

2020-2023 WIOA Regional Plan

(Revised 11/30/2020)

Fox Valley Workforce Development Board

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**Program Year 2020-2023 WIOA Regional Plan
(Revised 8/14/2020)**

Planning Region: NEW North

Local Areas: Fox Valley WDA (#4), Bay Area WDA (#5)

Plan Period: PY 2020 – PY 2023

Prelude 1:

Fox Valley WDB and Bay Area WDB have been engaged in regional planning since 1998 when we created the Employers Workforce Development Network (EWDN). On September 18, 2003, the workforce boards led a partnership that brought Dr. Richard Florida to Green Bay for a daylong planning session with 300 community leaders from throughout NE Wisconsin. In 2004 the workforce boards co-sponsored the NEW Economic Opportunity Study that focused on the regional economy in the 21st century. A NEWEOS implementation committee followed with the workforce boards as central organizers, and in 2005 NEW North was created. Under the NEW North umbrella came NEW Education Resource Alliance (NEWERA) and NEW Regional Economic Partnership (NEWREP). In 2006, the boards played an indispensable role in the creation of NEW Manufacturing Alliance. In recent years, NEW North IT Alliance and NEW Construction Alliance followed with the workforce boards' leadership.

Regional planning was not an idea that began with the passage of WIOA. In fact, legislators learned from the innovative efforts of workforce boards across the country. Regional planning cannot be a matter of checking off boxes on a state form or getting MOUs signed. It is a dynamic process involving building partnerships through hard discussions and pooling resources. It requires true leadership and collaboration. No one in the state has been more effective at regional planning and implementation than Fox Valley WDB and Bay Area WDB. You have only to attend the annual NEW North Summit or the Manufacturing First Expo and Conference to understand the true spirit of regional planning.

Prelude 2:

The coronavirus pandemic is impacting the regional economy, just as the 2002-2005 recession and the Great Recession did. Our regional economy and the workforce challenges will evolve as we go through this. At this point in time however, we do not know very much of what that impact will be or its ramifications during the coming months and years. At the same time, the NEW North economy remains much as it has been in the past

decade. The local workforce system will remain in place and serve as a strong foundation to meet the emerging workforce challenges.

1. *Provide an analysis of the regional labor market data and economic conditions, including:*
 - a. *Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and*
 - b. *The employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations.*

Data will be compiled from the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, occupational Employment Survey, and long-term Industry and Occupational Projections and from DWD labor exchange services such as Job Center of Wisconsin. DWD Regional Economists will provide information that may be supplemented by WDB Business Services Staff.

The NEW North economy, which includes both WDAs, is fundamentally sound with a diversified economy that has been developed collaboratively for two decades.

In-demand industry sectors include: manufacturing, construction, healthcare, insurance, finance, transportation, as well as office/administrative and food preparation/serving. Sales and information technology are occupational skill sets that cut across industry sectors because they are needed in most companies regardless of the sector. On March 9, 2020, there were a total of 13,742 job orders listed on Job Center of Wisconsin for the Northeast region of the state, which also includes WDA 6. Please note that many job orders in JCW represent more than one opening.

A good bellwether for NEW North workforce is the annual “Manufacturing Vitality Index” conducted by NEW Manufacturing Alliance (NEWMA). The 10th annual report was issued in December 2019 with 106 area manufacturing companies surveyed and a 95% confidence level in the survey results. Highlights of the report include:

- 67% of the companies expect to increase sales in 2020
- 60% of the companies expect to increase market share in 2020
- 98% of the companies described their financial situation as “Healthy” or “Quite Healthy” in 2020
- 74% of the companies report difficulty in finding talent
- The most difficult position to fill in the manufacturing sector are: general labor, machine operators, CNC machinists, industrial maintenance, and engineers
- The most in-demand skills are attendance, math skills, communication, industry experience, and flexibility/acceptance of change
- Many employers are finding workforce deficiencies in non-technical “soft skills”
- 46% of the companies anticipated hiring in the first quarter of 2020

