IMPERIAL COUNTY
WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
2017-2020
Executive Summary

Imperial County is a place of contrast, challenge and vast opportunity. One of California’s largest counties by virtue of square miles, it has fewer than 200,000 residents. Culturally, it is home to a large Latino population (more than 80%), the majority of which speaks Spanish, with many having limited English proficiency. Due to its proximity to the Mexican border, Imperial County boasts bi-national, bi-cultural and bilingual characteristics, which offer a highly advantageous position from which to conduct business over national borders and manage international trade. But challenges exist too. Unemployment is often near the highest in the state, as economic growth has not always kept pace with the growing population. Overshadowing these challenges are tremendous opportunities. The region is becoming renowned on a world level as an incubator for renewable energy and an infrastructure is in place to prepare the County’s young populace for a wide range of careers to help them achieve middle class success, and can, at the same time, enable the County to attract businesses based on the availability of a young, skilled workforce.

Alignment with Regional Plan: The Local Plan, which is part of the Southern Border Regional Workforce Plan, developed in partnership with San Diego County, embraces present opportunities and those that lie ahead. The region has adopted a series of “core tenets” for the workforce system, which will promote its ability to provide services and deploy approaches to foster regional prosperity. These tenets speak to the following commitments: create and maintain a single entry point for business customers; foster “demand-driven skills attainment;” embrace a shared labor market, working as a region; the system includes a complex array of stakeholders and investments that have the power to transform communities; create opportunities for all San Diego and Imperial County residents; spend less on “bricks and mortar” and invest more in people; embrace a human-centered approach to service design; increase service access points; and adopt a work-readiness definition that is meaningful to businesses and workers throughout the region.

Compatibility with State Workforce Plan: ICWDB has implemented various strategies and is continuing to develop new approaches to align local programs with the policy direction of the State Plan. Strategies in support of the State plan include collaboration with core workforce programs, one-stop partners and other local stakeholders. In addition, services for adult job seekers and youth serve as on ramps to regional sector pathways, the key workforce strategy promoted by the State Plan. Furthermore, ICWDB has implemented programs and strategies in the following areas to ensure compliance with State policies concerning local operations: sector strategies; career pathways; organizing regionally; “earn and learn” models; supportive services; building cross system data capacity; and integrating and braiding resources.

Local Service Delivery System: The local delivery system includes services provided by a wide range of partners and programs. Those led by the ICWDB include the following:

AJCC System: The cornerstone of the workforce system is ICWDB’s network of AJCCs. The largest are located in main population areas of the county. Currently, full-service centers in Imperial County are located in the cities of El Centro, Calexico and Brawley, with the main center in El Centro functioning as the comprehensive one-stop. Satellite centers are located in El Centro (west), Winterhaven and Calipatria.

Youth: Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program (IVROP) is the service provider for all WIOA Youth Program services. IVROP’s serves eligible youth and young adults, between the ages of 14-24. Participants have access to 14 WIOA Youth Program service elements that embody effective strategies that have proven to be successful both locally and throughout the nation. The program’s overarching goal is to assist youth in
improving their long-term labor market opportunities by providing specific education, training, skills development, and comprehensive services and linkages.

**Business Services:** ICWDB has organized a business services team to outreach and respond to the needs of local companies. The team and its efforts to engage key industries in discussions of their needs have proven effective in increasing placements and targeting employment of job seekers in key industries. The next major task for the board and the business service team will be to develop and implement strategies to address employer needs identified during the process of developing the Regional Plan.

**Facilitating Access to Regional Sector Pathways:** In recent years, the entire workforce system led by ICWDB has become increasingly sector-focused. These efforts have been enhanced by the significant regional planning that has occurred throughout the Southern Border RPU. As a system, the network of partners and stakeholders in Imperial County is turning its attention to industries for which priorities have been regionally established (advanced manufacturing, clean energy/advanced transportation, health care and information & communications technology) recognizing that these sectors offer the greatest promise in terms of creating employment within the region and to offer pathways to the middle class. Efforts are underway to identify industry need for career pathways programs, which includes training programs being developed by our education partners and business. The AJCCs will concentrate too on making job seekers aware of such programs and the value they offer in terms of employment potential. AJCCs are perfectly situated to serve as on-ramps to regional sector pathways, as they have the capacity to promote initiatives and to guide job seekers to the best opportunities.

**Key Partnerships:** Given Imperial County’s location and the geographic distribution of its population, working closely with partners is critical to the success of the ICWDB serving job seekers and businesses alike. Key partners include the Employment Development Department, the Department of Rehabilitation, and the Imperial County Adult Education Consortium, which is led by the County Office of Education and includes Imperial Community College District and seven local school districts. Economic development agencies including Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation and Imperial County Community and Economic Development are also important partners. ICWDB has formed important relationships with other County departments, including Probation, Child Support Services and Social Services.

**Goals:** ICWDB’s Plan includes goals to strengthen, develop and expand services and functions at the local level. Additionally, there are goals expressed in the Regional Plan that will require action at the local level.

**Local Area Operations:** Among the goals established to enhance local operations are: exploring opportunities to bring additional resources to the County for English language skills training; identifying alternate methods and best practices in English language skills training; considering new strategies and approaches for layoff aversion; and reviewing and evaluating continuous quality improvement systems.

**Regional Coordination:** Among our various goals to promote regional coordination, planning and system alignment are: support for sector-focused research; contribution to development of regional sector pathways; participation in human-centered design training; support for development of an e-portal for work-based learning; and support for unifying data collection/management across programs and fund streams.

**Submission of Unsigned Plan:** The time required to develop, vet and publish the Regional and Local Plans for comment has just concluded. The ICWDB and CLEO have been briefed on the development and content of the Local Plan. However, insufficient time was available to formally present the Local Plan to the ICWDB and CLEO for formal approval prior to the March 15, 2017 deadline. ICWDB will submit a signed original no later than July 1, 2017.
IMPERIAL COUNTY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2017 - 2020

Imperial County is a place of contrast, challenge and vast opportunity. One of California's largest counties by virtue of square miles, it has fewer than 200,000 residents. Culturally, the region is home to a large Latino population (more than 80%), the majority of which speaks Spanish, with many having limited English proficiency. The County however, is deeply American, with many residents, including Latinos and others having roots in the community stretching back decades. Due its proximity to the Mexican border, Imperial County boasts bi-national, bi-cultural and bilingual characteristics, which offer a highly advantageous position from which to conduct business over national borders and manage international trade. But challenges exist too. Unemployment is often near the highest in the state, as economic growth has not always kept pace with the growing population. Overshadowing these challenges are tremendous opportunities. The region is becoming renowned on a world level as an incubator for renewable energy and an infrastructure is in place to prepare the County's young populace for a wide range of careers that can help them achieve middle class success, and will, at the same time, enable the County to attract businesses based on the availability of a young, skilled workforce.

The county's workforce development system is ready to seize the opportunities and meet the challenges. Led by the Imperial County Workforce Development Board (ICWDB), the system has worked diligently to become demand-driven: capable of responding to the workforce needs of growth industries and emerging sectors.

This Local Workforce Development Plan, which is part of the Southern Border Regional Workforce Plan, developed in partnership with San Diego County, embraces present opportunities and those that lie ahead. Throughout the Plan, ICWDB may alternately refer to both the board overseeing workforce programs and to the agency that operates the program. The agency is also referred to in the Plan as the Imperial County Workforce Development Office (ICWDO).

A. Vision, Goals, Strategy and Resource Alignment

The ICWDB's mission is to implement WIOA by leveraging and integrating community resources and services to create a streamlined and demand-driven system, connecting employers and jobseekers, to develop a healthy workforce environment that supports the local and regional economy.

The information that follows describes our plans for putting this mission into action.

I. ICWDB's Vision, Goals and Strategies

ICWDB's vision is to meet the employment and training needs of businesses and job seekers, both unemployed and under-employed, in Imperial County. We strive to look ahead to issues of workforce supply and demand, to see a workforce system that takes a leading role within a network of systems. We envision a workforce that is adequate in numbers and equipped with a work ethic, employability skills, foundational academic skills, and specific occupational skills that fit the needs of local and regional employers and
prepare our workforce with the portable skills needed to compete in a global economy. We see a diverse workforce with equal access to employment and training resources and a prosperous job market where there is equal opportunity for all workers and prospective workers.

In addition, we see an environment where individuals find success and satisfaction in their careers and increase their economic prosperity to establish self-sufficiency for their families. We envision a system that is responsive to workforce needs as they emerge with the power and influence to make change happen. Ultimately, we seek a strong economy, encouraging established businesses to grow and prospective businesses to consider Imperial County as a venue for their enterprises.

As part of the regional planning process initiated by Imperial and San Diego counties for the Southern Border Workforce Region, significant opportunities were identified in a number of industries, including four that have been classified as priorities due to the promise they hold for driving economic growth and for creating good jobs and careers. The region has adopted a series of “core tenets” for the workforce system, which will promote its ability to provide services and deploy approaches to foster regional prosperity. These tenets speak to the following commitments.

- Create and maintain a single entry point for business customers
- Foster “demand-driven skills attainment”
- Embrace a shared labor market, working as a region
- The workforce development system includes a complex array of stakeholders and investments that have the power to transform communities
- Create opportunities for all San Diego and Imperial County residents
- Spend less on “bricks and mortar” and invest more in people
- Embrace a human-centered approach to service design
- Increase service access points
- Adopt and promote a definition of work-readiness that is meaningful to businesses and workers throughout the region

The region’s core tenets are described in greater detail within the accompanying Regional Plan.

II. Collaboration and Resource Alignment

As described throughout this Local Plan, ICWDB is not the workforce system for the local area. Rather, it leads the workforce system, which is comprised of the organizations that manage and operate core programs, along with a host of other agencies in education, economic development, workforce services and community support. Together, the partners have the resources and capability to meet the needs of businesses and job seekers. The narrative that follows describes this capacity and how the system’s goals will be met.

B. Local Alignment with State Plan Strategies

1. Local Workforce Development System and Programs
In keeping with the service delivery focus of the State Plan, the local workforce development system is built around services for key customers: adults and youth seeking employment and local businesses.

**WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs and the AJCCs**

ICWDB’s manages and operates a network of full-service AJCCs and satellites at locations throughout the county. Through these centers, ICWDB and the one-stop partners, deliver and provide access to a broad range of services, including:

**Basic Career Services**: Replacing WIA’s core services, these services are largely informational and are available to the general public. They can inform career exploration and job search decisions and serve as a gateway to enrollment into more in-depth WIOA services or into partner programs, services and activities.

**Individualized Career Services**: Assessment, service planning, case management, and intensive guidance and support are all characteristics of this level of services. Job seekers are enrolled in WIOA and typically participate in staff-assisted and facilitated employment preparation services, including pre-vocational and basic skills training, to ready themselves for employment.

**Training Services**: For those job seekers with skills gaps, training in a classroom or work-based setting is used to impart the specific knowledge and skills required to do a job or groups of jobs.

Section D of this Local Plan provides details about the AJCC system and additional information about services for adults is interspersed throughout the Plan.

**WIOA Youth Programs**

WIOA Youth Programs are contracted to the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program (IVROP), which utilizes the 14 WIOA Youth Program elements as the foundation for delivering services aimed at assisting in-school youth in completing high school and moving on to employment or additional education and training. For out of school youth, the program is focused on disconnected individuals and, therefore, concentrates on reengaging them with programs that remediate skill deficiencies, help youth earn a school diploma or equivalent and develop skills that will prepare them for work. Additional, detailed information about WIOA youth programs and services in Imperial County is provided under Item E-IV, below.

**Education and Training Providers**

ICWDB has established a system for vetting training programs so that they can be placed on the Eligible Training Provide List, enabling the referral of WIOA participants. The community of education and training providers in the county in largely comprised of public institutions, including the Imperial Valley campus of San Diego State University, Imperial Valley College, adult schools operated local school districts, and IVROP. In addition, there are a number of non-profit organizations (such as the Center for Employment Training) and private organizations, such as the Imperial Valley Public Safety Training Center. More
information about local education and training programs is provided under Item E-V and Section I.

**Support Systems and Services**

Most participants will need some sort of assistance to enable their participation in and successful completion of services to prepare for employment. Transportation, childcare, and work-related clothing and supplies are among the most frequently needed services. To supplement scarce WIOA resources, ICWDB takes advantage of services through a network of local public and private agencies to secure support for job seekers. Additional information on support services is provided under Item E-VI, below.

**II. Local Board Support for State Policies and Collaboration with Core Programs and Other Workforce Development Programs**

Current board operations demonstrate that AJCC services, sector strategies, training priorities and program management fit well within the structure of State policies. Similarly, existing relationships with core program partners and other stakeholders are very much aligned with the State Plan’s policy direction for local workforce systems.

**Support of State Plan Policies**

Examples of the various ways in which current and planned services and approaches support the seven State Plan policies strategies include the following.

**Sector Strategies:** As described throughout this Plan, the development and implementation of sectors strategies in Imperial County are driven, to a significant extent, by economic development efforts and are aligned with our Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), which is produced to meet U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration guidelines. However, ICWDB has for several years also been deeply involved in using economic data to drive workforce system activities in support of business and economic goals. As a result of the recent planning process undertaken with partners throughout the Southern Border region, ICWDB plans to provide more intensive focus on regional priority sectors and the development of regional sector pathways. Based on an understanding of the labor market’s needs and a gap analysis of the region, the regional partners agreed to focus the system’s efforts on four sectors, including:

- Clean Energy/Advanced Transportation
- Health Care
- Information & Communication Technologies
- Advanced Manufacturing

**Career Pathways:** Career pathway programs are emerging and more programs are in the early planning stages, in sync with the goals of the Regional Plan.

A current example is the Imperial County California Career Pathways Trust grant. Under the grant, Imperial Valley College is partnering with IVROP, the Imperial County Office of Education Alternative Education program and five local high school districts to offer
students in their junior year of high school the opportunity to earn college credits in the fields of Administration of Justice and Allied Health. By the time they graduate from high school, students seeking careers in Administration of Justice will have 12 units of the 60 units needed for an Associate of Arts transfer degree. Students in health fields will have the opportunity to obtain certification either as an Emergency Medical Technician, Home Health Aide or Certified Nursing Assistant during the summer of their senior year.

A strategic priority of the Regional Plan and for ICWDB is to create opportunities for all residents through career pathway development. With regard to this goal, ICWDB, along with our local and regional partners will:

- Annually review and agree on regional sector research for each fiscal year, obtain agency approvals, and fund the research and resulting dissemination reports and conferences.
- Focus on one sector and, from a regional perspective, describe the career pathway/career ladder for grade schoolers through adult participants (involving all partners including industry). This information will result in a clear understanding of access and upward mobility.
- Meet with partners in the first quarter of 2017 to solidify plans for work readiness initiatives across partner organizations.

Organizing Regionally: As reported in the Regional Plan, the workforce development system in the Border Region began coordination and alignment efforts in recent years, with the goals of supporting businesses and ensuring that every person has the skills to ensure a sustainable career. This Regional Plan aligns efforts among all partners in the region’s workforce development system. Key regional partners, include: the ten community colleges and six community college districts in the region; the two Workforce Development Boards; K-12 and Adult Education; local universities; economic development entities; the State Employment Development Department, including LMID; CalWORKs; the State Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), and community organizations from throughout the two-county region.

Earn and Learn: On-the-job training (OJT) opportunities are actively promoted to business in all sectors in order to place people into employment and provide training at the same time. The board is committed to creating more opportunities for work-based learning, as it allows businesses to work with ICWDB staff and partner representatives to craft training plans that reflect the precise needs of their companies. ICWDB has developed a partnership with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 569 through a pilot apprenticeship program in order to meet the demands of local industry for skilled electricians. The ICWDB will continue to pursue apprenticeship opportunities with other unions such as the Laborers’ Union of North America Local Union 1184, as these jobs pay strong wages and offer advancement potential, enabling workers to enjoy a middle class lifestyle.

Supportive Services: As described above and elaborated upon under Item E.6, ICWDB makes available a wide range support services, including, but not limited to, bus tokens or bus passes, mileage reimbursement, auto repair, housing, clothing/uniforms, testing costs, licenses, utilities assistance, DMV printouts, DMV registration tags, driver’s license,
fingerprinting and background checks, and tattoo removal, along with books, tools, and supplies.

**Building Cross System Data Capacity:** Cross system data capacity is not just a goal of California’s Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan 2016-2020, it’s a goal for Imperial County as part of our ACT Work Ready Communities commitment. In order to help education and workforce professionals across the county to develop career pathways programs that meet the needs of key industries, the Workforce Development Board and other public and private agencies across the county, have expressed their desire to work toward identifying opportunities for sharing data and information.

Within the content of developing the state’s workforce goals, this policy objective is, ideally, best dealt with at the state level, as it is reliant on choices and resource commitments by key decision makers at State agencies. However, Imperial County WDB is prepared to support the State’s objectives regarding cross system data sharing.

**Integrating Services and Braiding Resources:** Over more than a decade, ICWDB has made tremendous strides in developing relationships with key workforce system stakeholders throughout the county, from training and education providers to business and economic development organizations and community agencies. Perhaps the group with which we have experienced the greatest success in forging truly effective integration and resource alignment is other agencies within the County family. These include Imperial County Probation Department (ICPD), Imperial County Child Support Services (ICCSS) and Imperial County Department of Social Services (ICDSS). Examples of work among local agencies to integrate and braid resources include:

- In 2016, the ICWDB partnered with the Probation Department in an effort to improve the workforce outcomes for transitioning incarcerated individuals by providing career services in a jail-based AJCC located within the Imperial County Day Reporting Center.
- ICWDB entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with ICCSS. The purpose of the MOU is to expand a framework of cooperation between the agencies in providing services that improve and enhance the lives of each agency’s participants with respect to their child support obligations.
- Under a groundbreaking collaboration (Project Fostering Unprecedented Training through Useful Resources leading to Employment - FUTURE), a contract has been signed between the ICWDB and ICDSS to align resources and offer expanded subsidized employment opportunities for Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) recipients. Leveraging the workforce development system’s relationships with the business community, TANF recipients will have the opportunity to build real life work experience that they can use to market themselves for full-time unsubsidized employment.

Naturally, the foregoing descriptions are simply examples of progress accomplished to date. ICWDB is committed to working with the full range of core program agencies, one-stop partners, public agencies and community organizations to access and effectively utilize resources on behalf of county residents and businesses.

**Collaboration with Core Program Providers and Other Workforce Stakeholders**
ICWDB’s collaborations with the core program partners and many other stakeholders are evident in the operation of our AJCCs, the content of career pathway programs, the services available to job seekers with limited English proficiency and virtually every aspect of our service delivery system. As the board continues to work with local and regional partners in developing demand-driven responses to the needs of industry and the workforce, we will look for every opportunity to coordinate with federal, state, county, municipal and community-based programs. Several of the goals enumerated at the conclusion of this plan are centered on opportunities to strengthen partnerships with core program and other partners.

C. Local Services and Service Delivery Strategies

The following information summarizes key local service strategies and approaches. These approaches generally correspond to those emphasized within both the State Workforce Plan and the Southern Border Regional Plan.

I. Collaboration to Expand Access to Services

ICWDB is committed to ensuring the all Imperial County residents have access to the services, education and training they need to enter and move up career paths in demand occupations within growing industries. Furthermore, we believe that a person’s personal and community background and experiences should never be a barrier to fulfilling his or her potential. The WDB, EDD, local education agencies, and the State Department of Rehabilitation will work together to ensure that everyone can access the programs and services that he or she needs to achieve success in the workforce. ICWDB’s Local Plan, therefore, embraces the following strategies and approaches to expand access to services.

- **Recognize the Need for Multiple On-Ramps:** Some participants are prepared for work and need minimal assistance. Others have very low basic skills and need extensive interventions and training to qualify for entry-level positions. Many are in the middle. ICWDB, education partners, public agencies and community organizations will assess individual needs and develop individual pathway plans to meet those needs.

- **Commit Resources to Address Barriers to Employment:** As needs are identified, they will be addressed. Organizations operating core programs, the one-stop partners and local agencies have extensive resources. ICWDB and partner staff is committed to match resources to needs. Where resources are not locally available, they will be sought regionally.

