



Informal strategic planning for workforce development happens throughout the year as we strive to be nimble and proactive in providing critical services to our job seeker and employer customers, while ensuring we have adequate resources to meet those needs. A more formal process of defining strategy and direction and documenting that strategy is completed on a regular (annual or biannual) basis for Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) and the Local Workforce Development Board (WDB). The next planning session will be held in August. Along with our local, ten-county delivery area strategies, we are working closely with Winona County to develop regional strategies. The recently updated regional plan includes strategies for the eleven counties of Southeast Minnesota around Career Pathways, Regional Sector Partnerships, and Equity.

Highlighted in the plan are the **Advanced** career pathways and sector partnerships in Healthcare; the **Active** career pathways and sector partnerships in Construction/Carpentry; and the **Emerging** career pathways and sector partnerships that are being developed in Manufacturing, Public Sector, Customer Service, including retail, hospitality, and tourism, and IT. The Sector Committees of the WDB and WDI staff are assigned the task of carrying out the activities highlighted in the plan for each sector and career pathway. The Sector Committees of the WDB are Healthcare, Manufacturing, Services and Trades, and Emerging Technologies and Economic Development.

Another critical component to the Regional and Local Plan is documenting the considerable work being done throughout the region around equity and inclusion. The WDBs are working hard on solutions to the unique problems faced by our job seeker and employer customers. Taskforces of the WDB include MaxAbility Employment, focusing on employment issues faced by persons with disabilities; Salute Southern MN Veterans Network, providing service and support to our Veterans; Diversity and Inclusion, consisting of two subcommittees: Previously Incarcerated Individuals and Women and Minorities, both tackling disparities; and Emerging Workforce, focusing on strategies around out of school youth.

To WDI and the Local and Regional WDBs, the local and regional plans are more than just compliance documents. These plans outline and guide our work, providing direction and focus while still allowing for flexibility and innovation. The strategies and activities outlined in the work plan and timeline help to keep the region focused on specific career pathway and equity solutions that are key to helping us meet our employer and job seeker needs.