- 35% of the companies planned to hire in each quarter of 2020

Information from the other prominent industry sectors, including healthcare, construction, and transportation indicate similar challenges such as finding skilled workers, and deficiencies in soft/employability skills in the applicant pool. Healthcare needs will continue to include registered nurses, pharmacists, physical therapists, health information technicians, and medical coders. At a recent Bay Area WDB meeting, a panel of construction industry leaders indicated that area contractors are turning down work due to a lack of skilled workers in all areas of that industry sector. There are continued skill shortages in areas such as sales and accounting that cut across industry sectors, and there is an emerging need for skilled IT workers across sectors as well.

The NEW North Digital Alliance (formerly NEW North IT Alliance) estimates that 3,000 new IT jobs will be created in northeast Wisconsin by 2021 with an average annual salary of \$77,375. Both workforce board directors have been actively engaged with NEW North's strategic planning and business intelligence initiative which includes a major focus on "Digital Transformation" and its impact on the workforce across industry sectors. So-called "Disruptive Technologies" (digital manufacturing, artificial intelligence, predictive analytics, and robotics) will continue to change the nature of work across the region, and this trend will accelerate. These changes will come fast and furiously, so we need to be prepared. Similarly, NEWMA, in partnership with St. Norbert College's Strategic Research institute, conducted an Industry 4.0 survey last fall, finding the region's manufacturers ill-prepared for the coming changes. An Industry 4.0 Taskforce has been meeting to develop and implement strategies in response to these challenges.

One other central issue in the NEW North strategic planning effort is workforce attraction, which is particularly focused on diversity and inclusion in the workforce, but also encompasses changing skill needs, workforce housing, development of educational systems, and leadership. These are all trends that will have significant impact on the NEW North workforce over the next several years. The *status quo* will no longer be viable.

2. *Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs of in-demand industry sectors and occupations.*

As indicated above, throughout the NEW North region, there is a demand for skilled workers in manufacturing, healthcare, construction, and transportation, as well as across other occupational sectors. Specific occupational areas are listed above. The most significant challenges for knowledge and skill needs to meet employer demand are:

- a. Soft/employability skills

- b. Technical skill training
- c. Adaptation to diversity and inclusion
- d. Preparation for change due to technological innovation.

There are several major challenges to meeting the workforce needs of NEW North employers. The first and most significant is simply a shortage of available workers. This is best documented in the Forward Analytics report, *Falling Behind: Migration Changes & State Workforce* in April 2019. While the workforce system is not charged with the effort to attract workers to the state, we can respond to this need by addressing the barriers experienced by marginalized workers already in Wisconsin such as those in the reentry process, disconnected youth and young adults, youth aging out of foster care, and the ALICE population. The workforce boards have made significant efforts in this area as described in our Local Plans. In addition, part of the career pathway initiatives accomplished in partnership with the technical colleges through the RISE grant have embedded employability skills throughout their curricula.

During the last twenty years, NEW North collaborators have done as well as anywhere else in the state to promote careers in our in-demand occupations by building partnerships between businesses and our schools and colleges. That is reflected in the “Falling Behind” report that indicates significant retention of 15-19 year olds in the state. It is increasingly a matter of not having enough people to hire.

Currently, many area employers will hire and train anyone who demonstrates the ability to show up regularly and work diligently. This will increase post-pandemic. One large area employer recently shared that retention, not recruitment, is the biggest challenge that company faces. The workforce boards work closely with Forward Service Corporation administering the W-2 and FSET programs.

Despite double digit decreases in WIOA funding over the last five years, the workforce boards have also made the most of opportunities such as the Retail Dislocated Worker Grant, Wisconsin Fast Forward, Windows to Work, and other grants to provide technical training options to customers. We have also worked with NEW Manufacturing Alliance and NEW North Digital Alliance to provide access to technical training opportunities.

Diversity and inclusion are also challenges for the regional workforce. We were pleased to host the second “Toward One Wisconsin” conference in NEW North recently that was conducted virtually because of the pandemic. Our WIOA programs also promote enrollment of women and non-Caucasian participants.