- **Prepare Individuals for Work:** The partners realize that not all job seekers are ready for work. Many need training in one or more of the following: basic skills, core competencies, soft skills or job-specific skills.

- **Address the Whole Person:** Many job seekers have multiple barriers, besides skills deficits, to employment. The partners are committed to identifying and securing support services to enable participation in and completion of workforce services and training.
Continue to Make Services Available: Once trained and placed, workers should be able to come back to the workforce system for additional career guidance, training and support services.

II. Facilitating Career Pathways

As described in the preceding section, the Imperial County WDB is committed to career pathways as the optimal method for preparing the local workforce for careers in demand sectors. ICWDB’s career pathway model has the goal of increasing learners’ and workers’ education and skills attainment and improving their employment outcomes, while meeting the needs of regional and local employers in growing sectors and industries. We understand that career pathway programs offer a clear sequence, or pathway, of education coursework and/or training credentials aligned with employer-validated work readiness standards and competencies. This model makes it easier for people to earn industry-recognized credentials and to attain marketable skills so that they can more easily find work in growing careers.

ICWDB will facilitate career pathways by: continuing to gather input from industry leaders; working with local and regional education agencies and other partners to develop programs and strategies to prepare unemployed individuals and current workers for careers; adopting career pathways developed throughout the region and implementing them locally; and leveraging resources across fund streams to maximize services for job seekers, including co-enrolling participants in various programs and services to ensure their success.

III. Improve Access to Activities leading to Recognized Post-Secondary Credentials

Making credentials more accessible to job seekers and incumbent workers will require ICWDB to work closely with our education partners to: review credentials that have currently been identified as industry-recognized through the regional planning process; and discuss where local programs need to be developed or expanded to lead to these credentials. We will also need to work with Imperial County businesses to discuss credentials and obtain their buy-in within regard to value.

The Southern Border Regional Plan describes the results of a credential inventory process, where the community college system’s deputy sector navigators identified various currently available credentials and certifications in priority and other key sectors, including: Advanced Manufacturing; Advanced Transportation/Renewable Energy; Agriculture, Water and Environmental Technologies; Energy Efficiency/Utilities; Global Trade and Logistics; Healthcare; ICT/Digital Media; Life Sciences/Biotech; and Hospitality and Tourism. Other in demand certifications across all sectors include: project management (PMP), security clearance, forklift operator certificate and lean/six sigma across all sectors (not just manufacturing).

IV. Facilitating Employer Engagement

Within Imperial County, the Workforce Development Board aims to engage businesses on various levels and in various capacities which will, ultimately, contribute to the employment of county residents in employment within a promising career path. The following information
describes both how we involve business in our system and how we make contact with them.

**Securing Business Involvement with the Workforce System**

The workforce system in Imperial County, which includes ICWDB, the core program partners and many other stakeholders, views business as not only a customer, but as a partner in the system. Business of all types and sizes, including those representing priority sectors, are currently engaged in various ways. The system seeks to expand business participation in the workforce system in all of the following categories.

**Business as Policy Maker:** The WDB is a business-led board. The role of business in setting policy for the ICWDB programs and services is critical to ensuring that programs are relevant to the needs of the local economy and the businesses that make up that economy.

**Business as Advisor:** The development of career pathways, design of training programs, the value of credentials and the content of nearly all services that the system provides are reliant on guidance from business. As regional sector pathways become the primary method to prepare workers for demand-driven jobs, the need for intensive interaction with business will grow. While much of the required industry engagement will take place at the regional level, the ICWDB will continue to interact with and gather input from businesses on a daily basis. This information will be shared throughout the region to inform the development of career pathways and other sector strategies.

**Business as Trainer:** For both new employees and incumbent workers, businesses play an important role in hosting and delivering work-based learning. In sync with the State and Regional Plans, ICWDB and our partners are committed to increasing the involvement of businesses in offering work experience, internships, try-out/job shadowing opportunities, transitional employment, OJT, customized training and apprenticeships. For many jobs and many job seekers, work-based learning offers the ideal structure for learning skills and improving workplace performance.

**Business as Primary Customer:** The board recognizes the role of business as the primary customer of the workforce system. This assertion in no way minimizes our commitment to job seekers, including those with barriers to employment. It merely acknowledges that the workforce system must have a clear and complete understanding of the skills needed by business in order to prepare workers to meet those needs.

**Outreach to and Engagement with Specific Companies**

A primary objective of the ICWDB’s business services team is to make contact and develop relationships with businesses, particularly those within regional and local priority sectors. In part, team members use their own knowledge of local communities to guide their business outreach efforts. However, the workforce system as a whole relies extensively on economic development and business serving organization to provide intelligence about and make introductions to businesses. The county and local cities are crucial partners in this regard, as they interact with new and expanding businesses on licenses, zoning and related issues. Another prominent partner is economic development (including both the public Imperial County Community and Economic Development Department and the private Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation), which provides a wide range of services and support
to companies, including connecting them to the workforce system. Chambers of commerce are an especially important partner in terms of reaching small businesses. ICWDB business services team representatives are involved in activities sponsored by the chambers of commerce in El Centro, Calexico and Brawley.

V. Meeting Business Needs

ICWDB has organized a business services team to outreach and respond to the needs of local businesses. The following activities and services are being used to address the needs of local employers:

- Outreach and education has been a priority for the team, reaching out to the local chambers of commerce in order to engage the business community in various topics such as incentives, labor law and layoff aversion strategies.
- Communication with economic development from every local city plays a crucial role to support the work of the WDB.
- Customizing services is critical to meet the needs of every local employer. These services include targeted recruitment events, where the participation of partners, such as EDD and ICDSS, can play a key role in the success of these efforts.

The business services team and its efforts to engage representatives of key industries in discussions of their needs has proven effective in ICWDB’s work to increase placements and target employment of job seekers in key industries. The next major task for the board and the business service team will be to develop and implement strategies to address employer needs identified during the process of developing the Regional Plan. These include efforts that recognize:

- Workers with strong soft skills are essential for businesses to succeed.
- Soft skills make the difference in securing and retaining employment.
- Previous work experience is key for many well-paying middle-skill occupations.
- Technical skills are required to respond to the latest innovations and technological changes.
- Industry-based certifications are an indicator to employers of a job candidate’s technical proficiency.
- Regional employers have difficulties finding qualified employees and are interested in new ways to find and cultivate new talent
- Small businesses have few jobs posted online, and instead rely on word-of-mouth to hire new employees.
- Imperial County’s economy is strongly tied to the border region and cross-border trade with Mexico.
- Many students are completing programs/graduating with degrees; however, the quality of the labor supply is unknown

Going forward, ICWDB’s business services team will work both regional and locally to address the results of the foregoing findings on cross-sector business needs.

VI. Coordinating Workforce Development Programs and Economic Development
One of the ways in which ICWDB coordinates workforce development programs with economic development is through coordination and partnerships with local and regional economic development organizations. The effectiveness of these relationships is described in Section E-I, below. Coordination is also achieved through the use of economic data, participation in economic analysis, and involvement in economic development initiatives. Following are some examples of such efforts.

ICWDB will continue to utilize tools and services that provide accurate, local labor market data. Of particular use to the board and staff is information on projected industry growth and occupational trends, along with other workforce, education and population demographic information. Currently, ICWDB has a contractual relationship between Economic Modeling Software Inc. Analyst Software (EMSI). Through the use of EMSI, ICWDB staff is able to access key data, including that pertaining to in-demand industries and occupations and the skills needed in order for those industries to function and grow. Data obtained from EMSI is shared with: both the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation and Imperial County Community and Economic Development, the two leading local organizations seeking to improve Imperial County’s economy; and with employers seeking to make important business decisions related to the local workforce.

Through our efforts to identify and prepare skilled workers to meet the needs of business, ICWDB continues to support the CaliBaja Mega-Region Initiative, a long-term economic development strategy that collectively partners San Diego County, Imperial County, and Baja California in Mexico for global competition. The initiative brings together businesses, civic and government leaders to assess the advantages and challenges of doing business in the bi-national region, and ultimately market the region internationally. Funding comes largely from private and public stakeholders, including Bank of America, CDT, County of San Diego, EW Corporation, Kyocera, Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch, San Diego Gas & Electric, San Diego State University, San Diego Workforce Partnership, Solar Turbines, Unified Port of San Diego, Walmart Foundation, Imperial Irrigation District, and Imperial County Workforce Development Board.

The ICWDB and the ICWDO business services team actively participate in the development of Imperial County’s Comprehensive and Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) by contributing information pertaining to vocational training and local workforce development system. Creation of the CEDS Report is spearheaded by Imperial County Community & Economic Development and is discussed further in Section J of this Plan.

VII. Linkage between One-Stop Services and the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program

Among the basic career services described by WIOA is the provision of meaningful assistance in filing a UI claim through the one-stop delivery system. Such assistance may be provided directly in-person by AJCC staff or by referring customers to EDD’s UI resources as follows:

1. Provide in-person guidance to individuals, including individuals identified as having barriers, in filing an UI claim through the various methods, with priority given to utilizing the eApply4UI or UI Online applications; or
2. Direct customers to the UI Public Service Program (PSP) direct line to speak with a UI
PSP Single Point of Contact when a determination is made that the AJCC staff are unable to provide meaningful assistance to file a UI claim because in-person attempts to assist the individual have been exhausted or the customer is considered irate or disruptive.

To promote stronger linkages between the one-stop system and the UI program, the partners are committed to the following:
- UI program representatives will provide AJCC staff training on resources available on the EDD website for filing a UI claim, accessing UI Online, viewing tutorials, and FAQs.
- The UI program will make PSP lines available in AJCC offices as a source of real-time technology for providing meaningful access after all in-person attempts by cross-trained AJCC staff have been exhausted.

