

WIB Five-Year Strategic Plan

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LA CITY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD STRATEGIC PLAN**I EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Los Angeles City is the heart of the Southern California economy, which is the 18th largest economy in the world. We are known as an incubator of new ideas, new products, and for our entrepreneurial spirit. Diversity abounds in LA City in many dimensions demographic, economic, institutional, cultural, ethnic, and geographic. Eighteen key industries lead our economy. The opportunities are limitless and the challenges are significant. Workforce quality and availability are key challenges that are being addressed by business with a significant infusion of government money and other resources through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA).

The Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board (WIB) is charged with the development, oversight, and evaluation of workforce readiness programs under the WIA in the City of Los Angeles. We are developing a world-class system to serve our local employers and job seekers. Our Youth Council is developing a partnership of LA's key youth programs to ensure that all youth, particularly those most in need, acquire the necessary skills to successfully transition to adulthood, careers, and further education and training.

The vision, goals, initiatives, and programs to reach these goals are discussed in this plan. The programs are developed jointly with 19 separate partners and/or programs and are carried out through a system of One-Stop career centers. A Regional Collaborative has been formed with all Workforce Investment Areas in Southern California, and closer ties with Economic Development entities are in place. This system will enable employers and job seekers to have a single point of entry to receive services.

The WIA sets forth the following national goals for the workforce preparation and employment system in order to meet the needs of the nation's businesses and job seekers:

- Attaining a high performance workplace
- Providing knowledge and skill attainment
- Linking supply and demand in the workforce
- Providing a pathway to employment
- Training for career mobility
- Increasing the self sufficiency of workers
- Being a cost effective system
- Providing a high level of customer satisfaction

In the process of developing the workforce preparation system for the City of Los Angeles, the local WIB has based its strategic plan on the unique nature of the local economy and has embodied the seven WIA operating principles:

- Integration of many workforce development programs
- Universal access

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- Empowerment of individuals to guide their careers
- Increased accountability for WIBs, One-Stop Career Centers, and training providers
- A stronger role for the Workforce Investment Board
- More flexibility for the WIB in addressing local issues and needs
- Integration of many local youth programs to leverage funds and prepare youth for the workforce.

Leading up to the establishment of this strategic plan, the LA City WIB conducted several planning sessions to consider our local vision, our mission, and our goals. We established our strategies and initiatives to reach these goals. Included in this process was a retreat to consider our position on “Nine Big Policy Questions.” These policy questions, listed below were also reviewed and discussed by each of the WIB committees to assure a balanced approach to the allocation of our resources toward meeting the needs of the various employer and participant populations. The nine policy questions considered were developed by Greg Newton Associates and are as follows:

1. Should the public workforce investment system strive to serve more, less intensely, or fewer, more intensely?
2. Should more of the public resource be expended on the unemployed or the employed?
3. How should resources be allocated between “work-first” and “training-first” strategies?
4. Which skills should be developed during pre-employment and which skills should be developed during post-employment?
5. What is the appropriate balance between classroom-based and workplace-based skill development?
6. What industries and businesses have critical skill shortages and/or labor shortages?
7. Which industries and businesses should be targeted with the limited public resources?
8. How can the public workforce investment system support existing business efforts in skill development and develop meaningful business partnerships?
9. How can the variety of public training resource be made more understandable, responsive, efficient, effective, and accessible to more businesses?

The positions developed on these policies have been folded into our strategic plan, which led directly to our Five-Year Plan, First and Second Year Annual Plans, and will be the basis for annual plans to follow.

The vision and mission statements that led to the development of the goals are discussed in Section II of this document.

The strategies, initiatives, and policies that will lead to our goals are included in Section III.

Section IV reviews the measures by which we will judge our success.

Finally, in Section V we have included a chart showing the schedule by which we intend to complete our key initiatives under each goal.

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II VISION, MISSION STATEMENT

The Los Angeles City Workforce Investment Board developed its vision from the viewpoint of three constituent groups: the employers, the participants (job seekers), and the service providers.

From the perspective of the employers, we expect that our system will have easy access to a person who is happy to help on the first phone call. Our ongoing career-training program will be organized by industry, responsive to the needs of the employers. These programs will be provided by high quality One-Stop Career Centers, and Satellite Centers who will use training providers with proven performance, and who provide the skills needed for upward mobility in the workforce.

From the perspective of the participants, we expect that all residents seeking workforce related assistance will find it easy to access friendly, helpful people in our high quality system on the first phone call, walk in visit, or any other contact. This system will concentrate its resources on skills upgrading.