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

Prior to the coronavirus outbreak, unemployment throughout the NEW North remained at record low levels and there was an increasing shortage, not just of skilled workers, but of available workers. Much of that remained the case even as unemployment shot up with the coronavirus responses. Since unemployment in the region peaked in April 2020, unemployment in NEW North has plummeted to near pre-pandemic levels. Most NEW North counties are under 5% unemployment in October 2020 and some are under 4%. Almost 635,000 individuals are employed in NEW North in October 2020. The continued retirement of the Baby Boom generation will increase the need for replacement workers in addition to the new positions employers are adding. As a result, subgroups within the available workforce in the region are emerging as target demographics. These subgroups include:

- Disconnected 'at-risk' young adults (ages 16-30)
- The ALICE population
- Mid-career professionals
- Individuals with conviction records

It should also be noted that that much has been achieved during the last decade in connecting K-12 schools with area businesses and with the regional economy. The success of those efforts was clearly demonstrated in Forward Analytics' *Falling Behind: Migration Changes and State Workforce* report (April 2019) showing a significant positive change in the retention of 15-19 year olds statewide since 2010. NEWMA and the NEW North IT Alliance have numerous K-12 initiatives that serve as best practices.

In 2015 Bay Area WDB was awarded a contract from Wisconsin Department of Children and Families to administer the Foster Care Independent Living (IL) grant for all 17 counties of the two workforce boards. The IL grant brings a much needed focus on an extremely vulnerable population, Youth Aging Out of Foster Care, and it has done much to promote the coordination of WIOA Youth services in the NEW North region.

The 2016 Wisconsin United Way *Asset Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed* (ALICE) report, updated in 2018, found a significant portion of the NEW North workforce that is underemployed and struggling financially. The 2018 update of the ALICE report observes:

Low-wage jobs continued to dominate the employment landscape in Wisconsin, with 62 percent of all jobs paying less than \$20 per hour. Although unemployment rates fell, wages remained low for many occupations. With more contract work and on-demand jobs, job instability also increased, making it difficult for ALICE workers to meet regular monthly expenses or to save.

The ALICE population includes significant numbers of households in the working population, estimating that 33% of households headed by someone ages 25-44 are struggling financially, as are 32% of households headed by someone 45-64 years of age.

The ALICE population represents a significant opportunity to both assist families economically and meet employer needs. Strategies for the ALICE population include career awareness and planning services, access to training opportunities, and supportive services. We anticipate that people in the ALICE population will be among those most negatively impacted by the coronavirus pandemic.

As the Baby Boomers retire, the next two generations, GenX and Millennials, have higher percentages of college-educated members. Worker dislocations in the coming years will increasingly affect those more educated age groups, but the current public workforce system has limited experience with them and is poorly equipped to meet their needs. NEWMA recently conducted a study of young workers, ages 18-30, and asked about their job seeking preferences. The top three job search tools were Indeed, Google Search, and family/friends. Job centers and traditional job fairs ranked very low in that survey. The career movement of these workers, ages 20-55 in 2020, will have to be better understood and connected to employer needs. Bay Area WDB conducted a survey of the 500 professional workers displaced in 2019 when the Shopko corporate headquarters closed in Green Bay as a means of gathering important insights into GenX and Millennials workforce needs. More effective use of social media and adaptation to the changing needs of younger workers who have more experience with career planning and more knowledge of the regional economy will be required.

Wisconsin currently incarcerates 22,000 men and women while another 66,000 are on community supervision. That is a significant workforce waiting to be tapped. Bay Area WDB started the *Windows to Work* reentry program in 1998 and it was expanded statewide in 2010. Fox Valley WDB has successfully administered W2W at the Oshkosh and Redgranite prisons for ten years. Bay Area has active programs at Taycheedah and Kettle Moraine and is in the process of starting a pilot W2W program at Green Bay Correctional. The workforce boards and our job centers have developed partnerships with DOC Community Corrections agents. Statewide efforts between DWD and DOC need to be connected to local resources and support systems to facilitate successful reentry.

