

**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Local Plan
July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2020**

Local Area:

Midlands

Counties within the Local Area:

Fairfield, Lexington and Richland

Local Area Administrator and Contact Information:

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Attachment B: Local Plan Requirements

The local plan serves as a four-year action plan to develop, align, and integrate local area service delivery strategies with those that support the State’s strategic and operational goals. In partnership with the chief elected officials, each Local Board must develop and submit a local plan to identify and describe the policies, procedures, and activities that are carried out in the local area, consistent with the strategic vision and goals outlined in the State Plan and the respective regional plan. The local plan must include:

- Section I: Workforce and Economic Analysis
- Section II: Strategic Vision and Goals
- Section III: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies
- Section IV: Program Design and Evaluation
- Section V: Compliance

Section I: Workforce and Economic Analysis

1. **An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions, to include existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis shall include:**
 - **The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**
 - **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment; and**
 - **An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**

Labor Market Information and relevant related area workforce data has driven the planning process for the Midlands Area for many years - prior to both WIOA and WIA. The Midlands Area’s five year priorities, goals and plans focus around an analysis of the current and emerging trends that will shape the needs of employers. For the purposes of our planning we have evaluated and considered data both as a Local Workforce Development Area and as a member of the Central Region.

According to the data from the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (*Industry Employment Projections Program – Local Workforce Investment Area Industry Employment Projections, 2012-2022*), the Midlands forecast for job growth is strong. Total employment projections into 2022 indicate 11.8 percent growth, which equates to more than 39,000 additional jobs being created. These figures place the Midlands area second only to the Trident Area in growth. The projections indicate the Midlands Area is not only experiencing continued recovery from the Great Recession, but is positioned for significant growth. With growth comes the challenge of ensuring our Area is acting to prepare and develop the talent for the emerging workforce needs of business. The Midlands Area benefits from the diversity of the blend of metropolitan and rural areas. Convenient transportation systems link these areas together allowing for expanded commuting patterns, and therefore a diverse workforce that exists beyond the boundary lines of the Workforce Development Area.

The elements of labor market data for the Midlands Area planning includes information from SC DEWs Business Intelligence Reporting, and include existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; employment needs (of employers); knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs; current workforce of the area and region; and the education and training providers/opportunities.

Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations

Chart 1

Community Profile

Midlands

Labor Market Projections
Growing Occupations
 (County/Metropolitan Statistical Area Data Unavailable)

Note: Projections are available by Workforce Investment Area (WIA). The data displayed is selected from the appropriate WIA.

Midlands	2012	2022					
Occupation	Estimated Employment	Projected Employment	Percent Change	Replace	Growth	Total	Average Salary
Interpreters and translators	121	200	65	2	8	10	\$ 49,000
Home health aides	2,561	3,745	46	49	118	167	\$ 19,630
Diagnostic medical sonographers	208	302	45	3	9	12	\$ 52,696
Physical therapist aides	154	223	45	3	7	10	\$ 23,188
Personal care aides	1,536	2,211	44	11	68	79	\$ 19,963
Physical therapist assistants	252	358	42	6	11	17	\$ 70,796
Healthcare social workers	621	861	39	13	24	37	\$ 38,971
Medical secretaries	889	1,228	38	11	34	45	\$ 30,548
Physician assistants	177	244	38	3	7	10	\$ 75,558
Market research analysts and marketing specialists	990	1,355	37	14	36	50	\$ 53,908
Dental hygienists	575	784	36	15	21	36	\$ 50,126
Meeting, convention, and event planners	270	365	35	4	10	14	\$ 48,367
Operations research analysts	111	150	35	2	4	6	\$ 62,568
Physical therapists	586	789	35	14	20	34	\$ 63,131
Brickmasons and blockmasons	96	129	34	1	3	4	\$ 38,391
Welding, soldering, and brazing machine setters, operators, Information security analysts	67	89	33	2	2	4	\$ 34,090
Medical assistants	1,173	1,540	31	22	37	59	\$ 28,576
Industrial machinery mechanics	709	929	31	20	22	42	\$ 55,058
Helpers--carpenters	107	140	31	2	3	5	\$ 30,527

Occupations are sorted by highest estimated percentage growth from estimate year to projection year.

Source: S.C. Department of Employment & Workforce - Occupational Projections

Table 1
Industry Data

<u>Element</u>	<u>Midlands Workforce Area</u>	<u>Central Workforce Region</u>
New Hires by Industry (10 Highest)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administrative/Support/Waste mgmt. 2. Accommodation & Food Services 3. Retail Trade 4. Health Care & Social Assistance 5. Professional, Scientific, and 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Administrative/Support/Waste mgmt. 2. Accommodation & Food Services 3. Retail Trade 4. Health Care & Social Assistance 5. Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services

	Technical Services 6. Construction 7. Manufacturing 8. Public Administration 9. Educational Services 10. Other Services (except Public Admin.)	6. Manufacturing 7. Construction 8. Educational Services 9. Public Administration 10. Other Services (except Public Admin.)
Turn-over by Industry (10 Highest)	1. Administrative/Support/Waste mgmt. 2. Accommodation & Food Services 3. Arts, Entertainment & Rec. 4. Construction 5. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing... 6. Retail Trade 7. Other Services (except Public Admin.) 8. Real Estate, Rental & Leasing 9. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 10. Transportation & Warehousing	1. Accommodation & Food Services 2. Administrative/Support/Waste mgmt. 3. Arts, Entertainment & Rec. 4. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing... 5. Construction 6. Retail Trade 7. Real Estate, Rental & Leasing 8. Other Services (except Public Admin.) 9. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 10. Transportation & Warehousing
Labor Market Projections (Total Employment by Industry) 2012 - 2022	Total Employment, All Jobs: 11.80% + 1. Construction (28.07% / 2.5%) 2. Health Care (25.47% / 2.3%) 3. Professional, Scientific... (25.19% / 2.27%) 4. Admin./Support (19.09% / 1.76%) 5. Transportation & Warehousing (16.98% / 1.58%) 6. Real Estate, Rental & Leasing (16.05% / 1.50%) 7. Management of Companies & Enterprises (12.60% / 1.19%) 8. Other Service (not public admin.) (12.49% / 1.18%) 9. Arts, Entertainment & Rec. (12.33% / 1.17%) 10. Accommodation & Food Services (12.18% / 1.16%)	Total Employment, All Jobs: 12.65% + 1. Construction (27.96% / 2.5%) 2. Health Care (26.54% / 2.38%) 3. Professional, Scientific... (25.19% / 2.27%) 4. Admin./Support (19.55% / 1.80%) 5. Real Estate, Rental & Leasing (16.67% / 1.55%) 6. Transportation & Warehousing (14.23% / 1.34) 7. Arts, Entertainment & Rec. (13.24% / 1.25%) 8. Mining, quarrying, and oil... (12.87% / 1.22%) 9. Management of Companies & Enterprises (12.60% / 1.19%) 10. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing... (12.43% & 1.18%)

Table 2
Occupation Data

<u>Element</u>	<u>Midlands Workforce Area</u>	<u>Central Workforce Region</u>
Projections by Occupation (Openings – Growth, 10 Highest)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Office/Admin Support 2. Healthcare Practitioners & Tech. Operations 3. Healthcare Support 4. Sales & Related 5. Education, Training & Library 6. Food Preparation & Related 7. Transportation & Material Moving 8. Construction & Extraction 9. Business & Finance Operations 10. Management 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Office/Admin Support 2. Health Practitioners & Tech. Operations 3. Food Preparation & Related 4. Sales & Related 5. Education, Training & Library 6. Construction & Extraction 7. Production Occupations 8. Transportation & Material Moving 9. Business & Financial Operations 10. Management
Growing Occupations (Percent Change, 10 Highest)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpreters & Translators 2. Home Health Aides 3. Diagnostic Medical Sonographers 4. Physical Therapist Aides 5. Personal Care Aides 6. Physical Therapist Assistants 7. Healthcare Social Workers 8. Medical Secretaries 9. Physician Assistants 10. Market Research Analysts & Marketing Specialists 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interpreters & Translators 2. Home Health Aides 3. Diagnostic Medical Sonographers 4. Physical Therapist Aides 5. Physical Therapist Assistants 6. Medical Secretaries 7. Physician Assistants 8. Radiation Therapists 9. Magnetic Resonance Image Tech. 10. Personal Care Aides
Declining Occupations (Percent Change, 10 Highest)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Entry Keyers 2. Textile Knitting/Weaving machine setters... 3. Textile Winding/Twisting machine setters... 4. Postal Service Clerks 5. Computer Operators 6. Postal Service Mail Sorters 7. Postal Service Mail Carriers 8. Prepress Technicians & Workers 9. Switchboard Operators 10. Postmasters & Mail Superintendents 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data Entry Keyers 2. Textile Knitting/Weaving machine setters... 3. Textile Winding/Twisting machine setters... 4. Postal Service Mail Sorters 5. Postal Service Clerks 6. Computer Operators 7. Textile Cutting Machine Setters 8. Prepress Technicians & Workers 9. Meter Readers, Utility 10. Information & Record Clerks

Table 3
Employment needs of Employers/Business

<u>Element</u>	<u>Midlands Area</u>		<u>Central Region</u>		<u>South Carolina</u>	
Job Openings (By Number, PY15)	Jun-16	12,337	Jun-16	18,726	Jun-16	61,518
	May- 16	12,368	May- 16	18,212	May- 16	63,126
	Apr-16	13,574	Apr-16	19,764	Apr-16	67,021
	Mar-16	13,929	Mar-16	20,000	Mar-16	61,889
	Feb-16	13,616	Feb-16	19,831	Feb-16	64,238
	Jan-16	13,409	Jan-16	19,511	Jan-16	56,427
	Dec-15	12,622	Dec-15	18,432	Dec-15	60,418
	Nov-15	14,476	Nov-15	20,574	Nov-15	73,219
	Oct-15	14,877	Oct-15	21,052	Oct-15	71,138
	Sep-15	14,769	Sep-15	20,871	Sep-15	71,372
	Aug-15	14,378	Aug-15	20,410	Aug-15	71,760
	Jul-15	14,239	Jul-15	20,482	Jul-15	73,050
	Avg. Openings	13,716	Avg. Openings	19,822	Avg. Openings	66,265
	Percent of Openings	69.20% (Area) 20.70% (SC)	Percent of Openings	29.91% (SC)		
	Avg. UI	5.09%	Avg. UI	5.61%	Avg. UI	5.56%

The areas of in-demand and growth employment are in line with several key factors that make the Midlands unique; the Midlands is the geographic center of the state, encompasses the state capital and much of the state's government, hosts a diverse cross-section of the South Carolina industries, and is well connected via the interstate system to the Charleston Port and Charlotte, NC. These factors put *Existing Key Industry Sectors* such as **Healthcare, Construction, Information Technology, Diversified Manufacturing, Transportation/Distribution/Logistics and Business** at the forefront of employment in the Midlands Area. In many cases, there is a commonality or commentary connection between two or more of the industries. For example, growth in the Diversified Manufacturing Sector drives increases in Construction. Currently, the top ten occupations in these Industry Sectors include **Home Health Aides, Personal Care Aides, Medical Assistants, Market Research Analysts, Medical Secretaries, Industrial Mechanics, Health Care Social Workers, Physical Therapists, Dental Hygienists, and Meeting/Event Planners**.

The data available indicates that these existing sectors will continue the trend of growth into the future, and remain the critical basis of Industry the Midlands Area. The occupations that become more in-demand will result in shifting needs and levels of demand by employers. By the numbers of projected future openings and job needs, the following are identified as the top ten emerging in-demand occupations: **Home Health Aides, Personal Care Aides, Medical Assistants, Market Research Analysts, Medical Secretaries, Industrial Mechanics, Health Care Social Workers, Physical**

Therapists, Dental Hygienists, and Meeting/Event Planners. Based on the trend, it appears that the emerging trend could be considered more of a continued growth. A few outliers such as Interpreters and Translators shows a dramatic increase in percentage (65 %) growth, however the number of anticipated openings represent a relatively low overall representation of occupations in the area.

