

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
WIA Five-year Local Plan
Fiscal Year 2003 Modification

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.
WIA Five-year Local Plan
Fiscal Year 2003 Modification

Table of Contents

Planning Package Checklist
Cover Sheet with Signatures
Plan Narrative.....pages 1-21
 A. Local Labor Market Analysispages 1-4
 B. Workforce Development System Capacity Building.....pages 4-10
 C. One-Stop Delivery Systempages 10-15
 D. Training Strategypages 15-17
 E. Youth Activities.....pages 18-19
Implementation of Structural Re-design FY2003pages 20-21
 ➤ MOU between GNBWIB, Mayor of New Bedford, New Directions, and
 Department of Workforce Development Administration

List of Attachments

- A. MOU Activity Summary
- B. Overall Performance Goals
- C. Integrated Budget Summary
- D. Summary Sheet by Region
- E. Fiscal Agent

Memoranda of Understanding
Attached

- New Directions (WIA Title I Operator/ Welfare to Work)
- Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training
- Commonwealth Corporation (Trade)
- Massachusetts Department of Education

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

**Planning Package Checklist for
Five-Year Local Plan Modification
Workforce Investment Act
FY2003**

**Items to submit with Five-Year Local Plan
Modification**

- Completed Checklist
- Signed Cover Sheet

- Plan Narrative

- MOU Activity Summary

- Overall Performance Goals

- Integrated Budget Summary

- Summary Sheet by Region

Submit a signed original and 2 copies of the plan to:

Angelo R. Buonopane, Director
Department of Labor and Workforce Development
One Ashburton Place, Room 2112
Boston, MA 02108
Attention: Jennifer Kadlick

Additionally, please e-mail a complete copy with attachments to:

Jennifer.Kadlick@state.ma.us
LJCaissie@CommCorp.org
WMurphy@detma.org

**Workforce Investment Act
Fiscal Year 2003**

Five-Year Local Plan Modification

Greater New Bedford

Name of Local Area

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

Name of Workforce Investment Board

We submit this plan with knowledge and acceptance of our roles and responsibilities for the workforce development system and for the One-Stop Career Center service delivery system as specified in Workforce Investment Act of 1998, and in the Final Regulations at 20 CFR Part 652.

Chief Elected Official

Chair, Workforce Investment Board

Signature

Date

Signature

Date

Frederick Kalisz, Jr.

Printed name

Anthony R. Sapienza

Printed name

Mayor

Title

Chairman

Title

City of New Bedford

Organization

**Greater New Bedford Workforce
Investment Board, Inc.**

Organization

133 William Street

Address

12 Welby Road

Address

New Bedford, Massachusetts 02740

City, State, Zip

New Bedford, Massachusetts 02745

City, State, Zip

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

WIA Five-year Local Plan Fiscal Year 2003 Modification

Narrative

A. Local Labor Market Analysis

Please describe any significant changes in local labor market conditions that have occurred since the submission of the Five-Year Plan (and subsequent modification) which will result in a shift of emphasis in the service mix available through the local One-Stop delivery system. This analysis should describe any significant changes that have an impact on current industry employment trends, with an emphasis on the identification of industries experiencing either major growth or decline; projected industry and occupational employment opportunities; job skills and training requirements necessary for employment in targeted industries and occupations; education and training needs of individuals in your labor market area.

Greater New Bedford's labor market conditions have changed dramatically over the last year. The principal change has been in the unemployment rate.

Annual Average Unemployment Rates (%)		
	2000	2001
New Bedford	4.8 *	5.7*
State	2.6	3.7

**Highest annual average unemployment rate, among sixteen workforce investment areas (Source: DET)*

However, as the economy's sluggishness and events of September 11 took their toll, New Bedford's unemployment rate took a sharp turn upward, reaching 7.1% in March 2002, which was again the highest in the state.

A key factor in the unemployment increase was the loss, in 2001, of over 1000 manufacturing jobs in the Greater New Bedford area, as a result of plant closings and downsizing at Volex Inc., Justin/Shepard Clothing Co., Inc., Madeira Twin Fashions, and Acushnet Rubber Company., Inc. Sixty-five percent of these dislocated workers are 45 years of age or older; many had been employed by their companies for fifteen years or more. The majority do not have a high school diploma.

Critical and emerging industries identified in studies completed for WIB last year that accounted for 7% or more of 1999 private sector employment are Retail (21.7%), Allied Health Services (14.2%) and Distribution (7.8%) (UMass Dartmouth Center for Policy Analysis). Testing the study's data against Division of Employment and Training (DET) LMI Data for 2001 private sector employment, indicates that these percentages are virtually unchanged. Thus, these industries will continue to be the source of most jobs in the region.