## D. Local America’s Job Centers of California (AJCC) System

Imperial County's AJCC delivery system consists of one comprehensive center at El Centro East: AJCC sites in the cities of Brawley and Calexico; and satellite locations at Winterhaven and El Centro West sites, and a new "community on-ramp" location, as follows:

**America's Job Centers of California**
- El Centro East AJCC: 2799 S. 4th Street, El Centro, CA 92243 (Comprehensive Center)
- Brawley AJCC: 860 Main Street, Brawley, CA 92227
- Calexico AJCC: 301 Heber Avenue, Calexico, CA 92231 AJCC Satellites
- El Centro West: 1550 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243
- San Pasqual Family Resource Center: 676 Baseline Road, Winterhaven, CA 92283
- Calipatria-Niland Family Resource Center: 501 W. Main Street, Room 4, Calipatria, CA 92233

These are further described under item D-II, below.

## I. Ensuring Continuous Improvement

ICWDB operates the WIOA Adult and Dislocated Workers system and contracts out the WIOA Youth Program to the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program. Under this structure, which has been in place since the inception of the Workforce Investment Act, quality has been examined through two lenses: performance and compliance. Performance results against the WIOA measures continue to be crucial to determining the value of workforce services, encompassing achievements including placement in employment, wages, credentials and job retention. Compliance reviews, naturally, assess adherence to the rules and policies that govern workforce programs. While measuring both performance and compliance are extremely useful in determining the merits of the workforce system, neither necessarily drives quality.

Workforce boards across the nation have adopted a wide range of approaches to promote continuous quality improvement (CQI) within their systems and among their providers. The Imperial County WDB is committed to ensuring that our workforce programs implement strategies to improve quality by using data and input from customers to inform our decision.
making. Several of the state’s WBDs (including the City of Los Angeles and Los Angeles County) have elected to use the California Council for Excellence (CCE) California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE) Program as to system for examining and measuring quality improvement in workforce programs. The CAPE Program helps organizations in all sectors, including workforce development, continuously improve. The program has been in existence since 1994 and has assisted hundreds of organizations in improving performance. CAPE allows organizations to apply for state-level awards and to receive feedback about their current performance and their opportunities for improvement using the nationally recognized criteria from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. For more than 25 years, the Baldrige Excellence Framework has empowered organizations, from Fortune 500 companies to small non-profits, to accomplish their missions, improve results, and become more competitive. It includes the criteria for performance excellence, core values and concepts, and guidelines for evaluating and scoring an organization’s processes and results. ICWDB plans to review and assess the value that CCE’s CAPE program and the Baldrige framework could bring to the local workforce development system. No later than July 2018, the board will implement this or a comparable approach to fueling CQI in the County’s workforce programs.

II. Facilitating Access to the AJCC System

The cornerstone of Imperial County’s workforce system is ICWDO’s network of AJCCs. The largest of these are located in the three main population centers of the county. Currently, full-service centers in Imperial County are located in the cities of El Centro (population of 42,888), Calexico (population of 38,768) and Brawley (population of 25,191).

Reaching Remote Locations within the County

Smaller communities exist throughout Imperial County. As indicated, a satellite office with part-time staffing is in located Winterhaven (population of 280). Recently, another satellite was established, offering career and business services two days a week, at the Family Resource Center in Calipatria (population of 7,095), providing easier access to northern Imperial County residents.

Improving the Use of Technology for AJCC Services Delivery

Given the large geography of the County, AJCC basic career services are accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the Internet, primarily through sites maintained by ICWDB, CalJOBS and other partners. ICWDB is currently in the process of redesigning its website to improve its online presence and deliver more information with regard to services and WIOA. Additionally, an Imperial County One Stop Facebook page has been created to increase public awareness to job postings, job fairs, and other events. The use of additional social media platforms is under consideration to enhance the accessibility of services for all county residents.

III. Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities

ICWDB’s programs and services comply with WIOA Section 188 and Title 29 CFR Part 38, the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and other applicable codes and regulations. Following are additional details on how our AJCCs
provide access for persons with disabilities.

**Facilities**

The Imperial County Public Works Department has completed a review of AJCC facilities to determine their compliance with federal and state accessibility mandates. As a result of this review, it was determined the facilities meet federal and state accessibility mandates.

**Programs and Services**

Through the provisions outlined herein, the County ensures that ICWDB’s services are accessible to customers with disabilities. An ADA information notice is available to customers using the AJCC resource center that informs them of services, features and accommodations available.

**Assistive Technology and Materials**

Each of the AJCC Centers is equipped with Text Telephone Systems (TTY) for use by persons with hearing or speech difficulties. ICWDB is in the process of reviewing and evaluating additional assistive technology resources. Under consideration are tools that assist persons with disabilities manage visual, auditory, dexterity and other limitations. Prior to making a determination with regard to purchasing a particular product or service, ICWDB will consult with DoR.

**Staff Training and Support**

Specialized staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities was conducted in 2015 by staff from the Department of Rehabilitation office in El Centro. This training focused on “disability etiquette” and covered a wide range of topics on providing effective services to individuals with disabilities. The training provided vital information to ICWDB staff on working with customers with mobility impairments, who have vision loss, are deaf and hard-of-hearing, have speech difficulties, or have diagnosed mental health issues or learning disabilities. As assistive technology and other support systems for customers with disabilities are implemented, ICWDB will arrange for additional training for all staff.

**IV. Roles and Resource Contributions of the AJCC Partners**

Roles and resource contributions of the AJCC partners are embedded within the language of the AJCC Partner MOU, as described below.

**Partner Roles**

The Phase I comprehensive MOU addresses service coordination and collaboration among the AJCC partners and describes roles within the system. Per the provisions of the MOU, the AJCC partners agrees to participate in joint planning, plan development, and modification of activities to accomplish the following:

- Continuous relationship building among all partners.
• Continuous planning in response to state and federal requirements.
• Responsiveness to local and regional economic conditions, including employer needs.
• Adherence to common data collection and reporting needs, including modification and changes, as required.
• Making the appropriate service(s), applicable to the partner program, available to customers through the one-stop delivery system.
• Participating in the operation and development of the one-stop system, consistent with the terms of the MOU and requirements of authorized laws.
• Principally, the workforce services of the AJCCs that the partners provide, either on-site or through electronic connections, include those described in WIOA:
  ✓ Basic Career Services
  ✓ Individualized Career Services
  ✓ Training Services
  ✓ Follow-up Services
  ✓ Employer / Business Services
• Participating in cross-training to ensure staff develops the knowledge, capacity and ability to advocate for their customers’ needs.

The roles of the partners are evolving, and, as continuous partnership building and collaboration occurs, refinement of roles and responsibilities are likely. Expansion or changes in roles would be reflected in future updates/amendments to the MOU.

Partner Contributions

Partner contributions will be described in Phase II MOUs, which will address methods for sustaining the unified one-stop system described in Phase I through the use of resource sharing and joint infrastructure cost funding.

The ICWDB and the AJCC partners have agreed to share costs to operate the comprehensive One-Stop (El Centro East). Contributions will be shared for both infrastructure costs (i.e., rent, utilities, maintenance, equipment etc.) and other costs including WIOA career services. Infrastructure costs will be proportionately shared by collocated partners based on service benefit and FTE methodologies. Other costs, including agreed upon career services (i.e., initial intake, assessment) will be shared by AJCC partners and based on factors such as receipt of benefit and or partner referral. Costs for the One-Stop delivery system will be agreed upon through an Infrastructure Funding Agreement (IFA) and budget identifying partner payment methods as cash, non-cash (in-kind) and or third party contributions. In accordance with federal and state requirements, an infrastructure funding agreement (IFA) will be solidified before June 30, 2017.

V. Memoranda of Understanding

Imperial County has executed a WIOA Phase I Master MOU among all core program providers and mandated AJCC partners. Parties to the MOU include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WIOA Title I Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth</td>
<td>Imperial County Workforce Development Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIOA Title II Adult, Education and Literacy</td>
<td>Central Union High School District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Code</td>
<td>Agency/Institution</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIOA Title III Wagner-Peyser Trade Adjustment Assistance Act Veterans Unemployment Compensation</td>
<td>Employment Development Department</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIOA Title IV Vocational Rehabilitation</td>
<td>Department of Rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Perkins Career Technical Education</td>
<td>Imperial Valley College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title V Older Americans Act</td>
<td>Public Administrators Area Agency on Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Corps</td>
<td>San Diego Job Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American Programs</td>
<td>California Indian Manpower Consortium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers</td>
<td>Center for Employment Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services Block Grant</td>
<td>Campesinos Unidos, Inc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Urban Development</td>
<td>Imperial Valley Housing Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/CalWORKs</td>
<td>Imperial County Department of Social Services</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All Phase II MOUs are in process and will be executed by June 30, 2017. MOUs are included as Exhibit 3 of this Plan.

The process of developing the MOUs involved all of the AJCC partners and the discussions pertaining to its content were instrumental in formulating content for this local plan. This process is described in further detail within Section J of this Local Plan.

VI. Coordination with WIOA Section 166 Grantees

The California Indian Manpower Consortium (CIMC) is party to the Imperial County AJCC Partners MOU. The California Indian Manpower Consortium was formally created in 1978 under state law as a nonprofit corporation for the purpose of working for the social welfare, educational and economic advancement of its member tribes, groups, organizations and Indians and other Native Americans living in its service area, of which Imperial County is part. The membership of the consortium includes federally-recognized American Indian tribes, reservations, rancherias, bands, colonies, terminated rancherias, American Indian groups, entities, and organizations (public or private non-profit) satisfying the requirements set forth in the By-Laws of the California Indian Manpower Consortium, Inc. The primary purpose of the Consortium is to offer training, employment, and other activities designed to meet the employment and training needs of the client population. The principal funding source is the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, under the provisions of Section 166. Within the South Border RPU, CIMC serves Imperial County by outreach conducted via its field offices at the Pala Reservation in adjacent San Diego County. Referrals from between ICWDO and CIMC are made in accordance with the referrals procedures outlined in the MOU. In addition, CIMC has implemented a "mobile app," which enables eligible individuals in Imperial County to connect directly to information and CIMC staff at the touch of a button and instantaneously receive information about training and job opportunities.