Knowledge and Skills Necessary to Meet Needs/Demands

Table 4
Growing Job (2012-2022) by Education for Midlands LWDA

<u>Education/Training</u>	<u>By Number</u>	<u>By Percent</u>
Associate's Degree	2,931	7.9%
Bachelor's Degree	7,162	19.2%
Doctoral or Prof. Degree	1,111	3.0%
High School Diploma/GED	12,641	34.0%
Less than HS/GED	8,991	24.1%
Master's Degree	1,054	2.8%
Postsecondary, Non-Degree	2,843	7.6%
Some College, No Degree	501	1.3%
Total	37,234	100.0%

	<u>Certification</u>	<u>Soft Skills</u>	<u>Hard Skills</u>
1.	Driver's License	Oral/Written Communication	Quality Assurance
2.	Certified Registered Nurse	Integrity	Technical Support
3.	Basic Life Support	Team-orientated/Teamwork	Structured Query Language
4.	Commercial Driver's License	Marketing	Preventive Maintenance
5.	Basic Cardiac Life Support	Microsoft Office	Medicaid
6.	Cert. in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	Detail Oriented	Quality Control
7.	Continuing Education	Customer Service Oriented	Computer-based Training
8.	HAZMAT	Problem Solving	Preventative Maint. Inspection
9.	Cert. Nursing Administration	Self-starting/Self-motivation	Bilingual
10.	Licensed Practical Nurse	Work Independently	Geriatrics

The diverse economy and workforce of the Midlands leads to variety of knowledge, skill, and educational needs. The trend of Sectors and Occupations that show the most demand for future growth fall into what is coming to be known as Middle Skilled Jobs. Middle Skill jobs are those that

generally require some significant education and training beyond high school, however less than a bachelor's degree. These include *technical training, industry certifications, and stackable credentials* in addition to traditional Associates Degrees. Table 4 shows the 10 highest areas of Certification and Hard Skills needs center around the ***Healthcare, IT, Diversified Manufacturing Sectors***. Across all sectors, regardless of job training requirements, employers consistently report a need for stronger Workplace Soft Skills

The alignment of industry sectors and occupations between the Midlands Area and Central Region is quite beneficial for our planning. This close correlation has meant that our work (as a WDA) toward a strategy for regional alignment has been in sync with local priorities. Employment needs and growth opportunities match, as do those industries which show a decline in worker needs. Overall, the Midlands Area represents the largest portion and percentage of the Central area which is to be expected given population and business size.

Table 5
Current Workforce in the Region

<u>Element</u>	<u>Midlands Area</u>		<u>Central Region</u>		<u>South Carolina</u>	
Unemployment Rate (Annual, Prior 5 years)	2015	5.4%	2015	6.0%	2015	6.0%
	2014	5.7%	2014	6.5%	2014	6.4%
	2013	6.5%	2013	7.7%	2013	7.6%
	2012	7.8%	2012	9.2%	2012	9.2%
	2011	8.9%	2011	10.4%	2011	10.6%
UI Rate Change (%)	5 Year – 60.0% decrease		5 Year – 56.6% decrease		5 year – 56.6% decrease	
Unemployment Rate (Monthly, PY-15)	Jun-16	5.3%	Jun-16	5.7%	Jun-16	5.6%
	May- 16	4.5%	May- 16	4.9%	May- 16	4.8%
	Apr-16	4.8%	Apr-16	5.2%	Apr-16	5.2%
	Mar-16	5.1%	Mar-16	5.6%	Mar-16	5.6%
	Feb-16	5.0%	Feb-16	5.5%	Feb-16	5.6%
	Jan-16	5.0%	Jan-16	5.5%	Jan-16	5.6%
	Dec-15	4.9%	Dec-15	5.3%	Dec-15	5.4%
	Nov-15	4.9%	Nov-15	5.4%	Nov-15	5.3%
	Oct-15	5.3%	Oct-15	5.9%	Oct-15	5.6%
	Sep-15	5.2%	Sep-15	5.8%	Sep-15	5.7%
	Aug-15	5.5%	Aug-15	6.2%	Aug-15	5.9%
	Jul-15	5.6%	Jul-15	6.3%	Jul-15	6.1%

Table 6
Labor Market Trends

<u>Element</u>	<u>Midlands Area</u>	<u>Central Region</u>		
Employment by Industry (10 Highest)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health Care & Social Assistance 2. Retail Trade 3. Public Administration 4. Educational Services 5. Accommodation & Food Service 6. Admin./Support/Waste mgmt. 7. Manufacturing 8. Finance & Insurance 9. Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services 10. Wholesale Trade 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health Care & Social Assistance 2. Retail Trade 3. Manufacturing 4. Accommodation & Food Service 5. Educational Services 6. Admin./Support/Waste mgmt. 7. Public Administration 8. Finance & Insurance 9. Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services 10. Construction 		
New Startup Firms (8 Prior Quarters)	<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Midlands</u>	<u>Central Region</u>	<u>South Carolina</u>
	2015 Q4	144	228	889
	2015 Q3	83	173	665
	2015 Q2	140	254	905
	2015 Q1	273	476	1746
	2014 Q4	121	212	775
	2014 Q3	111	189	741
	2014 Q2	95	176	760
	2014 Q1	196	351	1384
New Hires by Industry (10 Highest)	<u>Midlands</u>	<u>Central Region</u>		
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admin./Support/Waste mgmt. 2. Accommodation & Food Service 3. Retail Trade 4. Health Care & Social Assistance 5. Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services 6. Construction 7. Manufacturing 8. Public Administration 9. Educational Services 10. Other Services (except Public Admin.) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Admin./Support/Waste mgmt. 2. Accommodation & Food Service 3. Retail Trade 4. Health Care & Social Assistance 5. Professional, Scientific & Technical Services 6. Manufacturing 7. Construction 8. Educational Services 9. Public Administration 10. Other Services (except Public Admin.) 		
Turnover by Industry (10 Highest)	<u>Midlands</u>	<u>Central Region</u>		
	1. Administrative/Support/Waste	1. Accommodation & Food Services		

	mgmt. 2. Accommodation & Food Services 3. Arts, Entertainment & Rec. 4. Construction 5. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing... 6. Retail Trade 7. Other Services (except Public Admin.) 8. Real Estate, Rental & Leasing 9. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 10. Transportation & Warehousing		2. Administrative/Support/Waste mgmt. 3. Arts, Entertainment & Rec. 4. Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing... 5. Construction 6. Retail Trade 7. Real Estate, Rental & Leasing 8. Other Services (except Public Admin.) 9. Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services 10. Transportation & Warehousing	
Educational & Skill Attainments	<u>Midlands</u> <u>(2013 5-year Estimates)</u>		<u>Central Region</u> <u>(2013 5-year Estimates)</u>	
	3.30% Less than 9 th Grade 7.83% 9 th to 12 th , No Diploma 25.22% High School Graduate 22.43% Some College 8.93% Associate's Degree 20.07% Bachelor's Degree 12.22% Graduate Degree		4.58% Less than 9 th Grade 9.20% 9 th to 12 th , No Diploma 28.58% High School Graduate 21.44% Some College 8.78% Associate's Degree 17.49% Bachelor's Degree 9.98% Graduate Degree	
Barriers To Employment	<u>Midlands</u> <u>(Combined – Fairfield, Lexington & Richland)</u> <u>Total Population: 679,872</u>		<u>Central Region</u> <u>(Combined – Catawba, Lower Savannah & Midlands)</u> <u>Total Population: 1,338,713</u>	
	Disability	35,908	Disability	125,709
	Ex-Offender (2015 Releases)	1,290	Ex-Offender (2015 Releases)	2,554
	Homeless (2015)	<i>*No data provided</i>	Homeless (2015)	1468 / 27.4% of state total
	Poverty	653,672	Poverty	1,303,641
	Youth not in school (15-24 years old)	39,944	Youth not in school(15-24 years old)	71,288

The review of current data related to workforce skills and knowledge show the Midlands in a strong position. Our Unemployment Rate is below the state average, and has declined at an even faster rate. The market trends for new hiring track with the sectors and industries that have, in recent history, shown significant growth; both in the Workforce Area and the Region as a whole. New firm startups also appear higher for 2015 when compared to the same quarter for 2014 – a trend that was also noted for the state as a whole. The upward growth of startups indicates a potential for

partnerships geared toward entrepreneurship. Other workforce indicators point to a need to expand partnerships that will expand our reach to serve populations that may have barriers to employment. Specifically, we will target new partnerships to leverage and expand services for individuals with disabilities and ex-offenders.

Workforce Development Activities

Strengths

In addition to the activities of the local Workforce Development Board and the WIOA program, workforce development activities in the Midlands are comprised of a series of strategic partnerships. Partnership, leveraging, and collaboration are the primary traits that highlight the Area's workforce development strengths.

The Midlands Workforce area serves as the convening entity for the Midlands Area Business Services Team. This group is comprised of the agencies and entities that provide service to the business community through the public workforce system. The group has strived to meet at least once each calendar quarter.

The Midlands also targets opportunities to partner with organizations that secure workforce-oriented grants, such as Midlands Tech and BOOST, GRIT and TechHire Programs. By collaborating on the promotion and recruitment of these scholarship opportunities, the Midlands Area is better serving the training needs of job seekers and placement with employers who need the specific job skills and credentials. All three of these workforce grants are partnered with the business leaders identifying the skills needed in the entry-level occupations in Healthcare and Information Technology. The stackable credentials with practical application of learned skills prepares these job seekers in the way the employer advisory group needs them. A recent connection is under development with Palmetto Health and a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant they have received to provide Certified Nursing Assistance training and certification. The partnerships seek to leverage resources that are aligned with the Growth Sectors and in-demand occupations within the Region.

Close ties and the trust of the Economic Development in the Region is another strength exhibited in the Midlands. Under this banner, we maintain our connections with the county Economic Developers and the existing industry representatives at the SC Department of Commerce, as well as Regional Workforce Advisor. We are also exploring methods to connect and assist industry groups such as the SC Manufacturers Alliance.

A recent addition to these activities includes the structured work of the Central Region toward a unified workforce strategy. Alignment of effort, and ultimately resources, toward common industry Sectors will yield a significant return of the overall time investment involved in the framework build out.

Weaknesses

The primary weakness of the Midlands Workforce system is reaching the farthest edges of our area. These are rural areas that are spread out, with no public transportation. The rural nature makes service delivery a challenge. To remedy this we are working with community partners to establish satellite locations to serve job seekers and businesses alike. Current targets include Batesburg-Leesville, Eastover and Northern Fairfield County. For example, in Batesburg-Leesville, the Board is working with a local Manufacturing facility and partnering with the local Adult Education provider (Lifelong Learning Center) to host an itinerate/satellite location. This area of the county is a 30 minute drive and 20 miles or more away from the current Lexington location. This pilot will serve as the model we will follow to address other geographic and regional service challenges. Identified partners for future expansion include Richland Two Adult Education as well as the Town of Eastover.

The perception of the workforce system as simply “unemployment” or “job services” still persists. While this old mentality of the old bureaucracy has been eliminated and revamped, the decades old image is slow to change. This perception is a weakness that we are able to overcome through new contacts, partnerships and direct demonstration of the new system.

Lack of a common or integrated system between partners is another weakness that hampers workforce activities as noted in the SC State unified plan. While this is a state-level issue, it flows down and has a direct impact on the area and services delivery. Also, the Midlands Area Business Services Team is in need of an overhaul and realignment. Over the last 18 months, the focus of the group became diluted and moved away from aligning resources and service delivery to employers. With the finalization for a WIOA services and One Stop Operator contract, we have begun the process to reorganize the Team and reengage with partners and stakeholders. Through our planning, partnerships and collaboration we are identifying these as challenges to overcome, not simply weakness that are to be avoided or ignored.

Table 7
Available Education & Training Opportunities

<u>Institutions</u>	<u>Degrees Awarded (2014)</u>
20	12,360

There are numerous educational institutions and training providers in the Midlands Area. This includes the University of South Carolina’s primary campus, a strong technical college system and

many private providers. At the present time, it appears that the education and training availability in the Midlands is poised to continue meeting the area demands, as well as other areas around that state. Increasing interest in training geared toward critical growth industries is the primary challenge as opposed to increasing training opportunities.

In addition, these numbers do not account for the opportunities available through distance education. As technology makes distance education a viable and cost effective option, this will ensure that the skill training needs of our area can be met.