4. *Describe efforts that have taken place, or are anticipated during the planning period, to assess the need for and establish regional service strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements. In addition:*

Each board has Shared Delivery of Service Agreements with partners within their respective local areas. Please refer to the two Local Plans for a description of those agreements. No formal agreements are anticipated between the two workforce boards within the region.

- a. *Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the planning region to better coordinate workforce development programs and services with regional economic development services and providers;*

- b. *Describe how the planning region will strategically coordinate workforce development activities with all required partners (Title 1, Job Corps, Migrant and Seasonal Farmworker, native American, YouthBuild, Title II, Title IV, Title V, Trade Adjustment Assistance, Job for Veterans State Grants, Unemployment Compensation, Reentry Employment Opportunities, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education, Community Services Block Grant, Housing and Urban Development employment and training programs, FSET, and TANF);*
- c. *Describe the strategies and services that will be used in the planning region to strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs; and*
- d. *Provide a description of how the planning region will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the region with statewide rapid response activities, as described in Section 134(a)(2)(A).*

Fox Valley WDB and Bay Area WDB have been developing regional service strategies since the two boards co-funded the NEW Economic Opportunity Study in 2004 which resulted in the creation of the NEW North regional economic development agency in 2005. Our joint efforts also resulted in the creation of the three primary industry sector alliances with which we closely collaborate in program development and training initiatives.

- a) Fox Valley WDB and Bay Area WDB have strong ties through the NEW North economic development agency that consists of the counties of both WDAs. NEW North has undertaken a very aggressive strategic planning initiative with which both workforce boards are engaged. NEW North and NEW Manufacturing Alliance are also working with the St. Norbert College Research Institute on a “Business Intelligence Study” that both workforce boards participate in. The local economic development agencies in the NEW North counties also have their own organization, NEWREP, that meets monthly. The Fox Valley and Bay Area directors jointly provide an annual workforce update to NEWREP and are regularly consulted on workforce issues. The regional industry partnerships are also NEW North based, so the activities of NEW Manufacturing Alliance, NEW North Digital Alliance, and the nascent NEW Construction Alliance connect with both workforce boards on a regular basis. NEW Education Resource Alliance (NEWERA) is a NEW North based collaboration of postsecondary educational institutions that also provides valuable input to the workforce boards.
- b) Fox Valley WDB and Bay Area WDB are in a unique relationship sharing responsibilities in the Fox Cities Workforce Development Center in Menasha through which Bay Area serves Outagamie County and Fox Valley serves Calumet, Winnebago, and other counties. Both boards are represented on the job center Management Team, so regular meetings occur with each other and with partner programs who are invited to Management Team meetings. We have a cooperative relationship established through the Fox Cities Workforce

Development Center MOU and Shared Delivery Cost Agreement. During the planning period a strategy to enhance communication between the two Business Services Teams will be developed. Bay Area WDB also administers the Foster Care Independent Living Grant (IL) for the entire 17-county region through a contract with Department of Children and Families. During the plan period, the boards plan to develop a formal agreement to refer IL participants in the Fox Valley counties for WIOA Youth services with Fox Valley WDB.

- c) The same individual represents the UI Division on both workforce boards and that serves to link the region. The responsibility for coordinating the One-Stop system and UI services falls mainly on the two Job Service Supervisors in Regions 4 and 5. During One-Stop monitoring, workforce board monitors will review the availability of UI information. Both boards accept referrals from RESEA sessions conducted by Job Service partners.
 - d) The commuting patterns within NEW North make it clear that we have a workforce that moves around within the 17-county region. That means that any dislocation can affect workers in counties other than the one in which the actual closing or layoff occurs. This is particularly true in the Outagamie/Calumet/Winnebago area, but in other subregions as well. The Rapid Response Teams in each WDB coordinate carefully when a dislocation occurs, and the respective program managers communicate regularly with the intention that an eligible dislocated worker can receive services at any of the NEW North job centers.
5. *Describe the development and implementation of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the planning region and explain how sector partnerships will be utilized to facilitate the engagement of employers in workforce development programs. Regions should consider:*
- a. *Current in-demand industry sectors and occupations within the region;*
 - b. *The status of regional collaboration in support of sector initiatives;*
 - c. *Regional sector priorities based on data driven analysis; and*
 - d. *Business involvement and public-private partnerships in current initiatives.*