From the viewpoint of the service providers, our system will be one of open communication, consistency in service and standards. There will be easy access and referral to all available services and training programs. There will be on-site shared services and information in an environment that allows providers to concentrate on the needs of the employers and the lifelong learning of the participants.

The vision, in summary, is that Los Angeles will have a World-Class Workforce Development System, in which every resident who needs a job will have one and every employer who needs an employee will find one with the necessary skills. In addition, every worker who is not self-sufficient will have access to upgrade his or her skills.

The vision leads us to our mission statement which is to:

- Improve the quality, career mobility, and the empowerment of the local workforce
- Enhance productivity and competitiveness of local industry
- Increase the self-sufficiency of those entering and moving up in the workforce.

We will accomplish this through universal access to lifelong learning based on relevant local labor market needs, and integrated, customer focused, accountable service provider partnerships.

In support of the vision and mission, we have established seven goals as follows:

- I. Provide consistently high quality services through a system that is user friendly and responsive to business, job seekers, workers who need to upgrade their skills to achieve self-sufficiency, and service providers.

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2. Provide job training for first time job seekers, unemployed, and incumbent workers. This training is focused on demand occupations with career paths that lead to self sufficiency and that include all of the skills employers need.
3. Promote collaboration and leveraging of funds and resources
4. Provide quality assurance through a system of standards and accountability
5. Provide improved services to business
6. Ensure access, quality service, and training for diverse populations
7. Minimize bureaucracy.

We have further adopted, through our Youth Council, the following five principles for our youth programs:

1. Accessible
2. Client driven/needs of the youth
3. Promotes the integration of all components of the system and community resources
4. Promotes simple goals and processes
5. Continuous improvement

The goals and principles set forth above for Los Angeles are consistent with Workforce Investment Act objectives and principles. They provide and define a framework for building our local initiatives and programs. They will also be used to operate and measure our workforce readiness system in Los Angeles.

III STRATEGIES, POLICIES, AND INITIATIVES TO REACH GOALS

The LA City WIB carefully considered nine key policy questions in each of its standing committees including the Executive Committee, which directed the development of this plan

While there is not complete agreement on each of the policy questions, the WIB has agreed on certain approaches:

A. WIB POSITION ON NINE BIG POLICY QUESTIONS

- I. Should the public Workforce Investment System strive to serve more, less intensively; or fewer, more intensively?

WIB Position: Each population segment must be addressed by its own training needs. This key policy question has no “one size fits all” approach. Our system is a tiered approach. At the first tier, we should serve more people with “up front” core and intensive services through “universal access.” In the case of the long-term unemployed, we expect to concentrate on workplace basics before moving them into the workforce. At the next tiers, after employment has begun, we will continue with more intensive and advanced training as needed by the participants and demands of the workplace.

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2. Should more of the public resources be expended on the unemployed or the employed?

WIB Position: The emphasis will be on the hard-to-serve and the under-served, both employed and unemployed. Our policy in this area needs to be flexible depending on the economy and industry status. To help move the unemployed and underemployed up the ladder, we expect to offer training to employer's front line supervisors on the services available under WIA.

3. How should the resources be allocated between "Work First" and "Training First" strategies?

WIB Position: The prime emphasis must be on "work first." However, we need to be flexible based on the needs of the participants, and the needs of the company or industry being served. The WIB should pay special attention to preparing for and "handing off" youth to the adult system and to providing low skill workers the training they need to be self-sufficient.

4. Which skills should be developed during pre-employment and which skills should be developed post-employment?

WIB Position: Basic workplace skills need to be in place or developed pre-employment. For youth and hard-to-serve groups, these may best be developed through combinations of work-based and classroom based learning. More advanced skills should be developed after employment.

5. What is the appropriate balance between classroom based and workplace based skill development?

WIB Position: The balance should depend on the needs of the individual and the requirements of the job. A mix of on-the-job and classroom training for those working and trying to upgrade their positions is a desirable policy. Long stretches of classroom training should be avoided unless adequate support services are identified and provided. For youth, classroom training should be combined with work based learning so that skills can be learned in context.

6. What industries and businesses have critical shortages and/or labor shortages?

WIB Position: The WIB will continue to search for and use the best LMI (Labor Market Information) services available to answer this question. We need to find ways to get this information on a quick turnaround basis so that training can be adjusted on a timely basis. We will work closely with EDD and other local WIB's in identifying needs. We will not emphasize protracted training as jobs may disappear before the training is complete.