Table 8
Education Levels of Projected Jobs

<u>Education/Training</u>	<u>By Percent</u> <u>(Projected)</u>	<u>Education Attainment</u> <u>(2013 5-year Estimate)</u>
Associate's Degree	7.9%	8.93%
Bachelor's Degree	19.2%	20.07%
Doctoral or Prof. Degree	3.0%	*12.22%
High School Diploma/GED	34.0%	25.22%
Less than HS/GED	24.1%	11.13%
Master's Degree	2.8%	*12.22%
Postsecondary, Non-Degree	7.6%	<i>Specific data not available</i>
Some College, No Degree	1.3%	22.43%
Total	100.0%	100%

*Education Attainment data available is not delineated between Master's Degree, Doctoral or other Professional Degree.

Overall, the education and training needs projections align very closely with educational attainment data from the last few years. The area of need and targeted focus will be High School Diploma/GED attainment. This has historically been a challenge across South Carolina, however this disconnect in the Midlands Area is less than 9 percent. Statewide emphasis has been placed on increasing the high school graduation rates which has been beneficial.

Increasing the number of job seekers with HS/GED credential is a continued focus of the Midlands Workforce Development Area (MWDA). Our method for increasing these numbers is directly linked to our partnerships with Adult Education. Reliable communication and referrals, as well as GED classes offered in our SC Works Center will ensure successful program toward narrowing this gap

**Source data and projections cited were obtained from the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce Labor Market Information Profile reports and information provided by the Business Intelligence Department.*

Section II: Strategic Vision and Goals

1. A description of the Local Board's strategic vision to support regional economic growth and self-sufficiency, including:

The Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) has adopted and maintained a vision of a workforce system, which provides employment opportunities, improves the quality of the workforce and facilitates economic development. The MWDB supports a workforce system in coordination with stakeholders that meets the needs of employers and job seekers by administering programs that promote their economic growth and competitiveness in the Midlands region. To achieve this end, the area objectives include building an integrated workforce development system that effectively pools the resources of diverse partner agencies and delivers optimal quality customer-focused service for both job seekers and employers in the Midlands region. Our dedication to the vision and these goals has been consistent and we will remain dedicated to these principles.

- **Goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment; and**

In realm of economic growth, we view our role as one of talent development. By partnering with area and regional stakeholders, we have the information needed to equip job seekers with the skills required to meet employer needs. The creation of the Central Region planning team is a critical component to this end. Regional planning will allow us ensure that our resources are aligned to work with the flow of business and adapt as necessary. The goals that define our vision include increases in high school diplomas/GED credential, employment opportunities and decreases in unemployment/joblessness and unfilled positions. The Midlands Area also seeks to continue our status within the Workready Communities initiative by continuing to increase and upgrade the number of Career Readiness Credentials earned. Additionally, training remains an important component of the Midlands strategy for the workforce. A focus on the priority clusters for classroom training combined with increased opportunities of Apprenticeship and On-the-Job Training will help the area strengthen and build the Talent Pipeline. The variety of training options will allow the Midlands to make training accessible, available and attractive to the wide array of job seekers including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

- **A description of the Local Board's strategy to work with entities that carry out the core programs and required partners to align local resources available to the area to achieve the strategic vision and goals referenced above.**

The Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) has long prioritized establishing and growing partnerships with critical stakeholders and contributors - both within and outside of our local area. This strategy remains a central focus in our service delivery model and in aligning the available local resources.

This includes continuing to coordinate the activities of partners through regular meetings of the Midlands Business Services Team, led by MWDB staff. This team consists of representatives from

SCVR, SCDSS, SCDEW, Midlands Technical College, County Economic Development Representatives, and many others. The cohesive team approach allows all partner agencies to share information in regards to services planned or provided, thereby reducing duplication and increasing participation. MWDB also maintains relationships with all WIOA required partners as mandated by the Act. Due to statewide cutbacks some agencies still do not maintain the level of in-person services as they were previously able to sustain. This has resulted in modifications to delivery methods to include virtual referrals and affiliate offices to accommodate the needs of job seekers in the area. Additionally, training remains an important component of the Midlands strategy for the workforce. A focus on the priority clusters for classroom training combined with increased opportunities for Apprenticeship and On-the-Job Training will help the area strengthen and build the Talent Pipeline. The variety of training options will allow the Midlands to make training accessible, available and attractive to the wide array of job seekers including youth and individuals with barriers to employment. Where possible, the Midlands Area partners with other initiatives to leverage the cost of skills training, such as Midlands Tech's BOOST and TechHire Grants. BOOST, or Better Occupational Outcomes with Simulation Training, is a training assistance program to allow those interested in Healthcare to choose training in three different tracks: Nursing Assistant Certificate, Phlebotomy Certificate, and Cardiac Care Technician Certificate. The TechHire initiative offers scholarships, training, and job opportunities for the high-growth IT field. The training areas include: Computer Technician, Desktop and Server Administrator, Advanced Desktop and Server Administrator, Front-End Web Developer, Back-End Web Developer, and Interpersonal Skills. Another opportunity to leverage funds to support the Healthcare sector is a grant through Palmetto Health, funded by HRSA. This opportunity is another source of no cost training to obtain Certified Nurse's Assistant training/certification. The Midlands continues to explore other partnerships and public/private collaborations that will allow us to work together to serve the region's talent needs while using resources in a strategic and effective manner.

MWDB also held an employer focus group comprised of local industry leading manufacturing companies in conjunction with SC Commerce, MEBA and the Manufacturers Alliance. This focus group provided MWDB with vital information on how to ensure skills in our region match industry needs, and to hear first-hand from employers regarding the challenges they face. Through this focus group and others that are planned, MWDB is hoping to create pathways to help strengthen our public private partnerships.

Our partnership with the Economic Developers in the Area have also helped to ensure we are aware of ongoing activities and are ready to respond to the needs of existing industry or support other projects as appropriate. The MWDA will continue to pursue opportunities with partners and other entities that match our vision, goals and that may allow us to leverage additional resources and funds

Section III: Local Area Partnerships and Investment Strategies

- 1. A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the local plan. The description must include how the chief elected officials and Local Board were involved in the development of the plan.**

The MWDB planning process followed a methodology with which we have previously found great success; a division a labor planning around staff areas of expertise. We view this as a Subject Matter Expert approach, and find it continues to be the most effective way to manage a large scale project. The individual components of the planning and plan writing were evaluated by subject area, and then assigned to the most appropriate staff or team of staff members. Each section and element of the plan template was analyzed to determine the need(s), then a determination of current status and areas in need of address or revision. During the draft development, members of the Center Management, Disability and Youth Committees assisted with the identification of content items to be included in the narrative. A peer review model was then implemented to ensure accuracy and that all relevant input was incorporated. Following the peer review, the three MWDB standing committees reviewed applicable excerpts of the final draft. Reports from the MWDB Committee meetings can be found here ([Center Management](#), [Disability](#) and [Youth Committee](#) meetings. Staff made a formal presentation to the members of the Central Midlands Council of Governments full Board which includes multiple members of the three county councils as well as members of the legislative delegation and various municipalities to detail the draft nearing publication. In addition to the Board members present at the overview, guests included representatives from additional municipalities, staff to Senator Graham and Representative Wilson and other interested parties. [Minutes of the CMCOG meeting can be found here](#). A final draft of the plan and framework was presented to the Midlands Workforce Development Board, county councils, local government members and chief local elected officials with an opportunity to provide comments and guidance before release for public comment. The draft plan was published on MWDB website for public comment. Official notification of the publication for comment was sent to the County Council Chairs, County Administrators, full CMCOG Board and the MWDB members.

- 2. A description of the workforce development system in the local area, including:**
 - **Identification of the programs that are included in the system; and**

The Midlands workforce development system has existing relationships with the required WIOA partners in SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Commission for the Blind, the local Adult Education departments and SC Department of Social Services for TANF services. These partners deliver services part-time in the SC Works Centers and full-time through referrals from the Center. The specialized services for the disabled population are accessible through the Midlands workforce system through collaborative partnerships with SC Vocational Rehabilitation, SC Commission for the Blind, Able SC and Arc of the Midlands. These partnerships provide access to advocacy (Able SC), training and workplace accommodations (Arc of the Midlands, SC Vocational Rehabilitation and SC Commission for the Blind) and employment placement (Arc of the Midlands, SC Vocational Rehabilitation and SC

Commission for the Blind). Other target populations have specific needs addressed through the 8 Adult Education programs to serve those who lack a high school or GED, need ESOL instruction, and or need to increase basic skills and income support for individuals and families through SC Department of Social Services SNAP and TANF programs. Access to all of these supports is part of the Midlands workforces system. Additionally, all Midlands WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs as well as the various programs delivered by the SC Department of Employment and Workforce co-locate services full-time in the SC Works Centers. The SC Department of Employment and Workforce programs run the gamut of employment assistance and include basic labor exchange of the general public (Wagner-Peyser), more intensive job preparation and search for those more likely to experience difficulty in returning to work (REA), training and income support for individuals who have lost their job due to overseas outsourcing (Trade Adjustment Assistance), specialized job search priority and assistance to members of the military (Veteran, DVOP and LVER) and income support for those seeking re-employment (unemployment insurance). The Board will continue to work with the partners required and others to develop a strategic delivery of the menu of services required by WIOA to increase integration and avoid duplication of services. Additionally all of the partners will continue working together as an integrated Business Services Team to provide employers with a cohesive and cooperative model for accessing the talent pipeline.

The current array of partners includes the Core partners listed above in addition to the supplementary services offered to the system customers in other ways. All workshops in the Center are offered at no cost to the attendees and most are facilitated by individuals not working in the Center. For instance, the “Careers In” workshop series are offered by training providers with expertise in the specified career field including ArcLabs, Midlands Technical College and New Horizons Computer Learning Center and are supplemented by career exploratory workshops from large area employers including Verizon, SCE&G/Scana, SC Department of Transportation, Spectrum (formerly Time Warner Cable) and the City of Columbia. Important job preparation workshops are offered by other partners include Expungement from the Richland County 5th Circuit Solicitor’s Office, other legal assistance from SC Legal, entrepreneurial assistance from the Small Business Administration and financial literacy from AllSouth Federal Credit Union and Wells Fargo. Additionally, workshops in computer basics, resume writing and interviewing are offered by partners including Blue Cross Blue Shield, New Horizons Computer Training Center, Training Concepts and WeKnowIT. Other partner services include Goodwill Industries placement of SCSEP volunteers to assist job seekers for initial services at the reception, resource room and office operations.

Training opportunities are available throughout the workforce system. Traditional routes flow through WIOA-funded ITAs but there are more opportunities through the system. Scholarships through Midlands Technical College for an array of career fields, Fast Forward Computer Learning Center for IT training and Goodwill Industries for nursing assistants are marketed through the Midlands system with collaborative community events, staff in the SC Works Center, and outreach with the SC Works social media network. In addition to the classroom based training, work-based learning opportunities through Benedict-Allen CDC’s YouthBuild and WIOA-funded On-the-Job Training combined with close collaboration with the Job Corps recruitment center offer training options to those jobs seeking it.

Job Fairs and Community Events are an important part of the Midlands workforce system and are also provided at no cost due to the collaborative partnerships established. Each Spring and Fall a large scale Job Fair is held in the Midlands area and coordinated by the Midlands workforce system. Often imitated but not duplicated, the partners work together to offer the best experience for employers and job seekers alike. Partners for the events include Dutch Square Mall (free space and parking for the event), local radio and television stations (WIS-TV, WLTX-TV, and Clear Channel radio stations) supplement the event promotion beyond the Center partners and social media outlets, the SC National Guard's assistance with donation of event tables and chairs, set-up and break-down is complemented by Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School's cadre in greeting and traffic direction of the job seekers. Needed accommodations are coordinated by our specialty partners, SC Commission of the Blind, SC Vocational Rehabilitation and the Columbia Mayor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Other Midlands workforce system partners assist with employer set-up, venue clean-up and promotion of the event. Local merchants and restaurants have rounded out the event with assistance of light refreshments and water available to the attending employer representatives.

Over the next year, the Board will continuously improve the menu of career services in quality, efficiency and accessibility. Working to improve access to career services particularly to job seekers who have barriers to employment will help the area and region continue to build the talent pipeline. Sharing of business intelligence with the partners and making group strategic decisions on addressing the skill gaps will be an integral part of the continuous improvement. Expanding the partner access to resources beyond SCWOS to include accessibility to assessment tools (basic skills and career exploration), opportunities for skill gap closure through a collaboration of training opportunities combined with a more integrated business services team will help us reach this goal. Lastly the Board looks forward to the rollout of the State Workforce Board's cross-training resources for partner agencies.