Most of the sector initiatives in the region have been NEW North based, covering both WDAs. The exception are the three healthcare alliances (Fox Valley, Green Bay Area, and Lakeshore) which now operate independently of the workforce boards. There is active engagement of the business sector in all these initiatives. Their level of organization provides the workforce boards with ready access to information about these key economic sectors.

Fox Valley and Bay Area together helped create and sustain NEW Manufacturing Alliance beginning in 2006 which now has almost 200 company members, 69 Associate members, and 49 Affiliate members. NEWMA is arguably one of the most successful industry sector alliances in the country and has been recognized as such with national

awards. NEWMA now operates financially independent of the workforce boards but provides regular updates to them. In addition, NEWMA initiatives such as the Talent Risk Management survey, the Industry 4.0 initiative, the Young Workers survey, as well as the annual Vitality Survey provide valuable information to the workforce boards. NEWMA's creative efforts have set a high bar for industry leadership with initiatives such as Get-Real Math videos, Excellence in Manufacturing/K-12 Partnership awards, SeaPerch competition, and the annual Manufacturing First Expo. The NEWMA Executive Director is a member of the Bay Area Business Services Team. A bi-monthly publication, *Insight on Manufacturing*, provides regular communication with board and business team partners.

The initiative that resulted in the creation of the NEW North Digital Alliance was begun in 2013 with the assistance of both workforce boards who co-funded the *NEW IT Pipeline* study along with NEWERA to support the work and development of that important and growing industry sector. The initiative ended up under the NEW North umbrella and has over 100 contributing supporters. NEW North Digital Alliance provides value-added information to the workforce boards on a regular basis. A monthly newsletter (*IT Tech*) and quarterly magazine (*Insight on Technology*) provide regular communication with board and business team partners. Please note that the NEW North IT Alliance recently changed its name to NEW North Digital Alliance.

There is a current effort to develop the NEW Construction Alliance supported by both workforce boards. In its nascent stage, NEWCA has 20 dues-paying members, has incorporated and has engaged the services of an executive director. One outcome of this effort has been increased involvement of construction companies in offender reentry efforts.

NEWMA, NCMMA, NEW North Digital Alliance, and NEWCA all are actively recruiting employer members for their respective alliances and each coordinates carefully with the workforce boards to increase employer engagement in regional workforce activities and programs. NEWMA and NEW North Digital Alliance have been especially active in engaging employers in skill training opportunities such as Wisconsin Fast Forward.

No additional data is required to understand the regional sector priorities. That has been done in the past and this Regional Plan is forward looking. We have understood for many years what sectors drive the regional economy. In fact, the two workforce boards played an indispensable role in the development of the regional economy when we co-sponsored the NEW Economic Opportunity Study (NEW EOS) in 2004. Please refer to that document for any required data. You might also refer to the "Building the IT Talent Pipeline" study that the two workforce boards co-sponsored in 2015. NEW Manufacturing Alliance annually publishes their "Manufacturing Vitality Study" as well as sponsoring targeted survey projects.

6. *If determined appropriate by the planning regions, describe how administrative cost arrangement have been/will be coordinated, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, or discuss why these are not appropriate for the planning region at this time. Regions may consider current or proposed resource leveraging agreements or establishment of a process to evaluate cost of sharing agreements.*

The county leaders in each WDA and the workforce boards do not consider it appropriate to coordinate or pool administrative resources at this time. Both boards are partners in the Fox Cities Workforce Development Center in Menasha and will be sharing costs through an infrastructure agreement. As indicated above, there is a substantial amount of regional coordination that exists between the workforce boards through NEW North, NEWERA, NEWREP, and NEWMA. At the same time, separation allows each area to respond to the unique requirements of the citizens in the respective WDAs.