VII. Coordination with WIOA Section 167 Grantees

In 2016, the Center of Employment Training (CET), along with the other AJCC partners, entered into a new MOU with Imperial County WDB. CET is a private, non-profit organization offering open-entry employment training and has a proven track record of excellence over decades of partnering with the farmworker community. Programs in vocational training, ESL, and GED preparation emphasize the development of locally
marketable skills with a philosophy of educating the whole person, maximizing self-sufficiency, and decreasing dependency on other direct aid programs. CET also offers referrals for child care while parents are working, supportive services for food and health care, legal services, and immigration and citizenship guidance. In Imperial County, CET operates from a 14,000 sq. ft. campus in El Centro. From this location, CET offers vocational training for the following occupations: Accounting Clerk, Green Building/Construction Skills, Truck Driver, Welding Fabrication, and Retail Operations Specialist, with the last two being WIOA Eligible Training Provider List-approved courses with ICWDB. Per the terms of the current MOU, referrals between CET’s WIOA Section 167 programs and services and those of the WDB and other partners are made through established referral forms and procedures.

VIII. Facilitating Access to Regional Sector Pathway Programs

Over the last several years, our AJCCs and the entire workforce system led by the Imperial County WDB have become increasingly sector-focused. Much of this emphasis is the result work that began with the development of our 2013 workforce plan and continued through our participation in the development of a countywide CEDS plan in 2016. Even more recently, these efforts have been enhanced by the significant regional planning that has occurred throughout the Southern Border RPU.

As a system, the network of partners and stakeholders in Imperial County is turning its attention to industries for which priorities have been regionally established (advanced manufacturing, clean energy/advanced transportation, health care and information & communications technology) recognizing that these sectors offer the greatest promise in terms of creating employment within the region and to offer pathways to the middle class. As described, efforts are underway throughout the region to identify industry need for career pathways programs, which includes training programs being developed by our education partners and business. The AJCCs will concentrate too on making job seekers aware of such programs and the value they offer in terms of employment potential. The AJCCs are perfectly situated to serve as on- ramps to regional sector pathways, as they have to capacity to both promote initiatives and to guide job seekers to the best opportunities. Veterans, disconnected youth, returning offenders, persons with disabilities, English language learners and others with barriers to employment are drawn to the AJCCs because they provide specialized services and support, along with access to resources, such as clothing, transportation and childcare. ICWDB is prepared to review and adopt other programs developed throughout the region. As sector pathways are developed, the AJCCs will promote these programs through media at the center and on-line, during orientations and by customizing career exploration and career counseling resources for targeted industries.

E. Specific Programs, Populations and Partners

The following responses address approaches, strategies and priorities of the Imperial County Workforce Development Board with regard to specific programs, populations and partners.

I. Coordination with Regional Economic Development and Promoting Entrepreneurial
Skills

ICWDB has very strong ties with economic development agencies serving businesses and communities throughout Imperial County. To promote the development of new businesses, our relationship with the local Small Business Development Center is a vital resource for entrepreneurial training and support.

Coordination with Economic Development Agencies

Within Imperial County, public and private interventions combine to provide substantial support for business growth and economic development. On the public side, the Imperial County Community and Economic Development Department works with local, state and federal agencies to develop greater economic opportunities and improve the quality of life for all Imperial County residents. The Department also assists with the improvement of neighborhoods and supports economic growth by securing the financing for housing project programs, water and wastewater treatment plants, road improvements, public services, and other projects. In its dealings with businesses considering location to the area or expansion, the Department leverages the county's capacity to support recruitment, hiring and training via ICWDO. The Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation (IVEDC) represents the private side of economic development within the region and is a master marketing engine, selling the potential of vast acreage, affordability and an untapped young workforce. Among the many benefits of Imperial County that IVEDC promotes to business are the services of the workforce system, including opportunities for businesses to "custom train" their new or growing workforce through work-based learning programs such as on-the-job training and apprenticeships.

Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Support for Small Businesses

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC), operated by the Imperial Regional Alliance in El Centro, is part of the San Diego and Imperial Valley SBDC network, which provides a vast array of technical assistance to small businesses and aspiring entrepreneurs in the region. The SBDC serves small businesses, include entrepreneurs, through advising, low-cost training and other specialized services. A “Start-Up” Program offers training in all aspects of launching a business from licenses to bookkeeping to marketing and setting up shop. In addition, the SBDC offers one-on-one consulting on business start-ups; business and marketing plan development; financial and business analysis; loan packaging, raising capital; cash flow analysis; accounting and record keeping; marketing and sales; government procurement; and international trade.

II. Availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker Employment and Training Activities

Between our description of the local workforce system (Section B.I) and the extensive information provided regarding Imperial County's local AJCC system (Section D), ICWDB's Local Plan provides a comprehensive overview of the type and availability of workforce services within the local area. In addition, though descriptions of planned career pathway programs and local options for training (in Section I, below), information is provided regarding the variety of options adults and dislocated workers have for training.

III. Coordination of Rapid Response Activities
California's Rapid Response system has evolved since the implementation of WIA and WIOA now requires that states and local areas include layoff aversion as component of rapid response programs. The primary purpose of rapid response is to enable affected workers to return to work as quickly as possible following a layoff, or to prevent layoffs altogether. To accomplish this, Imperial County WDB will expand upon our traditional layoff response system, which has been largely reactive, to a system that is, at the same time, proactive and better able to determine and respond to signs of distress indicating the possible need for layoff aversion support. Following is a description of our traditional approach to rapid response and planned enhancements to make these services better able to avert business closures, downsizing and job loss.

**Response to Events of Worker Dislocation**

The ICWDB business services team responds to business closures or downsizing to address the needs of affected workers. Over the years, a highly skilled and effective dislocation response network has coalesced to ensure that individuals experiencing layoffs have clear and comprehensive information about resources available to assist them. Agencies within this network include: EDD, ICWDO, Imperial County Department of Social Services, Imperial County Behavioral Services, Inland Fair Housing and Mediation Board, Imperial County Child Support Services, Imperial County Veterans Service Office, and other community resources as required by individuals' needs. Upon our becoming aware of an event of worker dislocation, typically through a WARN notice, an initial meeting is scheduled at the employer's facility, which is led by EDD and AJCC Business Services staff. EDD representatives describe the process to apply for unemployment insurance benefits, in addition to explaining CalJOBS resources. AJCC staff provides information regarding WIOA and partner services, including job search, classroom vocational training, OJT and more. When applicable, those affected by a closure are made aware of Trade Adjustment Act (TAA) benefits and technical assistance is provided throughout the application process. Once the TAA application is approved, EDD staff is responsible for intake and case management. Center staff provides assessment services and co-enrolls applicants. Once this process is completed, clients receive job search assistance or are referred to training. After training is completed, individuals receive assistance in finding training-related employment.

**Approach to Lay Off Aversion**

Proactive business engagement systems, including layoff aversion, rely on good intelligence. ICWDB will use our strong working relationships with the Imperial County Community and Economic Development Department, the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation, cities within the county, local chambers of commerce and business and trade associations to provide information about businesses that may signal the need for interventions, such as incumbent worker training, that could help to prevent layoffs or avert business closures. When signs of stress are identified, the ICWDB will lead an effort to presents businesses with resources, including not only training and workforce interventions, but assistance that partners can provide or access, such as plans to reduce utility costs, access to capital, tax credits and more.

**IV. Youth Workforce Development Activities**
Through an open, competitive solicitation, the Imperial County WDB procured the Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program (IVROP) as the service provider for all WIOA Youth Program services, inclusive of both the in-school and out of school portions of the program. However, individuals 18 to 24 years of age may also receive services under the Adult Program or, based on displacement from employment, the WIOA Dislocated Worker Program, which are provided through ICWDB's network of AJCCs. Applicants within this age group undergo an initial assessment at the site of application (whether at IVROP, an AJCC or a system partner program) and a determination of what program is best capable of meeting a candidate's needs is made.

Both the IVROP and key components of its Project Training Opportunities for Youth (TOY) are on the local and State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). IVROP's Project TOY provides WIOA services to eligible youth and young adults, between the ages of 14-24, residing in Imperial County. Participants have access to 14 WIOA Youth Program service elements. These services embody a number of effective strategies that have proven successful both locally and throughout the nation. The overarching program goal is to assist youth in improving their long-term labor market opportunities by providing specific education, training, skills development, and comprehensive services and linkages. Within the framework of the WIOA Youth measures, the specific targeted outcomes of program are:

1. Attainment of a degree or certificate, such as high school diploma, GED, or certificate of completion of a vocational, basic skills or academic program.
2. Subsidized or unsubsidized work experience that leads to unsubsidized employment
3. Achievement of post-secondary credentials.

At the heart of the program's approach to ensuring that youth and young adults will succeed in their preparation for employment are the following strategies that IVROP applies in working which each participant:

- Development of an individual service strategy (ISS), which takes into account educational attainment, past work experience, and potential barriers to employment. It also incorporates results of assessments pertaining to interests, aptitudes, and basic skills levels of the participant.
- Comprehensive case management to identify the right mix of service elements for each participant and to provide guidance, support and tracking of progress throughout a youth's participation in WIOA services.
- Workshops and short-term training that helps participants to develop the work readiness and work maturity skills that employers most value.
- Coordination with non-WIOA resources from local education agencies (including IVROP itself), the one-stop partners that participate in the ICWBD-administered AJCC system, and myriad non-profit, community- and faith-based organizations.
- Ongoing professional development of project staff to increase their effectiveness in meeting the needs of participants and to become familiar with proven service models and emerging practices in youth workforce development service delivery.

The ISS that IVROP Case Managers develop with each youth and young adult participant
will lay out a specific plan for his/her development and acquisition of skills, attainment of academic and vocational credentials and preparedness for entry-level employment in demand occupations within priority sectors. In developing and executing these services plans, staff, participants and partners draw from an extensive menu of youth services required by WIOA. These include:

Tutoring, study skills training, and instruction leading to secondary school completion, including dropout prevention strategies: Tutoring supports overall student achievement and often focuses on student engagement and dropout prevention with an emphasis on assisting youth with GED preparation courses, tutoring in all subjects, ESL, remedial courses, and California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE) preparation.

Paid and unpaid work experiences with an academic and occupational education component: Prior to any type of job placement, youth will complete a 20-hour employability class. High School students and out of school youth also have the opportunity to earn ACT's national Career Readiness Certificate. Participants are then connected to business partners that provide paid work experience opportunities.