- **How the Local Board will support the strategies outlined in the State Plan to support service alignment among the entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs.**

The MWDB is closely following the implementation of South Carolina's Unified Plan. The stated vision of an effective, customer driven workforce system to facilitate financial stability and economic prosperity for employers, individuals, and communities mirrors that of the Midlands Area. The MWDB approach is that of a scaled version of the key strategies outlined in the state plan to support service delivery and program integration.

The Midlands Business Service Team (BST) follows the state example to align partner members and resources so that service delivery is improved, duplication of efforts is minimized, and the limited resources are used in the most efficient manner. This is achieved through an area team structure that is led by the Midlands BST Lead. The Single Point of Contact structure ensures that messages and services are consistent, and are complimentary instead of duplicative and siloed. Partners represent the system and understand how to connect businesses to relevant service solutions.

The planning and decision making processes of the Midlands as an area is driven by information. Without timely and accurate data, our approach would be akin to a shot in the dark or chasing a trend. This is achieved by examining, evaluating and implementing the critical information provided

by the SC DEW Business Intelligence Division as well as other partners such as Economic Development. Through analysis and distribution of the data and findings, we ensure that our area is working in tandem to streamline service delivery and provide quality services.

Partnerships – existing and potential – are utilized to create and support the Midlands Workforce system as a whole. Partnerships are the foundation of the One-Stop system and critical to overall delivery. A cohesive implementation plan is the only way to achieve the goals and vision that South Carolina and our area have identified. The Midlands will support the state strategies through leveraging and resource sharing, that is clearly guided by MOUs.

Additionally, the MWDA is working both as an area and through the Central Region to support the state Sector Strategies Talent Pipeline development strategy. In both instances, our work and resources are aligned to support career pathways through the workforce system. By working as the partner and liaison to link between education (K-12 and high education) and the business community, our efforts should target an increase in middle skill attainment and middle wage growth. The focus on out-of-school youth, at a higher than required rate, dovetails with these outlined strategies. By understanding and focusing on working to meet the needs of business for the future, we are confident that we are not only aligned with the state's strategies, but that we are critical partner in ensuring that our area will have the future talent that is needed across all sectors and industries.

3. A description of how the Local Board works with the entities carrying out core programs to:

- **Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, including individuals with barriers to employment;**

Within the local area and beyond, the Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) has consistently prioritized establishing, and growing partnerships with core programs and contributors. As the central focus in our service delivery model, this strategy is essential in expanding access to and aligning the available local resources within the community for the foreseeable future.

The demand for services by individuals seeking jobs, training and employers seeking talent in an increasingly more competitive market has remained consistent during the last five years. Services range from staff assisted job search (job searches, resume preparation, labor market data and interviewing skills), training services (remedial education, short-term training, and career specific certifications), and On-the-Job Training placement opportunities. By aligning with similar organizations such as readySC, South Carolina Workready Communities (SCWRC) champions, Apprenticeship Carolina, SC DEW, DSS and surrounding Adult Education partners, we are able to maximize the delivery of employment related services to both job seekers and business customers. Both the Columbia and Fairfield Centers' partner with local Adult Education centers for referrals to have GED and basic skills services provided as needed. The Lexington Center currently provides onsite GED instruction. Private business and community organizations regularly volunteer to lead workshops in all of the Centers. Job searching, interviewing, basic computer instruction, career exploration and criminal record expungement workshops are all offered in the Centers at no cost to the job seekers or

the Centers. Some of our most popular workshops are facilitated by businesses and organizations; examples include Arclabs, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Training Concepts, Verizon Wireless, Wells Fargo,

Training is at the heart of the services that the MWDB provides. Our employer survey identified WorkKeys as a valuable service/assessment in identifying potential employees in search of jobs. The MWDB works closely with various Adult Education and English as a Second Language (ESL) programs in the local area as well as Midlands Technical College in an effort to assist adult learners with attainment of certificates and critical basic skills needed for continued education in occupational specific postsecondary education. Utilizing various resources for training will expand the capacity to fully serve Midlands residents in receiving training services in high demand occupations, and by covering most if not all financial needs to complete the training. The Midlands is currently coordinating outreach and recruitment with Midlands Technical College's Continuing Education students with Better Occupational Outcomes with Simulation Training (BOOST) and QuickJobs which covers 27 programs. Using these combined funding strategies will help leverage resources for training. The variety of training options will also allow the Midlands to make training accessible, available and attractive to the wide array of job seekers including youth and individuals with barriers to employment.

In our continuous effort to pursue opportunities with partners and other stakeholders that share our vision and goals, the MWDB intends to work collaboratively in a way that will allow us to leverage additional funds and resources. The Midlands has also expanded job opportunities for individuals with disabilities through a partnership with Arc of the Midlands. Arc of the Midlands has best practice models and a pilot project to develop further opportunities. The MWDB is providing support by connecting employers and industry leaders to these programs. The Midlands Area will also take the opportunity to expand services, revise service delivery and examine processes and procedures for continuous improvement in the coming months.

- **Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment in core programs, as appropriate; and**

Partnerships in the Midlands Area continue to evolve to ensure a successful strategy around career pathways. The need to ensure a positive transition from education and training to the workforce is critical to success for all stakeholders in the system. As a primary convener and point of resource contact in the Area, we are able to facilitate a network through the SC Works system that is both onsite (brick and mortar) and virtual. In addition to our formal partners, we work with Midlands Education and Business Alliance and the South Carolina Department of Commerce Regional Advisor to connect with the full scope of education (K-12 and higher education). Working directly through our Business Services Team, the MWDB maintains a process to maximize the strategies behind this proven model of success.

The MWDB views continuous education, or life-learning as core component of this approach. Our approach of LMI data-driven team work flows into our approach of career services. Co-enrollment within appropriate partner programs is a critical component and leverages the resources that are available within the workforce area. By ensuring the opportunities for our participants are maximized, this approach supports and sustains the MWDBs plan for a cohesive and effective workforce system.

- **Improve access to activities leading to a recognized post-secondary credential, including an industry-recognized certificate or certification that is portable and stackable.**

The diversity of educational options and credentials are strengths of our highly decentralized system, as it creates many opportunities and serves many purposes. However, it also presents major challenges for the students, employers, workers, and policymakers using it. Weak connections among parts of this multilayered credentialing system make it difficult for learners with different levels of abilities and needs to understand career pathway options and the most direct routes to learning in order to meet their goals. In today's competitive workforce, labor markets value postsecondary credentials. Business leaders desire to see more acquisition of training credentials that are stackable and portable.

The MWDA continues working closely with the various Adult Education programs in the local area, as well as Midlands Technical College, to attain stackable certificates to aid adult learners in completion of secondary education, attainment of critical basic skills and continuing education in occupational specific postsecondary education. Multiple areas of study are available with initial certifications through Midlands Technical College's QuickJobs scholarships in high demand careers including Forklift Operator, SC Manufacturing Certificate, Machinist, Accounting and Payroll Specialist, Cardiac Care Technician, Emergency Medical Technician, Computer Technician, Front-End Web Developer, Truck Driver training and more. These credentials can be the start of the career path training and combined with other funding opportunities. Additional training is available through other partners. Until 2017, resources were available through Growing Resources in Technology (GRIT) at Midlands Technical College to provide various tracks in Information Technology starting with classroom training followed by internship to jump start their career. Although the grant project has recently ended, a new grant opportunity called TechHire is now available and offers training in high-growth careers to develop a talent pipeline through a H1-B federal grant. Additional IT training is available to Veterans and Veteran spouses through a grant program at Fast Forward Computer Learning Center for CompTIA certifications. For those interested in the healthcare industry, nursing assistant training is available through opportunities at Goodwill Industries. Portability and stacking (progressive levels of attainment) are key components of industry recognized credentials and certifications. This can also indicative of an individual's ability to participate in a comprehensive program of study and that they have a structured career pathway to gainful employment. Such programs are also beneficial for non-traditional students. These courses offer many benefits to WIOA participants in the Midlands Area. Many of these courses produce a certificate that is able to be obtained in a limited amount of time. This creates a pathway to advanced jobs, offers a higher wage, and entry into middle income opportunities.

4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:

- **Facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**

To ensure that employers are engaged in the Midlands Workforce system, we intend to continue a multi-pronged approach. To ensure business use, we will provide relevant services, products and solutions. We will achieve this starting with the Midlands BST. The BST with its partnership approach and integration of services to support a one-knock system helps to ensure that duplication is eliminated – thus employers can understand system services and are not interrupted through repetitive contacts. Formally scheduled meetings are held quarterly at a minimum, however improvised meetings and electronic communication mean intelligence is constantly flowing through the team.

Engaging employers in Midlands does not follow one simple format. The BST members utilize a multifaceted approach that may include cold-calls, follow up from prior contacts, face-to-face through community based events, or even social media. In essence, the type of approach to engagement is tailored to the industry or business.

- **Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area;**

The Midlands BST has incorporated the use of data to ensure that efforts and services remain demand-driven. The information they use comes from a variety of sources, and covers many categories. The specific data from the SCDEW's Business Intelligence Division, Labor Market Information, Economic Development, etc. and the analysis of the information is an example. However, specific intelligence from the business community is also considered.

- **Improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development; and**

Our connection to area economic development has increased in recent years. The Midlands area has prioritized economic development from a local, regional and where appropriate, state level as a key partnership for success. We found success by providing a quality services that benefit and bolster the efforts economic development organization. Additionally, we have increased our engagement by seeking economic development experience and expertise through participation on our BST, area committees and other ad hoc groups.

- **Strengthen linkages between the SC Works delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.**

The departure of in-office Unemployment Insurance services has proven to be a continued challenge. While the online UI system and call center service model offer some upgrades, many of our customers are not computer literate or comfortable in self-directed use. While we do our best to offer computer classes to combat this, it is not a fast solution. To ensure a strong and customer focused linkage with the UI program within the SC Works System we have consider our partnership with SC DEW to be critical. The Re-Employment Assistance (REA) UI staff in the centers provide us with the needed connection to the front line of unemployment services. Beyond the local level, the MWDB works closely with the SC DEW Area Director for our Region. This relationship allows a two-way flow of information.

5. **A description of the strategies and services for employers that may include the implementation of initiatives such as Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) programs, On-the-Job Training (OJT) programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries, and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of regional employers and support the Local Board's strategic vision and goals.**

The principal strategy, or business-method, behind the success of the Midlands Area business services is hands-on, collaborative team, with a single leadership point of contact. Regular meetings and open communication between the team members ensure that every one is on the same page and bolsters a single knock approach to engaging businesses. Through this communication, we can assure system quality and that all partners are up-to-date with regard to programs, opportunities and are equipped with the Labor Market and Employment data they need. This method has also proven to breakdown the old "job service" silo approach from the past.

The Midlands Area builds our customer-focused approach around specific tools such as On-the-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IWT), Rapid Response Incumbent Worker Training, and WorkKeys. The approach to providing a solution to an employer is based upon an analysis of the business needs. That is, anyone representing our business service team is trained to listen first, and then evaluate. Our team is taught to assess an employer's challenges and needs before make recommendations for a solution through one of our programs or initiatives. For example, if an employer's issue is extremely high turnover a complement of a WorkKeys job profile and assessments along with specific training through IWT may be recommended. Also, if an employer's single issue is getting enough candidates to apply, OJT may be the appropriate course.

As an area, we intended to evaluate how beneficial and appropriate additional tools such as Locally Funded IWT/Customized Training may be. The process will included further evaluation of area needs that may not be met through existing work-based learning and classroom training initiatives. These activities would also be aligned with our sector strategy work with in the Central Region to ensure maximum effectiveness. This approach will support the Midlands Area's demand driven business service model, and strategically align the resources to meet our workforce system vision.

6. **A description of how the Local Board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area, including how the Local Board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.**

Collaborations and partnership through regional and statewide groups will be the prime method of ensuring connection to regional economic development activities. The MWDB has existing relationships with the area economic developers, and through our regional team intend to expand our contacts. By working with economic development, the MWDB can link with new and expanding existing businesses; however to promote entrepreneurship, skills and connect with microenterprises we intend to target additional organizations that move in these circles. To expand our services and business services approach to be more inclusive, our goals include greater connections to

organizations such as University of South Carolina Technology Incubator, engenuitySC, readySC, Women's Entrepreneur Network, SC Women's Business Center, etc.