The retail and service jobs that are replacing the manufacturing jobs do not offer the same wage scales. Retail jobs tend to be lower paying jobs, and most are replacement jobs, with few new jobs being created. In health care, the situation is somewhat different. Health care jobs have wider ranging pay scales, bounded on the low end by certified nursing assistants (average wage \$9.21) and home health aides (average wage \$8.01), which while they are among the fastest growing jobs, offer the lowest pay ranges; at the top of the scale, are the highly technical jobs, such as registered nurse (average wage \$21.05) and physicians (average wage \$49) (Source: 1998 Wage Data for New Bedford SDA).

According to a new SouthCoast report that is issued monthly in the Standard-Times, New Bedford's local newspaper, in partnership with the UMass Dartmouth Center for Policy Analysis and the Community Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, two other industries are poised for growth: marine science and tourism (Standard-Times, 2/10/02). (Their numbers were too small for inclusion in the WIB's Survey of Critical and Emerging Industries.)

Encouraging the growth of high-end jobs, like nursing and marine science, will be a challenge for the region. Companies relocating to the region are concerned about the level of education of the workforce, and the Greater New Bedford region continues to be dogged by a lack of educational attainment. According to 1990 U S Census data, only 50% of New Bedford adults held high school diplomas, and only 10% had completed college. Census data from 2000 is unlikely to reveal significant change.

While the yearly drop-out rate for New Bedford High School is 6.9% for the 2000-2001 academic year, it is important to note that of the original 932 students who entered as freshman in 1998, only 688 students remained to graduate as seniors. This represents a loss of 244 students, making the cumulative drop-out rate 26%; this figure is expected to grow with full implementation of MCAS testing. The Signals report cited above found the dropout rate to be as high as 36%. These figures are reflected in Career Center statistics: 33% of jobseekers do not hold a high school diploma.

Compounding the problem is the fact that college educated individuals are leaving the region, according to the Signals report (Standard-Times, 11/11/01). Moreover, the four-year college attendance rate has decreased from 49.5 to 49.2 percent between 1996 and 1999; the state average is 54.1 percent.

The challenge to the region is to take steps to increase educational attainment, so that workers can move into higher paying jobs. The educational requirements for these types of positions are advanced; for example, a 12th grade reading level is needed to pass the entrance exam for Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) training at Diman Vocational Technical High School in Fall River (the closest LPN program to our region). And passing the exam is only the first hurdle; once students are in school, many are unprepared for the rigorous workload; the low level of academic preparation among entering students contributes to attrition rates. In addition to basic

education, more emphasis is needed in science and math, if workers are to be prepared adequately for technical jobs.

In response, the Board took important actions to identify its key priorities for the region. In view of the trends discussed above, the Board designated two education-related priorities to be the focus of its attention, beginning immediately and continuing through the coming year. These are: Adult Basic Education and Employer Training Needs.

To address these needs, the WIB has undertaken a process of dialogue with industry clusters, using focus groups with employers and community experts to get to the heart of the skill deficiencies and other issues besetting the Greater New Bedford workforce, and to brainstorm strategies to address them.

One example is the Health Care Industry Consortium, initially convened in 2000 to begin to address the crisis in health care staffing, and Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative; it has continued to meet, transforming into the Health Care Regional Industry Team for BEST Initiative proposal development, and now for an H-1B proposal. This group, representative of our second largest industry sector and home to our largest employer, Southcoast Hospitals Group, has targeted several issues for continued effort in addition to increasing the numbers of qualified nurses, such as building basic math and science skills so students are better prepared for nursing school; marketing and recruitment for health care careers; and increasing the pool of nursing educators.

WIB staff has also attempted to initiate conversation with the retail industry, in partnership with the Retailers Association of Massachusetts (RAM). However, our invitations to attend an information session failed to elicit any response. Discussions with Board members in retail suggest that training needs vary significantly among retailers; those associated with national corporations tend to have in-house training programs that meet their needs, while independent retailers do not have the profit margins -- or the time-- to allow them to implement training. One of the WIB's identified objectives is to design training initiatives that will be highly transferable, in subjects like customer service, which will clearly benefit the retail industry. Additionally, we plan to continue to work with the RAM in the future.

In addition to the higher-level math and science skills that must be developed, many people in our community need basic skills – reading and writing English, basic arithmetic. Galvanized by limited ABE/ESOL class availability as reported in last year's MassINC report, "New Skills for a New Economy", and by lengthy waiting lists for those classes, an ABE Workgroup was convened to develop strategies to increase access to classes.

