23 - #3 formatting inconsistent with #2
26. The plan defines what new service strategies will be used to address regional educational and training needs based on promising ROI. - C. Russell: No ROIs were identified in this section. - Specific ROI data not included. - Consider providing more information on these new service strategies (i.e. Career Ready, Online Portal, Zendesk), specifically the expected benefits for the workforce system and implementation/roll-out plans for the region and the individual LWDAs
27. The plan identifies what existing service delivery strategies will be curtailed or eliminated based on minimal ROI. - No ROIs were identified in this section. - Plan lists strategies that the region will look at curtailing, but the plan does not explicitly list any as definitely being curtailed. - p. 25 - did not identify strategies that would go away, just that the Region would monitor various activity - This section reads like a hypothetical discussion about certain parts of the workforce system (i.e. Co-Enrollment, Partner Referral) that might be causing issues today. This section should clearly

state existing strategies that should be eliminated due to their minimal return-on-investment or their negative impact on operations in the AJCs.

28. The plan identifies what formal and informal cooperative procedures the core partners and other required partners will establish to align services and coordinate delivery.

- Talk about MOU and quarterly meeting but does not address any cooperative procedures will be established

29. The plan explains what steps will be taken to support the state strategies and goals to align and integrate education, workforce and economic development.

- * The strategies included in this section could become more meaningful if they referenced the in-demand sectors, occupations, and skills included in the Economic/Workforce Analysis section to provide meaningful examples of training programs or job opportunities that are relevant to East TN participants
- "Align and integrate business services" is a vague statement that could benefit from further detail around the actions that will be taken and how they will benefit the workforce system
- * "Clear, Precise Data Reporting" section needs to include specific information around the tools and critical metrics required to effectively measure performance

32. The plan describes the policies and procedures that will be established to promote coordination of supportive services delivery.

- Specific policies and plans should be added to this section.
- Specific policies/procedures not described in plan
- Only notes will explore, so unclear on what will be established
- proposed development and adoption of regional supportive services plan

33. The plan identifies the economic development organizations or businesses that are actively engaged in regional planning.

- Talks about meetings with ECD but does give any specifics as to how they coordinate on giving services.
- It would be valuable to explain how these different organizations contribute to the regional plan and the frequency in which they are participating in planning meetings
- There is not any reference to local businesses participating and that should be an essential part of the regional planning process

note: 34 and 35 sections are in reverse order

36. The plan describes the input provided by economic development and businesses that was incorporated into the regional plan.

• Plan states this information is included but does not elaborate.
• I would think this section should list something related to what was a need brought forward that was added to the plan
38. The plan describes the strategic vision to support state, regional and local economic growth. • * Overall, this section feels like it was written without much consideration of the Economic/Workforce Analysis section • There is a lot of discussion on priority sectors, but there is no explanation on how the region and individual LWDAs will increase employment and training opportunities in those sectors • * The key strategies included in this section (i.e. Implementing East's Initiatives) are vague and likely need to be updated to be more actionable and to ensure they align with the goals/objectives included in the state plan
39. The plan describes the goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment). • * Page 35, #4: Consider adding discussion of how AJC services will be marketed and offered to those applying for UI. Currently, this section focuses on assistance with UI but does not provide the linkage between UI and the one-stop delivery system
40. The plan describes the strategies relating to the performance accountability measures based on State and Local Performance Measures (Key Performance Indicators). • Didn't answer this question, instead when right into next section. Need to outline the KPIs • There are not strategies included in this section regarding how they will develop performance accountability measures for the region as a whole and the individual LWDAs. Additionally, there is no information included about who will be monitoring these performance metrics or how they will mitigate poor performance within the LWDAs.
42. A description of how State and Local Performance Measures will be monitored and tracked towards meeting regional measures. • Doesn't really speak to how it is monitored.   Need to answer the questions of who reviews, how often and how are they held accountable • There is very limited information about how these negotiated performance measures will be monitored and who progress will be reported to. Additionally, there is no information about how they will create mitigation plans to address poor performance within the LWDAs.
43. A description how the Regional Planning Council will focus efforts on serving priority populations to meet negotiated measures. • Answer is vague, would help to add the actions for how this will happen not just what. • There needs to be additional explanation on the specific steps/actions the region will take to more effectively serve priority populations. As it exists today, the plan simply listed "Veteran services" and provided no context on how they plan to address the needs of this population. Finally, it would be valuable to provide insight into the desired metrics they have for these populations and a corresponding plan to how they intend to meet those metrics.