We will also seek to engage these partners as active members of our Business Services Team. This will ensure that our Team and its approach will be geared toward entrepreneurs and understand the challenges these businesses face as start-ups.

Section IV: Program Design and Evaluation

1. A description of the SC Works delivery system in the local area, including:

- **How the Local Board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that the providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and jobseekers;**

Midlands Board staff provides on-going technical assistance to both WIOA program service providers via email, phone and in-person. Policies and procedures are issued and shared with service provider staff and encourage feedback in practicality of issued policies and procedures. With the start of a new contract with ResCare Workforce Services in Program Year 2017, the Midlands staff will plan to utilize the new resources gained from the new contractor to expand and improve services to area job seekers and employers.

Formal contractor training is held each Spring and Winter to encourage team-building, share best practices, lessons learned and deliver staff training. ResCare, as the One-Stop Operator, is charged with offering/coordinating Center staff training. Quarterly partner meetings afford an opportunity learn more about partner services available and address customer service opportunities to improve services. Quarterly Business Services Team meetings give the entire an opportunity to plan strategies to share business needs and strategies to meet them. These formalized training processes aim for consistent services offered throughout the Midlands system and are supplemented with less formal training and information sharing across partners.

Finally, continuous improvement through monitoring rounds out the Midlands Area's performance strategies. The State issued Center Standards establish minimum guidelines for a functioning SC Works Center. Midlands staff and Center Management Planning Committee use the Standards to identify areas of improvement and as a catalyst for service improvements. Additionally, staff continually monitors the WIOA program, Business Services and partner relationships to watch for problem areas, opportunities to improve, celebrate successes and share best practices. The monitoring is conducted through annual formal monitoring, weekly and monthly report analysis and on-site observations. The annual monitoring consists of a review of sample files to determine services delivered documentation of provided services and completeness of services.

- **How the Local Board will facilitate access to services provided through the SC Works delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means;**

The Midlands is exploring partnerships to develop regional access points. The purpose of this endeavor would be to deliver virtual access to as many SC Works system services as reasonably possible. At a minimum, our program design would involve providing equipment, training and other necessary materials/resources to a community based partner. The partner, location and other variables would determine the services and levels of service that may be available. Geography and population will be primary considerations in targeting our efforts to develop access point affiliate sites. Presently, we are working with or looking to develop opportunities in rural areas such as

Fairfield County, western Lexington County, eastern Richland County, well as additional downtown Columbia spots. In the meantime, multiple partners who serve on the Business Services team have received training in job referrals, job search, and resume and cover letter creation to encourage use of the SC Works Online Services (SCWOS) as they work with their clients. Partners who have received the training include Job Corps, SC JUMMPS program with SCDSS clients, Goodwill (Job Connection and SCSEP staffs), Lexington County DSS, and the various Adult Education partners. While these locations are not official access points, it does widen the access to the job referrals and thus bringing a better value to the businesses we serve.

For other services, the Midlands has sought to use technology when possible to streamline services. Both the TABE and WorkKeys assessments are available online as well as the various career assessments (Talent, Fit, and My Next Move) are all available online. As a part of WIOA, the Midlands area has increased access to Financial Literacy. Targeted and specific workshops are still held within the Centers with representatives from professional organizations at no cost to the job seeker. Additionally, the Midlands has made a host of financial literacy curriculums available to be taken online as reinforcement and deeper study of selected topics. These tools and training are available through serving an annual site for VITA providing free tax return preparation by trained professionals and free electronic filing and free training available through Allison, the South Carolina Library, and Wells Fargo. Additional basic skills and occupational skills training is made available to SC Works customers online through Allison, Aztec, and the South Carolina Library. The Midlands is continuing to seek additional online training opportunities for further integration of technology options for the variety of job seekers we serve.

- **How entities within the SC Works delivery system, including center operators and partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities; and**

All entities and partners that operate to provide services within the SC Works Midlands system must agree to and sign a Memorandum of Understanding that define the manner in which they will participate. Attachment B of the MOU provides the assurance that the partner will comply with nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA, Section 188. In addition to these assurances and certifications, the Midlands Area utilizes a designated EO Officer to ensure compliance and provide assistance as needed to ensure the services within the centers are met, to include accessibility as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This is achieved through monitoring, technical assistance and where appropriate, training. South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation has conducted an assessment of the comprehensive center to recommend technology and other accommodations that may be needed to assist customers. The recommendations from the report have been assessed and the assistive technology provided to the centers to ensure centers and services are accessible.

To afford our customers the highest quality service and experience and address on-going staff development, the Midlands Area is working with several partners through the MWDB Disabilities Committee to develop inclusion training. Areas of emphasis have begun around service to individuals

with physical and cognitive disabilities, but the committee is targeting expansion into other identified areas of need.

- **Identification of the roles and resource contributions of the SC Works partners.**

Core partners WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth services along with Wagner-Peyser, Veterans, and Trade Adjustment Assistance will continue to co-locate within the SC Works Centers. Additional partners (full-time, part-time, and electronically linked) will be added to the collection of on-site partners as appropriate. Resource Sharing among SC Works Center partners is outlined in the common costs and methodology for cost allocation in the Midlands Resource Sharing Agreement. These costs are allocated only to those partners who participate within the respective center.

- Rent/Depreciation Fee—The costs of the facilities that house the three Centers in Columbia, Lexington and Winnsboro.
- Utilities—Utility costs include heat, electricity, air conditioning, water and other utilities for the three centers.
- Janitorial/Maintenance—Costs associated with building maintenance and cleaning. Costs are applicable to Columbia and Lexington centers.
- Office Equipment Maintenance & Rental—costs related to maintenance of computer equipment, rental of such equipment as copiers.
- Telephone and Internet Access—Additional charges related to Telephone and Internet access for the centers.
- Liability Insurance—Required insurance for the centers.
- One-Stop Common Supplies—Estimated costs of printer supplies, copier paper, and resource room supplies.
- Resource Room Staff—Salary and benefit costs for personnel needed to staff the resource room in the centers for all hours of operation. Staff will provide assistance with services, computers, answer job seeker and employer customers questions, and oversee the operations of the Resource Room. Costs are estimated on the salary and benefit costs of an entry level Employment Service Representative.

The provision of core services will be delivered through the various Center partners to include those listed above as well as Adult Education, Midlands Technical College, TANF Employment and Training programs SC Commission for the Blind and Vocational Rehabilitation. Those relationships are formalized by the Memorandum of Understanding.

Staff in the Centers aim to empower each of the job seekers through an integrated continuum of career services individualized to address the individual's unique set of needs. The services begin with initial engagement and lead to retention in long-term employment to support the participant and their financial independence.

**Midlands SC Works System
Shared Cost
Budget**

System Wide

Partner liaison	\$26,000
Marketing & promotional materials	\$1,000
Total	\$27,000

Center Specific

	Columbia	Lexington	Fairfield	Totals
Rent/Annual Depreciation	\$27,364	\$96,910	\$9,580	\$133,854
Utilities	\$66,360	\$10,639	\$6,000	\$82,999
Janitorial/Maintenance	\$19,808	\$9,986	\$0	\$29,794
Security	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal	\$113,532	\$117,535	\$15,580	\$246,647
Equipment Maint/Rental	\$4,500	\$1,800	\$0	\$6,300
Data, Internet & Telephone lines	\$5,504	\$8,364	\$23,280	\$37,148
State Insurance	\$0	\$452	\$0	\$452
Subtotal	\$10,004	\$10,616	\$23,280	\$43,900
One-Stop common supplies*	\$3,800	\$740	\$400	\$4,940
Resource Room staffing	\$96,000	\$64,000	\$20,000	\$180,000
Total	\$223,336	\$192,891	\$59,260	\$475,487

Grand Total **\$502,487**

*Estimated costs of fax & copier paper, printer & resource room supplies.

* Quarterly costs for previous program year were annualized for annual baseline budget.

[The full Resource Sharing Agreements can be found by clicking here \(and here for SC DEW\)](#)

- 2. A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.**

The MWDA WIOA program is designed to assist Adult and Dislocated Worker participants access to high quality career services, education and training and supportive services to obtain quality jobs and retain employment.

Workforce center staff will conduct a comprehensive objective assessment summary of each participant's needs, which are essential if sound decisions are to be made by the participants and staff regarding the services needed for the customer. Service providers may provide other comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs of Adults and Dislocated Workers, which may include: WorkKeys, TABE, My Next Move and other diagnostic testing and assessment tools. Such assessments are especially important for lower-skilled or less-experienced participants, and for those seeking to enter a new field due to layoff. A portion of the assessment process is to determine whether the participant needs training services. Service provider will ensure that all participants meet the following training requirements:

- Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment, that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services alone;
- Is in need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment, through career services alone; and
- Have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program of training services.

Once assessments are completed, the Service provider and participant will work together to develop an individual employment plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of, and information about, eligible training providers.

Under WIOA and through the workforce center system, employment and training activities will include:

- The Workforce Center will provide labor exchange services, including job search and placement assistance, and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including job vacancy listings in labor market areas; information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements, and opportunities for advancement for those jobs. The South Carolina Online System (SCWOS) is the system used to provide job search and placement assistance, and labor market information to MWDA participants.
- Information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations.
- Provides information on nontraditional employment.

- Provides referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services
- Supportive services assistance may be available for Adult and Dislocated Worker participants, and appropriate referrals to other agencies that provide services and assistance, including: child care; child support; medical or child health assistance.
- Training services, when determined appropriate, will be provided through an Individual Training Account (ITA). Training services must be linked to in-demand employment opportunities in the local area and be in one of the training clusters that the Midlands Workforce Development Board (MWDB) has approved for the Midlands. The MWDB approved training clusters are currently:
 - Healthcare
 - Transportation & logistics
 - Manufacturing
 - Information Technology
 - Business Services

The selection of training services is conducted in a manner that maximizes customer choice and training providers are selected from the state's eligible training provider list. The MWDA plans to provide the following training opportunities:

- Occupational skills training;
- Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers;
- On-the-job training (OJT);
- Incumbent worker training (State funded);
- Skills upgrading and retraining;
- Entrepreneurial training;
- Transitional jobs;
- Job readiness training;
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language; and
- Customized training

3. A description of how the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.

The MWDB has always maintained a strong connection with the SCDEW Rapid Response team. We plan to continue to promote the Rapid Response services as an effective layoff aversion strategy as well as a first step towards engagement and re-employment for affected workers.

The MWDB has prioritized having a representative present at on-site Rapid Response events during layoffs, closures, or force reductions at local employer facilities. At these meetings and events, WIOA staff provides information to impacted employees regarding career and training services available for

eligible Dislocated Workers. The Midlands also conducts on-site certification and enrollment when the employer's schedule and facilities permit this service.

Additionally, the MWDA team embraces Rapid Response funded IWT as a layoff aversion tool and encourages local businesses to utilize the resources to improve their viability as a proactive step in competition. We have found both strategies to be very beneficial to both employers and the workforce. The MWDA intends to continue to support and promote these activities as long as funding is available.

4. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which must include an identification of successful models of such activities.

The MWDA youth service providers will provide high-quality services for all youth and young adults, beginning with career exploration and guidance, continued support for educational attainment, opportunities for skills training in in-demand industries and occupations. At this time the Midlands Workforce Development Board has decided to concentrate all Midlands youth program funding on the Out-of-School youth population ages 16 to 24 who reside in Fairfield, Lexington and Richland counties. The MWDA is working towards making all fourteen (14) WIOA required program elements available to all eligible youth participants. Youth service providers will assist youth in gaining academic and employability skills needed to become successful as they transition into adulthood. MWDA will conduct training for youth service providers, regarding an understanding of the different types of disabilities, how to handle issues of disclosure and disability identification with sensitivity at program intake, and how to determine the most effective mix of services and referrals to make when a disability is identified.