Occupational skill training, with a focus on recognized postsecondary credentials and in-demand occupations: Youth may participate in one of three vocational training IVROP programs: Certified Nursing Assistant, Commercial Truck Driving, and Security Guard, which include the opportunity to complete the National Career Readiness Certificate. IVROP offers links to CTE programs with over 90 different classes located throughout the Imperial County at all of the local comprehensive high schools. Participants may be referred to Job Corps and CET, which offer an array of vocational training options.

Leadership development activities: IVROP connects participants with leadership activities that incorporate service learning opportunities. Youth participate in leadership development and teambuilding workshops, food distribution with the local food bank, and activities that support seniors and children in the community. Additional leadership activities include assisting non-profit agencies that support farm workers, homeless individuals and low income families.

Supportive services: Youth and young adults have many of same needs as adult participants for support to promote their successful completion of training and services. These services are described under item E-VI, below.

Adult mentoring: Participants may be co-enrolled in IVROP's Project Exit to receive mentoring services or to programs such as the National Youth Program Utilizing Motorbikes (NYPUM), which incorporates mentoring components in its activities.

Follow-up services for at least 12 months after program completion: All youth exited from our program receive follow-up services for at least one year, including leadership development opportunities, support, employment follow-up and tracking, and career and educational development, such as assistance in securing better paying jobs.

Comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse prevention: Youth receive comprehensive guidance and academic counseling and may be referred to additional counseling services on an as needed basis to address academic barriers, drug and alcohol issues, depression, anxiety and more. Both IVROP and the AJCCs maintain linkages with counseling providers throughout the county.

Integrated education and training for a specific occupation or cluster: Service planning often includes a combination of educational programs that provide basic skills, language acquisition, high school completion and vocational training.

Financial literacy education: Participants receive information on making sound financial decisions. Skill development includes strategies that focus on living within one's means;
short-term and long-term goal development. Topics covered include: decision making; earning wages and understanding pay stubs; taxes (local, state, and federal taxes); budget development and spending strategies; understanding banking services, electronic banking services, and checking and saving accounts; budgeting and spending; understanding credit, credit scores, and debt; the importance of savings; short-term and long-term goal development; and investing.

Entrepreneurial skills training: Participants learn about the benefits of entrepreneurship and self-employment. This includes information and strategies that focus on setting up a business and resources that support business creation. The topics include: business structures (Sole Proprietorships, Partnerships, Corporations, LLCs); SWOT analysis techniques; business plan development; business loans; Small Business Development Center services; laws and regulations; marketing and planning; business operations; human resources; innovation; and shutting down a business.

Labor market information about in-demand sectors and occupations: Participants receive education, skill development, and strategies and techniques that allow them to make more informed educational and career decisions. Skill development includes strategies and resources that focus on utilizing labor market information for their short-term and long-term career goals. Topics covered include: definition of LMI; access LMI data; current job openings locally for that career/job/industry sector; information on wages; and projected job growth for demand sectors;

Postsecondary preparation and transition activities: Project staff help prepare youth for post-secondary education. Services include: assessment of A-G requirements; tutoring; remediation courses; general required courses; time management; EOPS services and linkages; work study; buying versus renting book; AP classes, articulated classes providing college credits; SAT/ACT and Accuplacer preparation; applying for Financial Aid; applying for scholarships; monitoring attendance and school progress; tours to local and regional colleges; universities, and vocational training programs; and follow-up to ensure effective transition.

Strategic Approaches to Serving Youth with Disabilities

Youth with disabilities and or special needs often face multiple barriers when seeking employment and or vocational instruction. IVROP has substantial experience working with youth with disabilities and/or special needs. IVROP Youth Development Specialists provide direct services to youth and work closely with school counselors, Department of Rehabilitation staff, the Imperial County Office of Education, and the IVC Disabled Student Services program. IVROP is an approved DOR Community Rehabilitation Programs service provider, meeting all DOR critical standards.

V. Coordination of Workforce and Education Services

The member agencies of the Imperial County Adult Education Consortium are a primary resource for education programs that support the workforce development goals of the board. Led by the Imperial County Office of Education, the consortium also includes the Imperial Community College District and seven local school districts (Brawley Union High School District, Calexico Unified School District, Calipatria Unified School District, Central Union High School District, Holtville Unified School District, Imperial Unified School District and San Pasqual Valley Unified School District). These education agencies play a key role in the local workforce development system by providing:
➢ **Basic Skills Training**, including literacy and numeracy skills, English-as-a-Second Language training and high school diploma/GED preparation classes; and
➢ **Vocational Training** for careers in demand occupations.

Other key education partners include the Imperial County campuses of San Diego State University (in Calexico and Brawley) and IVROP. As described, WIOA Youth Programs are operated by IVROP, which represents all seven of the local school districts listed above.

Moving forward, ICWDB will work closely with our education partners on the development of career pathway programs reflecting specific needs of businesses within the region’s priority sectors. This will be the central initiative in transforming ICWDB services into a fully demand-driven system.

**VI. Coordination of Support Services**

As indicated, job seekers, youth and even incumbent workers using ICWDB workforce development services often require a wide variety of support services to enable their participation in the job preparation and training. During assessment and service planning, needs may be identified. WIOA staff and partners will identify and arrange for services to address each need.

While a portion of WIOA formula and special grants funds is reserved for this purpose, AJCC and Youth Program staff attempt to identify non-WIOA resources. The Imperial Valley Regional Task Force on Homelessness, with which the ICWD is connected, maintains a list of support organizations and programs throughout the county. These organizations, which include public agencies, community organizations and faith-based programs, offer services including, but not limited to the following: personal and family counseling; assistance with utility payments; crisis intervention; emergency housing; transportation assistance (including bus passes and gas vouchers); substance treatment programs; emergency food; clothing; and legal and immigration services.

A copy of the Task Force’s “Imperial Valley Resources” list is included as Attachment 4.

**VII. Coordination of WIOA and the One-Stop System with Wagner-Peyser**

Through a strong working relationship with EDD at the AJCCs and at the policy level, Imperial County WDB ensures that Wagner-Peyser and WIOA services are well coordinated and that they are used to supplement (rather than duplicate) one another in providing services to job seekers. Coordination between these core programs is outlined in the MOU between ICWDB and EDD. Furthermore, in terms of service delivery, all AJCC partners have agreed to: a standard initial intake process (as discussed in Section K); utilize CalJOBS; and have a common cross-referral process, ensuring consistency in capturing basic customer information, recording that information and matching job seekers to resources that will meet their needs. To promote on-going success in collaboration, regularly scheduled meetings and cross training sessions will be conducted on behalf of all partners. WIOA and Wagner-Peyser staff work together on job development activities; shared job recruitments; coordinated job fairs; co-facilitated workshops; employer outreach; and marketing on-the-job training, paid work experience agreements, customized training options, work opportunity tax credits and other incentive programs.
VIII. Coordination of WIOA Title I Activities with Adult Education and Literacy Activities under WIOA Title II

In November 2016, the California Department of Education (CDE) released its Program Year 2017–18 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Request for Applications (RFA). Under this solicitation, responses are due in two phases. General responses are due on February 10, 2017 and supplementary responses are due on May 15, 2017. The second due date provides the opportunity for applications to be compared to state-approved Local Workforce Plans. The RFA indicates that, from May 17 through 30, 2017, LWDBs will review WIOA Title II grant applications for consistency with LWDB plans. The CDE will provide each LWDB the grant applications from eligible providers within the Local Workforce Development Area. The Imperial County WDB will assemble a committee to review applications to ensure that they are aligned with the goals of our Local Plan with regard to: 1) English Language; 2) Adult Basic Education; and 3) Adult Secondary Education (high school diplomas or equivalency). The CDE will consider the recommendations of the LWDBs in making the grant award determinations.

ICWDB is committed to effective coordination with local WIOA Title II programs. The board’s priorities with regard to Title II programs are aligned with those embedded in the State and Regional Workforce Plans. The board seeks to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the basic skills and English language skills training required for local job seekers to be able to participate in and successfully complete the occupational skills training and employment preparation services they need to qualify for employment in a career path that will enable them to achieve self-sufficiency, economic independence and a middle class lifestyle.

IX. Services for Limited English Proficient Individuals

In Imperial County, among those who speak Spanish at home, 43.3% speak English less than very well. This is more than 50,000 people. Clearly there is a tremendous need for training to assist residents in improving their language skills. However, like border regions throughout the Southwestern United States, communities and economies in Imperial County tend to exist along a continuum of bilingualism, where it is possible and, even common, for workplaces to be 100% Spanish-speaking. This is often true in agriculture, warehousing, and some sub-sets of manufacturing, particularly in food production. Better paying jobs, such as those that exist within the Southern Border region’s 4 priority sectors, generally require a strong command of English. ICWDB, therefore, recognizes that many county residents need to improve their English proficiency to be eligible for employment opportunities that will provide a middle class income. However, it is often difficult to persuade adult workers of the benefits of studying English to improve career opportunities and increase their earning potential.

An advantage the region has is terms of providing English language skills training is the commitment of the education community to this goal. From Imperial Valley College to adult education programs operated by all local school districts, there are many ESL classes available at all levels and ICWDB regularly refers participants to these training programs. In relation to need, however, resources are woefully short, even in consideration of additional community-based offerings, such as WIOA Section 167 programs operated by CET.
As indicated in the Regional Plan, improving the English skills of residents throughout Imperial and San Diego counties is a central goal of the workforce system over the next four years. ICWDB’s goals in this area include the following:

- Research non-traditional fund streams, including private philanthropy, to assemble more financial resources for English skills training
- Develop strategies to more effectively market to job seekers the career and financial advantages of developing English fluency
- Assemble a workgroup to assist the board in developing non-traditional strategies for addressing language skills acquisition
- Identify promising practices from across the nation for contextualizing English training within a work environment
- Work with communities of practice statewide to test and evaluate new approaches to teaching English to non-native speakers

F. Grants and Grant Administration

As described below, Imperial County WDB administers WIOA grant funds within the local area in compliance with the requirements of the statute and applicable federal regulations.