7. Which industries and businesses should be targeted with limited resources?

WIB Position: Businesses and industries should be targeted when they have one or more of the following attributes:

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- Accept youth and engage in youth programs
- Willingness to work with under served populations
- Provide transferable skills
- Promote from within, offer opportunities for increasing responsibilities, and pay wages that support economic self-sufficiency for working families.
- Work to leverage our resources with other government agencies, i.e., programs in Enterprise Zones

We need to develop creative approaches to working with smaller businesses with up to 200-300 employees as they are increasing in the LA area. We plan to increase the availability of entrepreneurial training in our funded programs.

8. How can the public Workforce Investment System support existing business efforts in skill development and in developing business partnerships?

WIB Position: The LA City WIB will reach out more to business, to schools, and to other WIB's in the LA basin. We will provide financial support to One-Stops for outreach to employers. We will also engage in a strong promotional program on a regional basis to promote services available to employers such as incumbent worker training, assistance in hiring, and tax incentives available to employers. This will be done directly and in partnership with economic development organizations, other WIB's, and organizations assisting growing businesses.

9. How can the variety of public training resources be made more understandable, responsive, efficient, effective and accessible to more businesses?

WIB Position: Our business outreach plan will address this issue in our second year. A Business Services unit in the Community Development Department LA City will have outreach to business as a prime goal. The increased use of technology in both outreach and training will significantly assist this effort.

B. GOALS

The WIB has adopted seven goals to guide our work. All initiatives must support one or more of these goals in keeping with the policy positions of the WIB as discussed above.

1. **Provide consistently high quality services through a system that is user friendly, and responsive to business service providers and job seekers.** The services under this goal are provided under a system of One-Stop Career Centers, along with satellite centers, youth service providers, and welfare-to-work contractors, which work closely with the Centers. Quality will be continuously improved through an on-going certification program. Technical assistance teams and customer satisfaction surveys will assure that these universal access centers are focused on continuous improvement and have user friendly "self service" facilities. A technology plan for upgrading and standardizing the entire system is being developed. This will

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speed communications, improve information quality, and provide a much-needed common standard of reporting and forms.

2. Provide training that is focused on demand occupations with career paths that lead to self-sufficiency. In pursuing this goal, we are working with economists from economic development organizations. We are also using the best obtainable Labor Market Information to identify trends, needs, and opportunities. Additionally, we have established a new Business Services Unit to work directly with local business in designing programs to meet their needs. We are further planning to significantly increase training in programs which will result in skill certificates or credentials. This training will be mainly for jobs in industries with growing needs such as (currently) healthcare, technology, travel/tourism and entertainment.

3. Promote collaboration and synergy among the many service providers in the WIA system. The goal of establishing closer ties to all mandatory partners and publicly supported institutions is being pursued within each One-Stop Center and Youth Center. In addition, closer ties are being developed between One-Stop Centers, between Workforce Investment Areas, between Youth Centers, and with all youth organizations. We are also pursuing partnerships with businesses through the One-Stop system. High yield collaboration will come through the integration of youth programs such as UNITE-LA, Job Corps, and through stronger relationships with LAUSD and community college training programs. Closer ties also with the mayor's business team and other economic development entities will further leverage our resources. Assistance will also continue to be offered through sponsorship of special workshops to discuss "Best Practices" and special issues common to the entire system. Demonstration programs aimed at hard-to-serve populations will be designed to encourage collaboration among all agencies.

4. Provide quality assurance through a system of standards and accountability. The first effort is to "build in" quality. This is being pursued through a vigorous initial certification program that will be constantly monitored and renewed every two years. Evaluation criteria are being developed which will result in tools to help evaluate the performance of the entire system and partnerships within the system. We also intend to provide consistency of services on a regional basis. The planned expansion of certificates and credentials by industry should further enhance the quality of the "system." A performance management system is being developed to help manage progress. A planned electronic consumer report card will help the job seeker, the employer, and the quality of the system itself

5. Provide improved services to business. To help oversee this important goal, a Business Services Unit has been established in the Community Development Department. This unit will promote the use of customized training and provide direct response to employer inquiries. A regional marketing collaboration has been established to help promote WIA programs in the LA Area. Additionally, the One-Stop Centers will be urged to promote and conduct training programs for employers. We expect to train front line supervisors on assistance available such as direct financial support for on-the-job and customized training, special tax incentives available. We will emphasize the use of the One-Stops as an extension of the company's

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Human Relations Department. We will provide technical assistance on how to work with Youth. Rapid Response programs for laid off workers will be improved through Regional Collaboration among the One-Stop Centers.

6. Ensure access, quality service, and training for diverse populations. Our newly developed Disability Access Network will serve all One-Stop Centers by supplying information on working with the training, adaptive technology, and employment needs of those participants with disabilities. There will be an increased emphasis on the One-Stop Centers to provide services for non-English speakers and limited English speakers. Greater use of information and referral services available by telephone and through the Internet will help the One-Stop Centers serve the needs of diverse populations. Increased resources are being directed to promote the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Individual Development Accounts (IDA's) to help low income individuals prepare to become more independent.