The MWDA coordinates with other agencies that provide service in conjunction with the MWDA and other services that cannot be provided under WIOA. Agencies the MWDB currently partner with and agencies the board plans to collaborate with include:

- Local Department of Juvenile Justice and Juvenile Probation and Parole to present to groups nearing the return to their homes on the services offered in the SC Works Center and the WIOA program;
- Columbia Housing Authority for public housing assistance for co-enrollment opportunities in the WIOA program;
- Adult Education and Continuing Education agencies both public and private for co-enrollments to leverage training resources and assist the education entities connect the individuals to the workforce;
- SC Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) and SC Department of Social Services(SCDSS) for participant assistance and referrals leveraging training resources for all of the programs and coordinating the efforts of business services;
- WIOA title II adult education providers private for co-enrollments to leverage training resources and assist the education entities connect the individuals to the workforce;

- SC Department of Disabilities and Special Needs, SC vocational rehabilitation Department Arc of the Midlands and health and mental health providers for co-enrollment, pilot projects including Project Search and the Starbucks Inclusion Academy;
- Project SEARCH and the Starbucks Inclusion Academy business-led school-to-work transition for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
- Job Corps referrals both for WIOA participants seeking training options and Job Corps participants returning home in need to services to transition into the workforce.

To ensure a focus on priority populations including the Youth program, the Midlands Board included a focus on these groups opportunity to transition into the workforce. One the benchmarks in the ResCare Workforce Services contract for services includes priority group placement into the workforce. At least 15% of the participants in either work-based learning or direct placements will be derived from one or more of the following populations: individuals with disabilities; ex-offenders and English language learners. The Board has identified these groups to grow service reach. While the contract measurable is designed for the workforce, the contractor will be recruiting and serving an increased number of participants in these target populations across all fund streams including Youth with all of the appropriate and available program services to achieve this goal.

Individuals with disabilities are an area the Board has targeted with individuals completing K-12 system attendance transition to the workforce as a special interest area. A number of partnerships have been forged to help the Board address this including collaboration with Arc of the Midlands and advisory groups with Richland One School District and Lexington/Richland School District Five. So far the partnerships have yielded involvement with the Starbucks Inclusion Academy and Project Search program expansion. The Starbuck Inclusion Academy, recognized by the National Organization on Disability, is a six-week training program for individuals with disabilities designed to provide meaningful work experience in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution. The MWDB is proud to be a part of the launch of this model in the Starbucks Roasting facility in our area. More information on the model can be found here (<http://www.nod.org/case-studies/starbucks-case.html>). Project Search is an international trademarked and copyrighted program model that the MWDB is proud to be partnered with for future expansion in our area. More information on Project Search can be found here (<http://www.projectsearch.us/OurPROGRAM.aspx>). While the projects are different, their approach is similar in than they target individuals with disabilities and help with job coaching in a combination classroom and on the worksite job training prepare for the workforce. The groups are small and both projects solicit other business partners to join them in preparing the individuals prepare for unsubsidized job placement. As the projects mature, the Board along with SC Vocational Rehabilitation anticipates growth and will continue sharing best practices across the school districts to provide the same opportunities for more individuals and businesses. The Board's involvement in the launch and expansion of the two model programs started conversations and momentum with service providers for individuals with disabilities, education, workforce and businesses that will continue development into a larger network and hopefully a roll-out of new best practices. The Board is not initiating a stand-alone service or model but is instead approaching their priority with a blend of services, resources and expertise across many stakeholders throughout the area. The Board will continue to act as a convener to expand the network of resources to this target demographic.

After eligibility determination, youth service providers will conduct a comprehensive objective assessment summary to determine participant's needs, if sound decisions are to be made by the participants and youth service providers regarding the services needed for the participant. Youth service providers may offer other comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels and service needs of youth participants, which may include WorkKeys, TABE, and other diagnostic testing and assessment tools. Assessments are also helpful in identifying basic skills deficiency, soft skills levels, training needs, career interest and leadership skills (TABE, Aztec, WorkKeys, Skills Profiler, etc.).

Once assessments are completed the service provider and participant will together develop an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) based on the needs of the youth, to identify appropriate goals and objectives, and any appropriate combination of services for the youth to achieve their education, training and employment goals.

The MWDA youth service contractors provide or referrer to partner agencies participants in need of the fourteen (14) WIOA required program elements available to eligible youth.

1. Tutoring, study skills training
2. Alternative secondary school services
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences
4. Occupational skill training
5. Education, workforce preparation activities and training for specific occupations/cluster
6. Leadership development and community service
7. Supportive services
8. Adult mentoring
9. Follow-up services
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling
11. Financial literacy education
12. Entrepreneurial skills training
13. Labor market and employment information
14. Preparation for and transition to postsecondary education and training

5. A description of how the fourteen (14) youth program elements are integrated in program design.

The purpose of the WIOA youth program is to provide effective and comprehensive activities to out-of-school youth seeking assistance in achieving academic and employment success. The MWDA is working towards making all fourteen (14) WIOA required program elements available either directly or through partner referrals to all eligible youth once eligibility is determined and assessments (formal/informal) are given and an Individual Service Strategy is developed with specific activities listed for a successful outcome. The fourteen required program elements are:

(1) Tutoring, study skills training, instruction and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies that lead to completion of the requirements for a post-secondary school diploma or a

recognized postsecondary credential – This is currently provided through a variety of methods: Khan Academy academic support and connections to Adult Education for high school credit recovery, Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) drop-out prevention sites at CA Johnson and Swansea High Schools, Supplemental Instruction (a peer facilitated academic support in courses identified with high drop, fail and withdrawal) at Midlands Technical College, ResCare Academy for supplemented material for difficult coursework on license preparation;

(2) Alternative secondary school services, or dropout recovery services, when the board determines to provide in-school services – no current in-school services are planned but for high school dropout who desire to return to secondary school services connections are made to the local school district. Alternatives schools are available at every school district in the area. These sites are supplemented by non-profit organizations offering preparation for high school diplomas such as Christ Central Ministries and St Andrews Baptist Church. In addition, the Midlands area has two application-based residential alternatives schools with a military basis at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School and the SC National Guard’s Youth ChalleNGe Academy. Lastly the Midlands area is home to the State’s Job Corps Center recruitment office to offer additional residential opportunities in the SC site and across the country to receive secondary school services combined with occupational skills training;

(3) Paid and unpaid work experiences that have academic and occupational education as a component of the work experience, which may include the following types of work experiences and are included in the service provider menu of available services:

- Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities available throughout the school year;
- Pre-apprenticeship programs;
- Internships and job shadowing; and
- On-the-job training opportunities

These services are available through the WIOA program for enrolled participants but are also available through a network of other partners including:

- City of Columbia, Columbia Urban League and Fairfield County host youth to participate in summer work experience;
- City Year (an AmeriCorps program) gives Young Adults an opportunity for one-year of service while providing support to vulnerable youth in the school system to make sure they are on track for academic support, offer tutoring where needed all leading to drop-out prevention;
- Communities in Schools identifies at risks students and work with the community to supply resources to address a wide range of needs from food and clothing to counseling. By addressing the underlying needs, the students are more likely to stay in school and reach their full potential.
- Midlands Reading Consortium offers volunteers to the target schools for tutoring to close the achievement gap that will lead to dropout prevention.

(4) Occupational skill training, which includes priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials that align with in-demand industry or occupational cluster approved by the Midlands Workforce Development Board. In addition to the WIOA-funded training, scholarship opportunities abound through public-private partnerships including Michelin (Michelin Scholars offers free tuition plus paid Internship for students interested in Electronics Engineering Technology), Palmetto Health (Health resources and services administration – HRSA grant offers

scholarships to individuals for Nursing Assistant training) and Midlands Technical College (Quick Jobs scholarships in an array of short-term in-demand training at no cost).;

(5) Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster. No-cost workshops are available through the SC Works Center in career readiness, career exploration and specific work preparation topics. These can be attended while a job seeker is in any phase of the workforce system.;

(6) Leadership development opportunities, including community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors. Leadership opportunities are available through encouragement and crediting in the K-12 system, through community groups including City Year, Youth Corps (a leadership training class for high school freshman and sophomores) and faith-based organizations. A more formalized integration of leadership development and community service is forthcoming in the WIOA Youth programs.;

(7) Supportive services available through the service provider and referrals made to State, local and community service providers – Supportive services are available through the WIOA program for enrolled participants for limited childcare assistance and training and employment related expenses including uniforms, tools, etc. Additional resources are available for qualified individuals from organizations such as SC Department of Social Services (ABC childcare vouchers and food stamps), Community Action Agencies (utility assistance), faith-based organizations – Lexington Interfaith Community Services, Brookland Foundation, Catholic Charities, Christ Central Ministries, Chapin We Care Center and for utility and food assistance, The Cooperative Ministry and Salvation Army for clothing, utility and food assistance, and Harvest Hope Food Bank for food assistance and Samaritan's Well, The Family Shelter, the City of Columbia emergency shelter, Oliver Gospel Mission and Sistercare (for transitional housing).;

(8) Adult mentoring for duration of at least 12 months that may occur both during and after program participation. Mentoring is formally provided in the community by organization including City Year, Youth Corps, Communities in Schools, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Boys and Girls Club of America. A more formalized integration of adult mentoring is forthcoming in the WIOA Youth programs.;

(9) Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after the completion of participation. This is being conducted by WIOA services providers.

(10) Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling, as well as referrals to counseling, as appropriate to the needs of the individual youth – WIOA service providers offer education and employment counseling and are supported by other community organizations including LRADAC (drug and alcohol abuse counseling), Mental Illness Recovery Center including the new Youth Drop-in Day Center, the Cooperative Ministry (financial counseling available as part of the CAR program), and Samaritan's Well, Christ Central Ministries and the Oliver Gospel Mission (counseling for those in transitional housing) ;

(11) Financial literacy education will be provided through workforce center staff provided workshops available through SC Works Center workshops and Wells Fargo Hands on Banking curriculum in addition to the ResCare Academy financial literacy curriculum;

(12) Entrepreneurial skills training available through workshops and mentoring with SCORE and Women's Entrepreneurship Network, the City of Columbia's partnership with Benedict College's Business Development Center to offer the NxLevel Micro Entrepreneur course, and ResCare Academy's entrepreneurial training.;

(13) Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and

career exploration services – provided through data in SCWOS with tools to research and compare occupations, Careers in Workshops offered in the SC Works Center for large employers and in-demand-occupations and informational displays periodically displayed in the Centers for in-demand occupations; and

(14) Activities that help youth prepare for and transition to postsecondary education and training – encouraged with connections to TRiO programs at USC and MTC geared to preparing, transitioning and integrating first-generation college students to post-secondary education. The programs host Financial Aid seminars in the Spring to aid the FASFA application process and actively recruit participants into their program year-round to provide the supports needed to be successful in post-secondary education.

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

The Midlands area has always prioritized maximizing and leveraging resources in support of innovative options to serve customers. The Board supports Business Services, Sector Partnerships, Career Pathways, Developing the Talent Pipeline and Work-Based Learning by working with local employers to provide information to the Board, Midlands Youth Committee and education and training partners. The MWDB and Youth Committee are able to use this information to guide job seekers to in-demand occupations, growing industries and opportunities for career identification, development and growth. The Board is committed to youth career development through strategies such as work-based learning, career exploration with short-term work experience, internships and On-the-Job Training. These work-based learning opportunities in conjunction with soft skills training and basic skills and occupational training from our secondary and post-secondary partners are a part of our integrated learning services that are Youth specific.

In service delivery, educational barriers to employment are always addressed as the Case Managers work with our participants. The staff coordinates communication between education program and the workforce activities as an on-going action item while breaking down other barriers. Identification of funding options for individuals is critical to addressing education needs while maximizing the available resources. For post-secondary education, MWDA staff works with them to apply for Federal and other financial aid that may be available. When appropriate, staff will connect the job seeker to Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) partner services for more intense financial aid assistance.

The Board has long-standing partnerships with several local post-secondary schools including Midlands Technical College as well as the local school districts' CATE and Adult Education programs. The Board staff regularly works with each of the groups through the Board Committees, Partner meetings, Business Service Team meetings, and advisory groups established by the education groups. These groups all discuss ways to integrate our services, leverage resources and avoid duplication of service.

Serving on the Advisory Boards for several education entities along with having education represented on the workforce committees and Board ensures all the groups understand the other priorities and services available. Workforce staff and Board members serve on K-12 and Adult

Education Advisory Committees including Richland One Community Coalition (ROCC) aimed at reducing youth substance abuse and strengthening families and the CAT (need purpose here) and the Lexington/Richland 5 Adult Education RoundTable to stay connected to the various focuses of Adult Education and help all parties avoid duplication while filling gaps in service where possible. The workforce Board in turns seeking feedback and guidance from education through various representatives serving on the Center Management and Planning and Youth Committees in addition to the mandatory representatives on the full Board.