I. Entity Responsible for Disbursal of Grant Funds

The entity responsible for the disbursement of WIOA grant funds is the Imperial County Board of Supervisors (ICBOS) through the administration of the Imperial County Workforce Development Office (ICWDO).

II. Process for Awarding the Sub-Grants and Contracts

ICWDO employs a competitive process for the award of all sub-grants and contracts for employment and training services. The process adheres to the procurement requirements specified in Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) policies and procedures, EDD Procurement Directives and the Procurement Policy developed by ICWDB.

Under the approved process, a Request for Proposal (RFP) document is approved by the ICWDB’s Executive Committee and recommended to the full board. The document is then forwarded for formal approval to the ICBOS. Once approved by the Board of Supervisors, a public notice advertising the RFP is posted in various newspapers and periodicals in Imperial, Riverside and San Diego Counties for a minimum of 30 days. Generally, a minimum of six weeks is provided for the receipt of proposals. Two workshops are held to provide technical assistance and guidance to eligible applicants. To ensure transparency, all questions that arise as a result of these sessions are documented in a “question and answer” format and are posted on the ICWDB’s website. After the submission deadline closes, proposals are reviewed by ICWDO’s Fiscal and Program Compliance Departments to ensure that all mandated fiscal and programmatic documentation has been submitted. ICWDB’s administrative analysts complete a compliance review of proposals to ensure that all sections are completed and compiled as specified in the RFP instructions. Proposals are scored by a Review Panel, which consists of individuals from public and private
organizations, and have subject matter expertise. Each Review Panel member is provided an ICWDB-developed Request for Proposal Evaluator Guide and Scoring Rubric document before the formal reading and scoring of submitted proposals occurs.

Final scores are tallied and the highest scoring proposal is recommended to the ICWDB Executive Committee and the full board for funding. After ICWDB approval, a formal recommendation for funding is presented to the ICBOS by the ICWDB Director. The ICBOS is the funding authority.

The two main types of procurements conducted by the ICWDB are: 1) Adult Training Services, and 2) Youth Services. Contracts awarded for Adult training services are for a period of one year. Contract awards for Youth services are generally for a period of two years. All contracts are eligible for a one year extension contingent on available funding and the successful completion of established performance outcomes.

G. Information Pertaining to Performance Goals

Following are the performance goals negotiated with between Imperial County WDB and EDD’s Workforce Service Division leadership on behalf of the Governor and the Imperial County WDB’s chief elected officials. The negotiated indicators of performance are:

Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Program Goals
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program (for Title I Youth, the indicator is participants in education, or training activities or employment in the 2nd quarter after exit).
- The percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program (for Title I Youth, the indicator is participants in education, or training activities or employment in the 4th quarter after exit).
- The percentage of program participants who attain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within 1 year after exit from the program.

Goals Exclusive to Adult and Dislocated Worker Programs
- The median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.
- The median earnings indicator was proposed for Title I Youth in the state plan, but due to insufficient data for use in the adjustment model, it was determined that Youth median earnings to be a "baseline" indicator

Negotiating Performance

In accordance with federal and state guidance published in accordance with WIOA 116(c), the State WDB provided the Imperial County WDB data representing the performance levels that California has negotiated with DOL. On behalf of the local board, ICWDO assembled a performance planning team to review local economic and workforce data. Given unique economic and demographic data for the County (including high unemployment, low levels of educational attainment, limited English proficiency, and basic skills deficiencies), ICWDO was successful in justifying performance levels lower that the
State standards for the Youth program, as represented in the following tables.

### PY 2016-17 Negotiated Performance Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperial County WIOA Performance Measures</th>
<th>State Proposed 2016-17</th>
<th>Negotiated 2016-2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ADULT</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DISLOCATED WORKER</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q2</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q4</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Credential Attainment Q4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>YOUTH</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Employment or Placement Rate Q4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Earnings</td>
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<tr>
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### PY 2017-18 Negotiated Performance Goals

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<th>Negotiated 2017-2018</th>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q2</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Earnings Q2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Q4</td>
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<td><strong>DISLOCATED WORKER</strong></td>
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</tr>
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<td>Employment Rate Q2</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>71%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Median Earnings Q2</td>
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<td>$7,523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credential Attainment Q4</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>YOUTH</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q2</td>
<td>65.4%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Rate Q4</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Earnings</td>
<td>BASELINE</td>
<td>BASELINE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H. Information Pertaining to Federal High Performance Criteria

In addition to assessing the effectiveness and ensuring the continuous improvement of the AJCC system (as discussed in response to item D.1), Imperial County WDB will meet state guidelines associated with existing state policies dealing with WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service and MOUs.

I. Compliance with State-Issued AJCC Policies

The Imperial County WDB has taken action to comply with the state-issued AJCC policies specified in the following directives:

- WSD15-14 – WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service
- WSD15-12 – WIOA Phase I Memorandums of Understanding
- WSD16-09 – WIOA Phase II Memorandums of Understanding

Details on Imperial County WDB’s approach to ensuring compliance are described below.

Compliance with WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service

WIOA made several changes to the priority of service requirement by adding individuals who are basic skills deficient as a priority population, changing intensive services to individualized career services, and removing the provision stating priority of service is only applied if funding is limited.

On the recommendation of the One Stop Policy Oversight Committee, in June 2016, the Imperial County WDB formally approved a policy adopting the priority of service requirements outlined in EDD Directive WSD15-14. In accordance with these guidelines, priority is provided in the following order:

1. Veterans and eligible spouses who are also recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
2. Individuals who are recipients of public assistance, other low income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient.
3. Veterans and eligible spouses who are not included in WIOA’s priority groups.
4. Other individuals not included in WIOA’s priority groups.

Additional information is provided under Item L-III (below) regarding processes utilized in Imperial County WDB programs to ensure compliance with WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service requirements.

Compliance with WIOA Memorandums of Understanding – Phase I

The State Directive on this topic (WSD15-14) indicated that Phase I MOUs were to address service coordination and collaboration among the AJCC partners. These MOUs were to be completed by June 30, 2016. Imperial County WDB complied with this requirement and the MOU, signed by all required partners, is included as Exhibit 3 to this Plan.
Compliance with WIOA Memorandums of Understanding – Phase II

Phase II of the MOU development process is intended to address methods for sustaining the unified system described in Phase I through the use of resource sharing and joint infrastructure cost funding. Imperial County WDB and partner representatives are currently in negotiation on this matter. Phase II MOUs will be completed prior to July 1, 2017, in compliance with WSD 16-09.

I. Information on Training Activities

Imperial County WDB has a long history of successfully leveraging local training programs through use of Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) and the State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). In recognition of the priorities of the State Plan and Southern Border Regional Plan, which are aimed at preparing a job ready workforce to meet industry demand, ICWDB will continue to emphasize training to ensure that candidates have the skills and credentials required for employment in priority sectors and demand occupations. Central to our ability to provide qualified workers to local businesses is making certain that an effective state of programs is available to train workers and that job seekers make good choices regarding training. ICWDB achieves this objective by offering training via ITAs and also using cohort training to meet industry need.

Provision of ITA Training

The ITA policy adopted by ICWDB ensures that limited training resources are used effectively by: limiting training to high demand/high growth industries; coordinating funding for individual training accounts with funding from other federal programs, such as Pell Grants; and reserving WIOA training funds for job seekers who lack skills to successfully compete for employment.

Enrolling Job Seekers in Cohort Training Programs

ICWDB enters into contracts with some providers offering one or more courses with a fixed start date and the need to ensure a minimum number of students are enrolled. In promoting such “cohort training” through the centers, AJCC staff make participants aware of the availability of all training options.

Ensuring Customer Choice in Training Selection

Whether a customer is enrolling in an ETPL-approved course using an ITA or is enrolling in cohort training, ICWDB ensures that clear and comprehensive information is available about: 1) each course or program that the board has approved; and 2) the full range of services available through the AJCC system, including classroom training, work-based learning, direct placement assistance and the programs and services of the one-stop partners.

J. Transparency, Accessibility and Inclusiveness

The Imperial County WDB has provided multiple distinct opportunities for partners,
stakeholders and members of the public to participate in planning and provide input on the Local Plan.

**Involvement of Partners in the Planning Process**

A variety of initiatives have resulted in discussions and decision making that support the local plan. These include the following:

**Regional Planning:** To support the development of the Southern Border Regional Workforce Plan, a committee was formed. The committee met on the following dates:

- Formation Meeting in May, 2016
- Initial Meeting in June, 2016
- Partner Meeting in September, 2016
- San Diego Workforce Partnerships Conference in November, 2016
- Assessment Meeting in November, 2016

Stakeholders represented at one or more of the following regional committee meetings, which served as feedback and planning sessions, were:

- Workforce Development Boards, including ICWDB
- Community Colleges, including Imperial Valley College
- Secondary and Adult Education, including Imperial County Office of Education and the San Diego-Imperial Adult Education Consortium
- Economic Development, including Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation
- Public Partners, including EDD and DoR representatives serving Imperial County
- Community organizations, including those serving the entire region

Additional information about the committee is provided in the Regional Plan.

**Development of 2015-16 Imperial County Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy:**
On October 25, 2016, the Imperial County Board of Supervisors approved an update to the CEDS, which meet the requirements of U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration to compete for funding to help support economic development initiatives in the area. Public, business and non-profit organizations contributing to the development of the CEDS, include: San Diego Gas & Electric, Imperial County Transportation Commission, Imperial County Transportation Commission, Rook Public Relations, CalEnergy, Spectrum, Strictly Business Consulting, Law Office of Steven C. Honse, Rabobank, Campesinos Unidos, Inc., Imperial County Workforce Development, City of Imperial, Imperial Valley College, Imperial Community & Economic Development, Imperial Irrigation District, Imperial Valley Regional Occupational Program, Imperial County Public Health Department, Imperial Valley Resource Management Agency, Imperial County Planning & Development Services. Much of the information from the CEDS report, including workforce development goals for Imperial County, has been incorporated into the WDB's Local Plan.