7. *If determined appropriate by the planning region, describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services, or discuss why these are not appropriate for the planning region at this time. Regions may consider:*
 - a. *Establishing a process to assess coordination of transportation and other supportive services delivery; and*
 - b. *Whether, and if so, how, to enhance the delivery of transportation and other supportive services delivery.*

At this time, neither the county leaders nor the respective workforce boards consider it appropriate to coordinate transportation and other supportive services costs. One size does not fit all, particularly in serving the large northern region of Bay Area as well as the three Indian tribes. Continued decreases in the WIOA funding allocations over the last five years restrict opportunities to innovate. The most effective way to enhance the delivery of transportation and supportive service delivery would be to allocate a portion of the WIOA Governor's 15% set aside funds to the boards for that purpose.

8. *Describe other strategies and services that will be used in the planning region to support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the planning region.*

As described above, both workforce boards participate actively in the three industry sector alliances in NEW North. Both are active in the various NEW North initiatives that support regional business growth and development. In addition, both workforce boards are actively engaged in writing and administering Wisconsin Fast Forward grants for area businesses or groups of companies. Assistance with Fast Forward training programs is a true value-added service to businesses. The Fox Valley board is very active on social media as a way of reaching out to the business community, and the Bay Area director has established himself as speaker and presenter to businesses. Both

boards will continue to develop and implement strategies to promote work readiness skills and in-demand occupations in key industry sectors.

9. *Describe how career pathways will be used to meet the needs of employers and support work-based learning opportunities.*

Both workforce boards were active with the four NEW North technical colleges (NWTC, LTC, FVTC, and MPTC) during the years when the RISE grants (2015-2018) were used to develop career pathways in the region. WIOA training has been carefully coordinated with those career pathway opportunities which are now embedded in our regional system. During the last several years, opportunities for work-based learning have exploded throughout the region with significant increases in youth apprenticeship participation and in the growth of registered apprenticeships through the WAGE\$ grant. Bay Area has had particular success with the WAGE\$ initiative through our subcontractor, Lakeshore Technical College. Partnerships between K-12 schools and area businesses, particularly in manufacturing and construction, continue to expand in creative ways in partnership with chambers of commerce and county economic development offices.

NEW North INSPIRE has been a particularly well-organized effort to connect K-12 Academic and Career Planning (ACP) programs with regional businesses. Both workforce boards have been engaged in the effort that is now being led by CESA #6, CESA #7, and CESA #8, whose districts encompass the NEW North region. INSPIRE Sheboygan has been the model for a successful program, and the workforce boards played a key role in convening this regional partnership in 2017.

10. *Describe the agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c) for local areas or the planning region. Describe if the planning region is negotiating performance as a region or as individual local areas.*

For the planning period, PY 2020-2023, WIOA performance levels will be negotiated as individual local areas. There are unique aspects to both the current WDAs that would be difficult to account for in a single regional plan.

11. *Briefly describe the activities and steps taken to develop this regional plan.*

For the purposes here, the two workforce board directors, in consultation with their respective staff, worked through the regional planning questions and agreed upon the documentation as submitted. It must be noted, however, that the Fox Valley WDB and Bay Area WDB have worked closely together on regional planning since before the NEW Economic Opportunity Study in 2004. Our joint efforts have achieved remarkable

success in the creation of NEW North, NEW Manufacturing Alliance, and NEW North IT Alliance.

12. Describe the process used by the local board in this planning region to provide an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and representatives of labor organizations, and other public input into the development of the plan prior to its submission.

The Regional Planning portion will be included as part of the WIOA Local Plan for both WSDA #4 and WDA #5. Each workforce board will release their respective WIOA Local Plans for the required 30-day public comment period through their normal channels on the schedule set up by DWD for plan approval and submission.