Our Employer Training Needs Workgroup convened to identify specific skill needs of employers, beginning with a synthesis of the data compiled in the Survey of Skills for Critical and Emerging Industries, conducted by the UMass Dartmouth Center for

Policy Analysis. As a result of input from the employer-members of the workgroup and the study data, a focus of effort will be on developing educational and training programs that address highly transferable skills – those skills needed by most workers, and which, unfortunately, employers tell us most workers are lacking. These include communications, computer skills, bookkeeping, math and science, and customer service skills.

The products of the workgroups have been compiled into a Strategic Planning Document that will be submitted to the Planning Committee in May 2002, for approval. It will focus the WIB's work in the coming months on its key priorities, with clearly defined outcomes expected, that will lead to positive impact in the community.

B. Workforce Development System Capacity Building

- 1. How does the LWIB intend to maximize its opportunities for securing additional resources? Are there specific federal, state, local or private funding opportunities which the LWIB intends to pursue? How does the LWIB plan to insure that additional resources are integrated into the local workforce system? Please describe how the LWIB will work in collaboration and agreement with the CEO in regards to the preparation of the WIA Plan Modification budget.*

As stated last year, GNBWIB believes strongly that to have significant positive effect on the workforce development system in our region, the Board must identify and pursue additional funding opportunities in addition to state and federal funds. To this end, we have devised two strategies to develop public and private funding opportunities.

Public Funding. During the past year, we have assessed several state and federal grant opportunities, pursuing those that were appropriate to us. For example, we participated in two BEST initiative proposals, one developed in our region and the other in collaboration with Bristol WIB. (Bristol WIB's proposal to provide a range of training programs to employees of a manufacturing consortium was funded.) We invited extended care facilities and home health agencies to an informational session on the Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI) out of which grew two projects, one of which developed into a Round 4 proposal for a home health agency; the other will be ready for the future Round 5. Our Youth Council Director and Planning Manager participated in proposal development meetings around the federal Young Offender Initiative: Re-entry Grant Program (the RFP was subsequently withdrawn by the issuing federal agencies). In addition, with Commonwealth Corporation's assistance, we have submitted a \$2.3 million National Emergency Grant Application that will fund services to employees of four local manufacturers who have closed or downsized; these employees face significant barriers to re-employment. We are currently preparing a proposal for the federal H-1B grant program that will, if funded, address the critical staffing needs of the health care industry.

We will continue to assess federal and state grant opportunities based on regional need in accordance with the WIB's identified priorities and organizational capacity. As appropriate, we will convene stakeholders, employers, and community experts to assist with these efforts.

Private Resources. Over the past months, the Planning Manager has been expanding her knowledge base around private, corporate, and foundation grant-seeking through attendance at seminars, reading, and online grants research. We are preparing specific plans to include development of draft proposals for a variety of workforce development projects that can then be customized for individual funding sources as opportunities arise. Specific projects that could benefit from private funding include Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) in the form of "scholarships" (based on a model project from Connecticut), staffing for the Career Centers' Resource Rooms (currently staffed by volunteers or interns), and our health care exploration class known as "Health Care 101". Through research, we can identify funding sources, such as Johnson & Johnson and Verizon, which are well suited to these and other projects; we are actively researching other resources.

Public / private fundraising goals will tie into the WIB's Strategic Plan. Some areas of need that have potential for such funding are programs to serve underserved populations: people with disabilities, older workers, disadvantaged youth and adults, individuals with math, language or computer literacy deficiencies, etc.

Integration of Funds. We will integrate funds secured in this way into the region's workforce development system by passing them through the WIB to the Fiscal Agent, for inclusion in the Workforce Investment Area's integrated accounts. Since budgets must be provided with any grant proposal, the Financial Officer will be involved in proposal development from initiation of projects. Proposals will be written to support identified needs, and any funds awarded must be used for those specified purposes.

As noted last year, a priority for the Board has been to analyze workforce development system funds with an eye to identifying potential cost savings in the administrative areas which can be diverted to training and other programmatic areas. Due to the shrinking budget for FY'03, operations staff in the system have continued to look for opportunities to cut costs and provide in-house core, intensive and educational services. This year's budget reflects this effort. In addition, our attachment, "Implementation of Structural Design, Fiscal Year 2003" provides additional information.

Collaboration with CEO. Mayor Kalisz, the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Area Chief Elected Official, empowered the Board and its Finance Committee to create the regional integrated WIA FY 2003 Plan Modification budget. The Finance Committee worked collaboratively with the New Directions' Executive Director and Fiscal Officer, the WIB Executive Director, the DET Area Director, the Youth Council Director, and others, in regular communication with the WIB's liaison

to the CEO, to arrive at a budget that appropriately addresses the needs and challenges of the workforce development system. These meetings were facilitated by Board and Finance Committee Member, Charles Simpson, President and CEO of First Citizens' Federal Credit Union in New Bedford, who brought a business perspective to the proceedings and ensured a comprehensive process. The budget resulting from this process, which is attached, was duly presented to the Executive Committee for approval and reviewed with the Mayor.