**Development of Memoranda of Understanding:** The planning process leading to the development of this Plan goes back to the enactment of WIOA and, in many ways, begins with the State and Local plans published in 2013 under WIA. In 2016, one of the major planning activities undertaken by the ICWDB was the development of the MOU with core
program and other one-stop partners. Coordination, system alignment, cross training, and co-enrollment/case management were among the many topics discussed as partners met and agreements were developed. The dialog between partners and ICWDB representatives is continuing, as all work toward developing cost agreements to support a unified system through the AJCCs. The results of the MOU planning process with all partners has contributed significantly to the content of this Local Plan.

**Imperial County WDB Meetings:** Substantial planning takes place under the leadership of the board. The Workforce Development Board is made up of an impressive slate of leaders representing business, labor, education, economic development and the community. During their meetings, board members, staff and individuals representing the public have established priorities that are embedded within the programs and services described in this plan.

**Public Comment and Review**

In accordance with the state and federal guidance, Imperial County WDB opened a 30-day public comment period on February 3, 2017, which concluded on March 4, 2017. Features of the comment period promoting maximum accessibility and inclusiveness included the following:

**Public Notice:** A public notice announcing the availability of the Local Plan for review and comment was placed in local publications and with the Imperial County Clerk of the Board, on February 3, 2017. The notice, which was available, both in print and on-line, and informed the public about: 1) the release of the Local Plan for comment; and the scheduling of a public meeting regarding the Plan on February 17, 2017. The notice of the Plan’s availability was also made available on ICWDB’s website and at the Imperial County AJCCs.

**Availability of Local Plan Document for Public Review:** ICWDB made the Plan available through its website and in hard copy at its headquarters.

**Public Meeting on Local Plan:** On February 17, 2017, ICWDB hosted a Public Meeting on the Local Plan. The meeting included a summary presentation on the Plan and those in attendance were provided the opportunity to submit written comments or provide verbal testimony. A copy of the presentation introducing the Plan is included as Attachment 5.

To ensure that the process complies with physical and programmatic accessibility requirements, the public announcement included TTD/TTY numbers, as well as a statement informing the public that ICWDB-sponsored meetings are accessible to persons with disabilities and that reasonable accommodations are available when requests are made at least 72 hours prior to a meeting. Implementing policies and procedures that make certain that facilities and programs are accessible, ICWDB fully complies with Section 188 of WIOA.

A Summary of Public Comments received is included as Exhibit 7.

| K. Common Intake and Case Management Efforts |
The one-stop partners have worked with ICWDB managers and staff to develop common processes to capture basic information about potential customers that can be used to establish baseline needs and identify resources to address those needs. The following information provides an overview of intake, referrals, co-enrollment and case management that occur through system collaboration at the AJCCs.

Basic Intake Process

Customers may approach the system as walk-ins (coming to an AJCC or partner site), by phone or via the Internet. For those who come to a center, staff welcomes the individuals, conducts a basic oral assessment, collects initial registration data and connects the individual to AJCC/one-stop partner or outside resource based upon customer need. Customers making contact by phone undergo a similar process, while those contacting the system via CalJOBS respond to series of prompts that enable basic registration and information about AJCC services. The end result, in all cases, is determining the services customers need and the most appropriate providers and programs to deliver them.

Methods for Referring Customers among Partners

The AJCC partners have agreed to utilize a common referral process and forms and to modify such processes and forms as necessary to their programs and customers. The referral process uses a referral form with information about the customer and indicates that program to which he or she is being referred for services. Forms may be transmitted to partners electronically or in hard copy.

Co-Enrollment, Case Management and Sharing Information

The partners have the ability to co-enroll participants in cases where their workforce development and support services needs can be met by different funding sources. WIOA emphasizes technology as a critical tool for making all aspects of information exchange possible, including client tracking, common case management, reporting, and data collection. To support the use of such tools, all AJCC partner have agreed to the following:

- Comply with the applicable provisions of WIOA, Welfare and Institutions Code, California Education Code, Rehabilitation Act, and any other appropriate statutes or requirements.
- The principles of common reporting and shared information through electronic mechanisms, including shared technology. For those using CalJOBS, the system provides these features
- Commit to share information to the greatest extent allowable under partners’ governing legislation and confidentiality requirements.
- Maintain all records of the AJCC customers or partners (e.g. applications, eligibility and referral records, or any other individual records related to services provided under this MOU) in the strictest confidence, and use them solely for purposes directly related to such services.
- Develop technological enhancements that allow interfaces of common information needs, as appropriate.
- Understand that system security provisions shall be agreed upon by all partners.

Many of the foregoing objectives on data sharing are aspirational. As indicated, the ability to
fully share data across the workforce system agencies will require agreement and action at the state level. ICWDB and local system partners are prepared to support these efforts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L. Miscellaneous Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The following information is provided to address those items labeled within the Plan guidance as "miscellaneous."

I. Availability of Local Plan to Title II Program Applicants

As indicated in response to item E.VIII, above, applicants for WIOA Title II Adult Education and Family Literacy Act funding for Program Year 2017-2018 will be submitting applications in two stages. The bulk of the application, which deals with content and the proposer's approach to delivering services is due on February, 10, 2017, while the portion that specifically addresses alignment with the Local Workforce Development Board Plan is not due until May 15, 2017. The later due date reflects a point at which Local Plans will have been submitted to and reviewed by the EDD and the California Workforce Development Board and will be available in final or near final form for review. The Imperial County WDB will make the Local Plan available for review by WIOA Title II Program applicants and others as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 3, 2017</td>
<td>Public Comment version posted to Imperial County WDB website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 15, 2017</td>
<td>Revised/Final version posted to Imperial County WDB website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 1, 2017</td>
<td>Final Version (incorporating any changes per State comments) posted to Imperial County WDB website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

II. Ensuring Priority of Service Requirements

As described in Section H, Imperial County WDB maintains and communicates policies to ensure that federal and state guidelines for WIOA priority of service are met. There are various points during the early stages of client interaction when applicant characteristics can be identified so that staff can execute service priority. AJCC messaging informs veterans of priority. In addition, print materials and orientations may quickly inform first time visitors of their qualifying for priority of services. Most often, staff will glean information from registration information that is completed prior to participation in services. Any priority of services characteristics not identified at this point will be identified as individuals complete the WIOA intake, assessment and enrollment process.

III. Coordination of the Local Plan with the Regional Plan

There are no items required for the Local Plan that are being handled instead by the Southern Border Regional Plan. However, the process leading to the development of the Regional Plan was instrumental in informing the content of the Imperial County Local Plan. This is especially true with regard to priority sectors, regional sector pathways/career pathways, the acceptance/value of credentials of businesses and services for segments of the population needing specialized services to prepare for employment, such as English Language Learners.
As discussed in the introduction, the Local Workforce Development Plan for Imperial County is considered part of the Southern Border Regional Plan and is being submitted to the California Workforce Development Board as Part of the that Plan.

M. Local Board Assurances

Included as Exhibit 1 is the required “Local Board Assurances” form, signed by the Chair of the Workforce Development Board and Chief Local Elected Official for the Imperial County WDB.

N. List of Comprehensive One-Stops and AJCC Partners in the Local Area

Included as Exhibit 2 is a list of comprehensive one-stops and AJCC partners within Imperial County.

O. AJCC Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

Included as Exhibit 3 is a fully executed Phase I MOU for all Imperial County WDB partners.

P. Provide the Local Area Grant Recipient Listing Using the Form Provided

Included as Exhibit 4 is the Grant Recipient Listing Form signed by the Chief Elected Official for the Imperial County WDB.

Q. Provide a Copy of Local Board Bylaws

Included as Exhibit 5 is a copy of the Imperial County WDB Bylaws.

R. Provide Program Administration Designee and Plan Signatures

Included as Exhibit 6 is the required “Program Administration Designee and Plan Signatures” form, signed by the Chair of the Workforce Development Board and the Chief Local Elected Official for the Imperial County WDB.

S. Provide a Summary of Public comments received that disagree with the regional and local plan.

The Summary of Public Comments form is included with this Plan as Exhibit 7.

T. Goals

The Imperial County WDB Local Plan is part of the Southern Border RPU Regional Plan and serves to implement regional goals at the local level. However, as is evident throughout the preceding narrative, Imperial County WDB has implemented and maintains systems for management, operations and service delivery that ensure that residents and businesses within the local workforce area have access to high-quality services. Interspersed throughout this Plan are statements reflecting goals and objectives to strengthen, develop and expand certain services and functions at the local level. Additionally, there are goals
expressed in the Regional Plan that will require action at the local level.

Following is a summary of the Imperial County WDB’s goals based on the information provided in the Local and Regional Plans.

**Local Area Operations and Service Delivery Goals**

1. Explore opportunities to bring additional resources to the County for English language skills training.
2. Identify alternate methods and best practices in English language skills training.
3. Convene education and training workgroup to discuss opportunities for career pathway development for regional priority sectors.
4. Investigate options for using technology to reach customers at remote locations.
5. Working with local economic development and community partners, consider new strategies and approaches for layoff aversion.
6. Develop a plan to increase incumbent worker training.
7. Further refine the roles and responsibilities or AJCC partners.
8. Review and evaluate continuous quality improvement systems and adopt an approach no later than July 1, 2018.

**Goals Pertaining to Regional Coordination and Planning**

1. Support sector-focused research.
2. Contribute to the development of regional sector pathways.
3. Participate in human-centered design training.
5. Support regional and statewide efforts for unifying data collection and management across programs and fund streams.

### U. Exhibits and Attachments

Following are the exhibits and attachments that are incorporated into this plan.

**Exhibits**

Exhibit 1: Local Board Assurances
Exhibit 2: List of Comprehensive One-Stops and AJCC Partners
Exhibit 3: Memoranda of Understanding
Exhibit 4: Grant Recipient Listing Form
Exhibit 5: Imperial County WDB’s Bylaws
Exhibit 6: Program Administration Designee and Plan Signatures Form
Exhibit 7: Summary of Public Comments form

**Attachments**

Attachment 1: List of organizations and individuals invited to Public Meeting on Local Plan
Attachment 2: List of individuals attending Public Meeting on Local Plan
Attachment 3: PowerPoint from Local Plan Public Meeting held on February 17, 2017.
Attachment 4: “Imperial Valley Resources” – Support Services and Providers Directory assembled by the Imperial Valley Regional Task Force on Homelessness