7. Minimize bureaucracy. Progress has already been made toward this goal through the streamlining of our contracting, and with the adoption of the Annual Plan which gives staff management increased authority over program implementation. Pushing decisions to a lower level is very efficient. A plan will be developed to improve universal access and cut down on paperwork at the One-Stop Career Centers. Further improvements in the client tracking system, ISIS, will help participants and service providers. The standardized technology plan discussed under the first goal will further help in minimizing bureaucracy. A common cost accounting system is also being developed. This will cut down on management time, improve inconsistencies, and help in managing system-wide resources.

By implementing programs such as the initiatives discussed above and tracking and monitoring these programs we expect to have a world class workforce preparation system for the city of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Regional Area.

IV MEASURES OF SUCCESS

The overall measure of success will be meeting performance standards imposed by the Department of Labor, and the State of California under the Workforce Investment Act. Beyond that, however, we will continue to develop ways to measure how we are doing against our Mission Statement.

We intend to develop methods to measure the quality, career mobility, and the self-sufficiency of the local workforce. Similarly, we must find ways to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of local industry and to measure our success. We must also develop a means to track the upward movement of the workforce.

An important overall measurement will be constantly improving customer satisfaction. We are developing methods to quantify job seeker, employer, and worker satisfaction.

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The WIA brings a new urgency for the need to work as a team within each One-Stop Center, and among One-Stop Centers. Similarly, there is a need to collaborate among programs such as the Welfare-to-Work program, Youth Programs, and the major WIA partners and programs in the One-Stop Centers.

We need, and expect, to find ways to measure our success in collaboration among service providers. We also expect to be able to measure our success in developing and operating a regional “system,” and measure our success in working with economic development programs.

While broader measurements are being developed, we have a need to provide measurements at a lower level. This will help us understand our progress against our seven goals. **We expect to have established benchmarks for each of our goals by the end of 2002 and to establish specific targets at that time.** These measures will include the following provisions:

- Goal #1 Provide consistently high quality service.
 - Improve Customer Satisfaction results from prior year
 - Increased customer flow at One-Stops
 - Re-certification of 100% of certified centers

- Goal #2 Provide training focused on demand occupations and with career paths.
 - Average wage at placement and retention rates (progressive over five years)
 - Increases at six and twelve months
 - Increased customized training activity
 - Increased amount of industry specific training
 - Incumbent worker upgrades
 - Inclusion of diverse groups
 - Increased follow up services for those with limited work experience
 - Number of youth successfully served
 - Conduct at least two sessions per year with economists to identify trends

- Goal #3 Promote collaboration and leveraging of funds and resources.
 - Increase in fund raising and cost allocation to support VITA projects
 - Increased linkages between youth programs and One-Stop Career Centers
 - Completion of financial MOU'S
 - Specific “team goals” by the end of 2002
 - Positive evaluation on “team measure”
 - Expansion of certification program
 - Increased linkages with secondary and post secondary education programs
 - Conduct two “test practices” workshops per year for One-Stop and Youth Center executives

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- Goal #4 Provide quality assurance through a system of standards and accountability.
- Positive outcomes on “scorecards”
 - Establish quality standards for youth programs
 - Meet and exceed State mandated performance goals
 - Number of visits on website
- Goal #5 Provide improved services to business
- Increased business awareness of VITA
 - Increase in customized training projects
 - Increase in business services contacts
 - Completion of classes to train front line business leaders - one per year at each One-Stop
 - Increased youth employment rates
 - Development of a unified plan to market to business
 - Improved access for business
 - Increase satisfaction ratings in customer surveys and continuously improving “scorecards”
- Goal #6 Ensure access and training for diverse populations.
- Increased enrollment of diverse job seekers including limited English proficiency, homeless, persons with disabilities, foster youth, and youth involved in the criminal justice system
 - Increased enrollment of out-of-school youth
 - Marketing publications in multiple languages
 - Marketing publications for diverse populations
 - Improve each year toward the goal of serving the percentage of population mirroring the general population
- Goal #7 Minimize bureaucracy
- Improved communications between One-Stop Centers, youth programs, LA City, and business
 - Improved turnaround time for contract execution and invoice processing
 - Reduction in paperwork by reducing number of pages in Annual Plan by 25%

There are several important considerations in establishing these measurements. They need to be as simple as possible. They need to be quantifiable and they need to be compared to a baseline. They need to be developed with input from those functions being measured so that they have “buy in.” They need to be flexible so that we can change them if they do not work. They need to be team measures that promote cooperation rather than competition. Finally, they need to be designed so that constant improvement is accepted as an integral part of doing business with the LA City WIB.