Workforce activities and investments will be designed and created based on labor market and business demands. The Board will continue to utilize economic reports and feedback gathered by the Business Services team from the local employers to inform the development of services and investments. As the secondary and post-secondary education providers are an integral part of the Board and Committee structure, the information gathered is shared on a regular basis.

While the WIOA program does not serve in-school youth in the Midlands, there is close coordination with the K-12 system to identify the youth that graduate from high school but lack post-graduation plans for employment and/or advanced training. As those youth are identified, the WIOA Youth program targets those who are eligible for the program. As the first step in the program, the Youth staff works with the participant to place them into a work experience or Internship as appropriate. While in the work-based learning, Youth staff work with the participant to identify career interests, determine post-secondary education needs and develop individualized plans for completion of the individual career goals.

7. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

The Midlands Workforce Development Board approved the conversion of the Midlands WIA transportation, childcare and other supportive service policies for the Midlands WIOA program. The services described in this policy are designed to assist participants who are receiving WIOA services to secure and retain employment as well as facilitate participation in employment and training activities.

MWDA Supportive Services may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Assistance with childcare;
- Assistance with uniforms or other appropriate work attire and work-related tools, including such items as eyeglasses and protective eye gear;
- Assistance with educational testing, books, fees, school supplies, and other necessary items for students enrolled in postsecondary education classes; and
- Payments of fees for employment and training-related applications, tests, and certifications.

Support services are provided on a case-by-case basis, funds permitting, when it is verified that the participant lacks the required means and no other agency is able to assist with services. They are

provided as part of the individual employment plan, and, as such, need to be considered each time an individual is enrolled in an employment and education program.

[Transportation support services are not funded in the local area at this time.](#)

Support services are meant to be a short-term measure and as such are limited in both duration and amount. Funding is limited and it is the responsibility of the Program Managers to ensure that each participant has a viable plan including provisions for meeting basic support needs and to assist the participant in identifying other sources of assistance to augment services.

Service providers will ensure that an assessment to determine supportive service needs are completed and documented on all participants who are eligible for and enrolled in WIOA programs. The MWDA policy addresses the coordination and referral of services to other entities in order to avoid duplication of resources and set limits on the funding and duration of such services.

The Supportive Services policies can be found by clicking here ([Childcare-policy](#)) and ([Other Supportive Services policy](#)).

8. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the SC Works delivery system.

The Midlands Area strategy to maximize service coordination and delivery while ensuring continuously improvement is that of a blend of utilizing a Center Operations Business Plan, Memorandums of Understanding, and a Partner Liaison in conjunction with the SC Works Standards. By clearly stating and assigning partner roles, responsibilities and expectations, we will be able to assure that services provided to customers are focused and not duplicative.

The Midlands operational plan for in-center services provides a method of clearly defined service delivery means that programs will operate in a complementary manner. The role of the Partner Liaison within the Midlands SC Works system is to provide the day-to-day linkage between partners, and oversee the mechanics of the plan execution. The methods and direction that the Partner Liaison uses to achieve the seamless effect of service delivery comes in the form of guidance from the MWDB as well as the SC Works Standards. In addition to as needed meetings in the centers, formal quarterly meetings will be scheduled to ensure partners receive the most up-to-date information regarding services and center operations.

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

The Midlands Workforce Development Board has a long history of collaboration with the Adult Education departments of each school district. We continue to explore opportunities for streamlining service delivery and strengthening the partnership for our shared customers. Adult Education continues to offer classes within the SC Works Center to expand access to the public for GED attainment. In addition, Adult Education has expanded the offerings in the Center to include free computer training as funding becomes available. For the Center collaboration, promotion of all Adult Education services available through all eight Adult Education departments is a part of the communication both physically in the Center and through SC Works Midlands social media to bring the opportunities for skill enhancement as close to each customer's neighborhood as possible.

The consortium of Adult Education Directors selects their representative on the Midlands Workforce Development Board. This Director serves as the liaison between the groups to share information and collaboration opportunities. Additionally, the consortium selected one of the Transition Specialists to serve as a member of the Midlands Business Services Team and representative on the Center Management and Planning Committee. This streamlines information to flow between the frontline staff of both the SC Works Centers and the various Adult Education departments. Combined with the Board member representative on the Midlands Youth Committee, the Board ensures Adult Education priorities and perspectives are understood by the Board and any actions are shared with the Directors.

The Midlands Board will follow the proposal process issued by the SC Department of Education in regards to reviewing the applications for WIOA Title II. When notified of the issuance of the RFP from SC Department of Education, the Midlands Board will solicit its membership for volunteers to serve on the review team with care taken to select representatives with no conflict of interest with any applicant organizations. The MWDB representative(s) will attend the Proposal Review Training webinar and utilize the supplied rubric to review any applicants for the local area and forward to the Office of Adult Education.

Section V: Operations and Compliance

- 1. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local SC Works system. This includes agreements between the local board or other local entities with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as the cross-training of staff, technical assistance, the use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.**

See copy of SC Works Midlands MOU and RSA.

- 2. A description of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the chief elected official(s).**

The consortium of Fairfield, Lexington & Richland Counties selected the Central Midlands Council of Governments as the fiscal agent for the Midlands area. Since 1969, the Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) has been assisting local governments develop local and regional plans within the four midlands counties (Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry, Richland) of South Carolina, as well as providing local governments with planning and technical support to improve the quality of life within the region. CMCOG currently consists of 15 member governments and serves in excess of 725,000 people by providing a regional forum, which allows local officials to seek out common goals and address regional concerns. Today, CMCOG offers a variety of local and regional planning services and technical assistance to local governments within the four-county region.

3. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

The Midlands procurement process is designed to safeguard fair and objective decision-making in choosing grantees and contractors to perform WIOA Title I activities. The rules are based on the South Carolina Consolidated Procurement Code to ensure the area complies with appropriate federal, state and local requirements. In summary to the extent possible, WIOA program service providers are selected through a competitive procurement process in accordance with the Federal Super-circular, SC Consolidated Procurement Code (competitive sealed bids, competitive sealed proposals, small purchases, sole source and emergency) and Central Midlands Council of Government procurement policies.

Sub grants and contracts for Title I activities generally exceed \$50,000 with awards based on weighted evaluation factors. As such, the competitive sealed proposal guidelines are applied. A formal competitive procurement request is written and advertised. The advertisement consists of notification to the maintained list of interested services providers for the Midlands area, a posting in South Carolina Business Opportunities (SCBO) and posting of the notice and Request for Proposals (RFP) on the Board website (www.midlandsworkforce.org). Sealed written bids are returned to the Board office on or before a designated date and time. When the bids are received they are secured until all are opened and then distributed together to the evaluation team members. All bids are scored based on the weighted evaluation factors included in the RFP and results are tabulated with and average score calculated for each proposal and then ranked. Award is based on multiple factors such as experience, knowledge and program design in addition to cost. A resulting recommendation(s) is forwarded from the evaluation team to the Center Management and Planning Committee. The Committee presents their advised action on the recommendation to the full Board or Executive Committee. Pending authorization to proceed, staff begins negotiation with the selected service provider for a contract.

Currently, the MWDB has a services provider for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs in Fairfield County procured through an RFP issued in February 2015 (Adult and Dislocated Worker) and February 2016 (Youth). There were no successful bidders for the Lexington or Richland Counties resulting from those RFPs. South Carolina and CMCOG policies for competitive procurement were followed for the RFP process.

The MWDB issued an RFP for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs for Lexington and Richland Counties in October 2016. As a result, a service provider was selected for WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth program in Lexington and Richland Counties as well as a One-Stop Operations and Business Services for the 3-county service area.

4. **Local Boards will not be required to include proposed performance goals for Program Years 2016 or 2017 in the local plan. Further guidance will be issued by the State regarding the negotiation of local levels of performance. Agreed upon performance goals must be incorporated into the local plan after negotiations are finalized.**

Midlands Program Year 2016 WIOA Performance Goals

Performance Measure	Negotiated Goals
Adult Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	73.1%
Adult Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	70.8%
Adult Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$5,220
Adult Credential Attainment Within 4 Quarters After Exit	51.0%
DW Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	77.0%
DW Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	75.0%
DW Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit	\$7,065
DW Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	54.4%
Youth Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit	75.1%

Youth Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit	67.6%
Youth Credential Attainment within 4 Quarters After Exit	68.1%

5. A description of actions the Local Board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing workforce area, including:

- **The effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the Local Board will implement to assess their one-stop centers;**

The Midlands area will continue the focus on business-friendly services and improve the integration of partner services. Additionally, we will utilize the SC Works Center standards for job seekers and businesses to ensure consistency across Centers within the local area, region and state. The area initiated a customer feedback system for customer satisfaction in the Centers several years ago and will continue until a time that the State initiates an alternative. Board members are encouraged to (and do) utilize SC Works Center services. They provide feedback to the staff and each other on the effectiveness and satisfaction of those services. At times, members have led focus groups to highlight the available services to other local businesses to encourage greater participation.

- **A description of the methodology used by the Local Board to allocate SC Works center infrastructure funds; and**

For Program Year 2016, the Midlands will utilize the Resource Sharing Agreement framework that was used under WIA. Partners will share in the costs of coordination of services, marketing, Center-specific operational costs (rent, utilities, janitorial, phone/internet, shared paper/ink, etc.) in addition to Center Resource Room Staffing. Partner costs are calculated based on the staff hours spent in the Center and partners choose which category to apply their proportionate share contribution. Costs and contributions are reconciled on a quarterly basis.

The proportionate share for each partner is determined by combining two cost pools – System Costs and Center Costs. The shared costs as contained in the budget document have been combined into 4 pools for the purposes of cost allocation (1 for the System and 1 for each of the three SC Works Centers). The total proportionate cost for each partner is determined by adding the share from the system cost pool to the applicable Center(s) the partner has a staff presence. The Cost Pools are described as follows:

System cost pool—Costs for marketing and the One-Stop Liaison position comprise the Systems cost pool. The costs have been distributed on the basis of equal benefit to partners. As the costs are not identified by program or partner and the services provided, each partner program receives an equal benefit from the incurrence of the cost, and thus an equal share of the costs.

- **One-Stop Liaison**—The One-Stop Liaison performs duties that benefit all partners in the Midlands SC Works Centers as a portion of the job duty. The position is responsible for the coordination of partner activities, including convening meetings of the Partners Committee, scheduling partner representation in the centers, and conducting cross training of staff. The position also develops schedules of training classes, workshops and other partner provided services to Center customers.
- **Marketing**—Costs include the printing and preparation of “branded” materials such as pencils, pens, brochures and other promotional materials to be used in promoting the services of the Midlands SC Works Center delivery system to both employer and job-seeker customers as well as maintenance of the SC Works Center website.

Operational cost pool—the individual cost items for the operation of each of the three Centers have been combined for a Center specific operations cost pool. These costs are allocated on the basis of the number of staff hours attributable to a partner program as compared to the total staff hours of the individual Center(s) the partner has a physical presence.

- Rent/Depreciation Fee—The costs of the facilities that house the three Centers in Columbia, Lexington and Winnsboro.
- Utilities—Utility costs include heat, electricity, air conditioning, water and other utilities for the three centers.
- Janitorial/Maintenance—Costs associated with building maintenance and cleaning. Costs are applicable to Columbia and Lexington centers.
- Office Equipment Maintenance & Rental—costs related to maintenance of computer equipment, rental of such equipment as copiers.
- Telephone and Internet Access—Additional charges related to Telephone and Internet access for the centers.
- Liability Insurance—Required insurance for the centers.
- One-Stop Common Supplies—Estimated costs of printer supplies, copier paper, and resource room supplies.

Resource Room Staff—Salary and benefit costs for personnel needed to staff the resource room in the centers for all hours of operation. Staff will provide assistance with services, computers, answer job seeker and employer customers questions, and oversee the operations of the Resource Room. Costs are estimated on the salary and benefit costs of an entry level Employment Service Representative. In preparation for future program years, the partner group will discuss other infrastructure costs that may need to be added as the partner integration continues and aided by the policy guidance from the State Administrative Unit for Workforce based on US Department of Labor’s

TEGL 17-16 (Infrastructure Funding of the One-Stop Delivery System). It is anticipated that other line items will be added to the budget increasing the infrastructure costs but adding flexibility in contributions and further integrating services while streamlining costs.