50. The plan identifies the implementation of initiatives such as apprenticeships, incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers.
- CTE is the primary initiative listed in this section. There are successful apprenticeship models in the East that include incumbent worker training and on-the-job training components that would fit well in this section.   - These strategies are described throughout the report, but not in this section.   - Only notes work around CTE, does not mention other efforts supporting apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, on -the-job training, customized training, etc.
52. The plan identifies how the region will support the efforts in creating an integrated intake system to efficiently deliver services.
Consider including the expected outcomes of the efforts being implemented to create a more integrated intake system (i.e. Improved consistency, enhanced efficiency, etc.)
53. The plan identifies how the region will support the shared vision for supporting Tennesseans with the greatest number of barriers to enter the workforce.
- More detail would be helpful   - This objective is discussed extensively in other parts of the plan and in an attachment.   - The plan should describe how the region will coordinate with VR to provided transition services for students/youth with disabilities.   - The header in this section should be modified, as it says "create a shared vision" as opposed to "support the shared vision"
54. The plan identifies how the region will help create a trained workforce to meet current industry needs.
- Describe specifically how the region will help create a trained workforce in the priority areas identified in the economic analysis section.   - No mention of system work-based learning, apprenticeships or working with the college systems for training. Does not address the "how"   - These bullets don't specifically address how the region will create a trained workforce to meet industry needs. It does not include any reference to the in-demand skills required to obtain employment in key industries or if the region has the necessary training programs to help participants develop those skills. Finally, many of the steps included in this section are very vague (i.e. Coordinate the workforce development process locally and regionally) and do not detail what needs to be done to upskill the local workforce.
55. The plan identifies how the region will support the creation of dashboards that measure the effectiveness of the integrated workforce strategy.
- No plan is outlined for the development of dashboards that measure the effectiveness of integrated workforce strategy.   - Single dashboard mentioned   - More detail on implementation. Explain what dashboard will include and how progress will be measured.   - Plan says it will but does not actually do so. Lacks detail on how this will be done.

- Explain what will be measured on the dashboard. How will it be measured and how will the region move to that? Possibly update the dashboard quarterly and report to the RPC.
- What do the current dashboard contain and what would be on the new dashboard? Does not address how it will support the creation of the dashboard.
- p.37 - need to state how the region will support this effort
- This is a very short section that does not provide much insight into what the dashboards will look like, what data will be utilized, and how the results will be reported. There needs to be explanation included on the value of these dashboards and how the different data sources will be leveraged to identify opportunities to enhance the effectiveness of the region's workforce strategy and activities.

SIGNATURE PAGE

The Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board (NETLWDB) and the East Region Plan are submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We certify that we will operate the Workforce Development programs in accordance with the plans and applicable federal and state laws and regulation.

Northeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board Chair	**Chief Local Elected Official**
Mike Horton	*Richard Venable*
Mike Horton	Richard Venable

Signatories:

Mrs. Terry Frank

Printed Name

(signature)

Signature

6/26/2020

Date

County Mayor, Anderson County
ETLWDA Chief Local Elected
Official

Title

Mrs. Martha Axford

Printed Name

Martha Axford

Signature

June 24,2020

Date

ETLWDB Chair

Title

Southeast Signature Page

The Southeast Local Plan and the East Region Plan are submitted in accordance with the provisions of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. We further certify that we will operate the Workforce Development programs in accordance with the plans and applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Southeast Tennessee Local Workforce Development Board	Chief Local Elected Official
_____ Signature	_____ Signature
John Proffitt *Chair*	*Mayor Jim Coppinger* *Hamilton County Mayor*
6/30/2020	*6/30/2020*