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Seven major goals have been identified for attainment during the five-year plan period. Steps have been taken to establish benchmarks, targets, and milestone dates for each of these goals. The goals and their statuses are as follows:

1. Provide consistently high quality services through a system that is user friendly and responsive to business, service providers, and job seekers.
 - A sample survey of all WorkSource Centers customers has been completed. Results indicate customers are pleased with the services offered. A second survey will be conducted in June 2002. Surveys will be conducted annually to measure satisfaction.
 - California State University Northridge contractors have developed "LA Performs" (Measuring Up), a web site application, for use by WDD staff and WorkSource center managers in tracking performance. Roll out of the application began in April 2002 with formation of a subject matter team comprised of six WDD staff members. Training will begin with WDD staff and then with contractors.
 - The flow of WIA customers appears to be increasing at a rate of 700 enrollees per quarter.
2. Provide training focused on demand occupations with career paths.
 - The banking, health care, and biotechnology industries have been identified as industry clusters with demand occupations:
 - A model to place individuals into health care career ladders is under development by a comprehensive collaborative. The model will be developed in Program Year 02-03.
 - An eight-week employment-training program has been developed between the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), Bank of America, and Goodwill Industries, Inc. Prevocational training and on-site work experience are provided to participants before employment.
 - An H1B Technology career ladder grant application is under development for 120 identified vacancies.
3. Promote collaboration and leveraging of funds and resources.
 - The certification process, which began in the Adult system, has been expanded to the Youth system.
 - "Best Practices" workshops are conducted biannually to provide contractors with opportunities to share practices.
 - In March 2002, a collaboration of all eight LA county Local Workforce Areas, including the City of Los Angeles, was awarded \$5.7 million in State of California Title IB 25 Percent Dislocated Worker project funds. The funds will be distributed among the partners to serve workers laid off by firms in the transportation and service industries.
 - Increased linkages with secondary and post-secondary education programs are scheduled for Program Year 02-03.
4. Provide quality assurances through a system of standards and accountability.
 - Eleven Department of Labor performance standards were met and exceeded.

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- Achievement of positive outcomes on “scorecards” and the establishment of quality standards for youth programs are scheduled for implementation in Program Year (PY) 02-03.
 - Tracking of satisfaction ratings via customer surveys and continuous improvement “scorecards” are scheduled to begin in PY 02-03.
 - The Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process has been implemented throughout the Adult System. Work has begun on internalizing the process within the Youth System that will continue during PY 02-03. An internal CQI process has also begun within WDD.
5. Provide improved services to businesses
- The entered employment rate for youth has exceeded the State negotiated rate by 31%.
 - A Central Services Team has been established within WDD to provide coordinated services to businesses.
 - A Business Services system-wide model and implementation plan have been developed and was rolled out in PY 02-03.
 - Volunteer Income Tax Assistance has been made available to small businesses that need assistance with income tax preparation.
6. Ensure access and training for diverse populations
- Disability Empowerment Teams and Legacy programs have been established to provide WorkSource Centers with staff assistance in giving high quality service to individuals with disabilities.
 - A Senior Project Coordinator, Limited English Proficiency, has been hired to oversee the improvement of service delivery to individuals who are not proficient in the English language. A survey of WorkSource system has been conducted to determine the types of service already provided and additional services that may be needed.
7. Minimize bureaucracy
- The Annual Plan has enabled the WorkSource system to procure, contract, and accomplish other necessary administrative processes with a minimum two-month timesaving for each major activity.
 - The approved Technology Plan enabled CDD to roll out 1000 computers with necessary wiring upgrades in a five-month period.

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V UPDATE

Introduction to Strategic Plan for 2004-2005 Annual Plan

In the process of developing 2004-2005 Annual Plan, the local WIB has determined that the Plan should address four items of importance for inclusion in the 5 Year Strategic Plan by the City of Los Angeles workforce community:

1. There will be on-going discussions within the workforce development community regarding delivery of a more diversified mix of services.
2. Because 40% of the population in the City of Los Angeles Local Workforce Investment Area is Limited English Proficient, the local WIB will ensure that a Limited English Proficiency Coordinator is hired for policy enforcement.
3. A policy will be developed clarifying the use of Pell Grants as the first choice of payment for Individual Training Accounts. The language will be specific as to the conditions on which training services may be provided while Pell Grants applications are pending.
4. There will be consideration for establishing incentives for service providers that serve post-incarcerated population.