- **A description of the roles and contributions of SC Works partners, including cost allocation.**

Partners share in the costs of coordination of services, marketing, Center-specific operational costs in addition to Center Resource Room Staffing. Line items include:

1. A share of the Partner Liaison position (coordination of partner schedules, workshops, classroom space, special events, hiring fairs, job fairs, staff training, space sharing, social media promotion, record keeping, etc.);
2. Marketing and promotional materials (Center website hosting);
3. Rent/Annual Depreciation;
4. Utilities;
5. Janitorial/Maintenance;
6. Equipment Maintenance/Rental (shared copy machine);
7. Internet & Telephone;
8. Building Insurance;
9. Center commons supplies (paper for copier and Resource Room printers and ink for Resource Room printers); and
10. Resource Room staffing.

Partner costs are calculated based on the staff hours spent in the Center and partners choose which category to apply their contribution. Costs and contributions are calculated on a quarterly basis.

6. **A description of how Adult and Dislocated Worker training services will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including:**

- **If contracts for training services will be used;**

The Midlands will continue using the voucher system to issue vouchers for participant Individual Training Accounts for both Adults and Dislocated Workers. We do not intend to issue contracts for full training classes at this time.

- **How the use of training service contracts will be coordinated with the use of individual training accounts; and**

The Midlands area intends to utilize Individual Training Accounts in combination with On-the-Job Training opportunities to deliver occupational skills training with WIOA funding.

- **How the Local Board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.**

The Midlands area has each participant complete a customer selection form in conjunction with the WIOA Eligible Training Provider (ETP) list as a part of the training funding application process. The Midlands internal ETP list is currently arranged by cluster to assist the participants in identifying the individual training providers for a specific training. The arrangement of the list also assists management and the Business Services Team to identify gaps in the training availability as job requirements evolve.

7. A description of the process used by the Local Board to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into development of the local plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, labor organizations, and education.

To ensure the Midlands community and stakeholders have adequate opportunity to contribute to the plan, the Midlands Workforce Board will provide an opportunity for online public comment for a minimum of 30 days. While we facilitated the writing of the plan, we want to create opportunities for community stakeholders and partners to provide feedback to shape the strategies described in the plan. We are seeking partner created solutions for an economic self-sufficient community. To ensure wide distribution of the plan, the link to the plan will be included on signage in the SC Works Centers and included on our social media outlets. Additionally the Plan outline and link will be presented to the County, City and Town elected officials, as well as regional planners and representatives of community groups in September 2016. Lastly, the link will be shared through the partner and Business Services Team members in order to reach additional business and labor representatives.

8. A description of how SC Works centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by SC Works partners.

The SC Works Centers utilize the South Carolina Works Online Services (SCWOS) to deliver many of the Core Services including a basic intake and some shared case management services. These services are internet based and available at any sites that are serving the client. Partners utilizing the SCWOS include WIOA (Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth), Trade, Unemployment Insurance, and Wagner-Peyser programs. Additionally, other partners utilize the labor exchange portion of case management within SCWOS by being a part of the Business Services Team. Partners included on the Business Services Team are Adult Education, Job Corps and SNAP Employment and Training programs.

9. A description of how the Local Board ensures compliance with the Adult priority of service requirements under WIOA Title I.

Midlands local policy and procedures have been established to give priority to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, individuals who are basic skills deficient and covered individuals in the provision of individualized career services and training services in the Adult program.

The Midlands Workforce Development Board issued MWDA Instruction Letter PY-15-14 Midlands Adult Priority of Service Policy on 1 July 2015. Midlands service providers received training to ensure that they fully understood how the priority of services would be provided in the Midlands. During certification of eligibility, applicants are identified as being covered individuals, low income, recipients of public assistance or basic skills deficient.

The Midlands Workforce Development Area will ensure compliance with the Adult Priority of Service Policy through constant program monitoring by board staff and required internal monitoring by service providers.

The list below describes the priority of service for individuals served in the WIOA Adult Program.

1st Priority – Eligible Veterans and spouses (Eligible covered persons) who are:

- Low income [as defined by WIOA Sec. 3(36)], or
- Recipients of public assistance, or
- Who are basic skills deficient.

2nd Priority - Eligible individuals (non-covered persons) who are:

- Low income [as defined by WIOA Sec. 3(36)], or
- Recipients of public assistance, or who are basic skills deficient.

3rd Priority - Eligible veterans and eligible spouses who are:

- Not low income, and
- Not recipients of public assistance, and
- Not basic skills deficient.

4th Priority - Eligible individuals (non-covered persons) who do not meet the above priorities may be enrolled on a case-by-case basis: Local policy limits the number of adults enrolled in WIOA who are not low income, public assistance recipients, or basic skills deficient to not more than 10% of all adults registered in the current program year.

10. A description of how the Local Board is serving special populations, including those with barriers to employment, as required by WIOA.

The Midlands Workforce Development Board's goal is to develop strategies and provide intensive services targeted to individuals with significant barriers to employment. MWDB recognizes the need to implement intensive services to those with significant barriers to enter labor force. Efforts related to this goal include the provision of more work-based learning opportunities, access to in-demand industry certifications, job readiness training, and relevant skill building efforts. Additionally the Board plans to increase the program population of participants with employment barriers and tailor services to individuals with disabilities, veterans, out of school youth, young adults with limited work history, those facing language barriers, criminal justice involvement, or homelessness.

Individuals with barriers to employment include those individuals in one or more of the following:

Displaced homemakers – Services provided by the MWDA dislocated worker program. Specific outreach to victims of domestic violence who need to return to the workforce are targeted with Board and Center staff working in a collaborative manner with shelter staff to maximize the services available to them. Outreach and presentations to the residents is on-going service of both the Board and Center staff at SisterCare Inc., Hannah's House and Samaritan's Well. The presentations are designed to educate the residents of the services available at the SC Works Center, opportunities through the WIOA program, employers who are actively recruiting and the WorkKeys assessments.;

Low-income individuals – Services provided by the MWDA adult or youth program. WIOA Title 1 programs specifically offer job preparation, training and job placement assistance to low income individuals and are located in all three of the SC Works Centers in the Midlands area. Additionally, SC Works partners who offer services to the same population are located in the Centers for their convenience. For instance, the SC Department of Social Services has SNAP Employment and Training staff located in both the SC Works Columbia and Lexington offices and offer customized workshops in addition to one-on-one services in the Centers. In the Winnsboro, the local food bank is located adjacent to the SC Works office to offer the basic assistance and the SC Department of Social Service is located on the next block. The core services located in adjoining spaces maximizes the services a job seeker can access with a single ride in this rural area.;

Individuals with disabilities – Services provided through partnership with SC Vocational Rehabilitation and local non-profit organizations. Staff from the SC Vocational Rehabilitation is located on a part-time basis in the SC Works Columbia and Lexington office to visit with clients in the Center, assist them with accessing services, host customized workshops and network with Center staff to facilitate quality cross-referrals. The first cycles of Project Search and the Starbucks Inclusion Academy have finished in early 2017 and both are in the planning stages for second cycle.

Board staff have been members of the Mayors Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. The MCEPD and Midlands Board have cooperated in planning job fairs to target people with disabilities. This relationship is expected to continue into future years. Board staff has participated in the Project Search application Advisory Board in the approval process of further Project Search sites. Additionally, the Midlands Board and Board staff have worked toward partnering with high schools in the Midlands Area and other organizations in developing pathways for non-diploma track students as well as adults with disabilities. The Board staff has been involved with Project Search, Starbucks Inclusion Academy, and other local initiatives.

Older individuals – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with SCSEP Service Providers - Experience Works and Goodwill Industries of the Upstate/Midlands Referrals for services for the population flow between the SC Works Center and the SCSEP service providers. In addition, the MWDA has trained the staff of the SCSEP providers in SCWOS services and includes their staff in the Business Services team to maximize the intensity of services. Finally, the SC Works Centers serve as a worksite for the SCSEP service providers.;

Ex-offenders – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with SC Department of Corrections. The new partnership with the SC Department of Corrections has brought another dimension of collaborative services. Department of Corrections staff is now co-located in the SC

Works Columbia office. The collaboration began in February 2017 so the full implementation is not yet realized but DOC staff will be learning more about the services of the Center to better guide their clientele, we are looking forward to customized workshops and integrating their staff into the Business Services Team. Additionally, the MWDA enjoys a collaboration with nearby First Baptist Church of Columbia for services to ex-offenders. The Church uses its kitchen facilities to partner its Chef with ex-offender to train them in basic restaurant practices to prepare them for the workforce. This is an early project but an exciting additional resource for that target population. The Solicitor's Office regularly assists us in helping individuals with criminal backgrounds understand the limitations and process of expungement through workshops in all three Centers. Finally, the MWDA is host area for the upcoming Re-Entry Job Fair in the Spring 2017. The event is for the entire Central Region but as the local area serving the host site, all Midlands staff and partners will be fully integrated in the planning and implementation of the Job Fair.;

Homeless individuals – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with His House, Oliver Gospel Mission, SC DEW's Back to Work, Sistercare Inc. and Samaritan's Well. Referrals between the SC Works Centers and the local organizations that provide customized services have been in place since early One-Stop formation days. The Midlands has enjoyed a pilot project in the last few years with staff from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce and Main Street Methodist Church in a new way to serve homeless individuals. The Church provides a safe space a few blocks from the SC Works Center and in the Center of Oliver Gospel Mission, soup kitchens, and headquarters for Christ Central and the popular hang-out areas for the homeless individuals to attend a job readiness boot camp. Still in the first few cycles, the pilot has given new energy to transitioning homeless individuals into the workforce.;

Youth in or aging out of the foster care services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with Department of Social Services and Epworth Children's Home. The WIOA Title I program activity recruits youth aging out of the foster into the program to assist with the transitional services to either post-secondary education and/or employment. This recruitment involves close collaboration with the staff of the Department of Social Services and Epworth Children's Home.;

English language learners – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with English Program for Internationals (EPI) and Agape English Language. The WIOA Title I program has a long history of serving English language learners in the Adult program and aiding them with the funds to continue improving his/her English language skills. The WIOA program provides the funds for the language acquisition from English Program for Internationals (EPI) and Agape English Language as well as licensing preparation fees for the English language learners who need to be credentialed in the US. These services combined to together move the job seekers into the workforce.;

Within 2 years of exhausting TANF – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with South Carolina Department of Social Services. With staff from the SC Department of Social Services co-located in the SC Works Centers in Columbia and Lexington, job seekers have more ready access to the services to transition them into the workforce.;

Pregnant/parenting – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with Department of Social Services. With staff from the SC Department of Social Services co-located in the SC Works Centers in

Columbia and Lexington, job seekers have more ready access to the services to transition them into the workforce.;

Long-term unemployed individuals – Services provided by the MWDA and in conjunction with Department of Employment and Workforce's and Unemployment services and Wagner-Peyser employment services. Through the REA services of the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, individuals who are likely to exhaust his/her Unemployment Insurance benefits are identified for more intensive services. This work can either shorten the unemployment duration and/or connect the job seeker to more intensive services needed to return to the workforce in a more expedient manner. When available, the WIOA Title 1 program conducts outreach to individuals who are nearing the exhaustion of unemployment benefits to supplement the efforts of the Wagner-Peyser staff.

11. Copies of current Local Board policies and definitions, including:

- **Supportive Services policy;**
- **On-the-Job Training (OJT) reimbursement policy;**
- **Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) policy, when using local funds;**
- **Youth Incentives policy;**
- **Local training cap policy;**
- **Local definition for youth who "require additional assistance"; and**
- **Adult and Dislocated Worker Self-sufficiency definition(s) for training.**

Attached

12. Copies of current local workforce area documents, including:

- **Memorandum(s) of Understanding, including signature sheets;**
- **Resource Sharing Agreements, including signature sheets;**
- **All service provider grants, including statements of work and budgets;**
- **Statements of work for in-house operational staff (where applicable);**
- **Current or most recent Grant Application Request(s)/Request(s) for Proposals;**
- **Local Workforce Development Board By-Laws;**
- **Local Workforce Development Board and Committee meeting schedules;**
- **Local Workforce Development Board budgets; and**
- **Local monitoring schedule.**

Attached

Local Plan Signatures

Local Workforce Development Board:

Midlands Workforce Development Board
Dennis Hunter- Chair

Signature Date

Local Grant Recipient Signatory Official:

Midlands Workforce Development Area
Ben Mauldin- Director

Signature Date