2. *Strategic planning efforts conducted by an LWIB should lead to the development of a comprehensive and integrated workforce development system. Please describe where the LWIB is in its strategic planning process. Describe the process and indicate what partners participated in this process.*

GNBWIB has completed a strategic planning process for FY03. The process was conducted by the Planning and Performance Measurement Committees of the Board. Work began with definition of the WIB's values and identification of the Board's priorities. The Planning Committee recognized that, although our community and workforce development system are faced with many needs and challenges, the Board could only be effective by focusing on two or three priorities at a time. Each committee member brought their perspective on community needs to the group, and together, distilled the key challenges, which became the Board's Priorities. The committee then divided into workgroups focused on each priority: Adult Basic Education, Employer Training Needs, and Frontline Service Delivery Improvements. Each workgroup, which included practitioners with expertise in the specific area under discussion, was directed to identify over-arching goals which, when achieved, would significantly improve the workforce development system's capacity; the workgroups then determined realistic action steps to achieve the identified goals. The products of these workgroups – goals, action steps, hallmarks of success, and time frames – formed the basis of the Strategic Plan, nearly complete, that will direct our work over the coming months. Workgroup members and their affiliations are listed below:

- **Adult Basic Education:** Lisa Jochim (UMass Dartmouth Workers Education Program), Helena Marques (Executive Director, Immigrant Assistance Center), Kathy Castro (New Bedford Public Schools CS² Entrepreneur), Isabel DaSilva (Career Services Manager, GNB Career Center), Rosemary Wilde (Director, New Bedford Public Schools Adult Education); (supported by WIB Manager for Planning and Program Development and WIB Asst Director for Operations Oversight)
- **Employer Training Needs:** John Fernandes (Greater New Bedford/Cape Cod Labor Council), John Leite (Manager, New Directions Business & Industry Center), Lisa Lemieux (Greater New Bedford/Cape Cod Labor Council), Richard Mello (Branch Manager, Adecco Employment Services), Atty. Joseph Michaud (Partner, Henry & Michaud, P.C., and Acting Chair, WIB Planning Cmtee), Marilyn Whalley (Onset Bay Association, Inc.), John Bunevith (HR Director, My Bread Baking Co.), Ron Rouillard (Sr HR Manager, Acushnet Co), Corinn Williams (Executive Director, Community Economic Development Center of

Southeastern Massachusetts, Inc.) (supported by WIB Manager for Planning and Program Development and WIB Asst Director for Operations Oversight)

- **Frontline Service Delivery Improvements:** Joe Andrade (Area Director Division of Employment & Training), David Mackley (President, Initia LLC and Chair, WIB Performance Measurement Committee), Jo Ritchie (Director, GNB Career Center), Linda Pina (Executive Director, New Directions), Paul Correia (LifeStream) (supported by WIB Asst Director for Operations Oversight)

3. *The local board, in partnership with the chief elected official, is responsible for conducting oversight of the local workforce development system. Please describe the process used by the LWIB to oversee the performance of the local workforce development system. Provide an overview of the LWIB's approach to performance oversight (including the steps in this process). Indicate what partners participate in the process and describe their roles. What types of data are collected? How is it collected and analyzed? How are the results of the analysis used to improve the performance of the local workforce development system?*

The WIB hired an Assistant Director for Operations Oversight in August of 2001. A major responsibility of this position is to work closely with members of the Planning and Performance Measurement Committee to develop a regional performance measurement system. Through the work of this committee, the WIB adopted three key priority areas at the December 2001 Board meeting: Adult Basic Education, Employer Training Needs and Frontline Service Delivery Improvements. Workgroups were established for each and meet monthly. The Frontline Service Delivery Improvements workgroup, made up of committee members, WIB staff and operations staff from the Career Centers, New Directions and the DET, have committed to implementing a performance measurement system and a continuous quality improvement process. A performance measurement system is in the development stage, while CQI is in the implementation stage.

The performance measurement system is slated to include the required (17) indicators of success for WIA Title I programs plus additional leading and lagging indicators of success in the One-Stop Career Centers, The Business and Industry Center and The Greater New Bedford Fishing Families Assistance Center. The committee will use the Baldrige Criteria to inform the process. Our goals and timeline include the following:

- Clarify 17 WIA Title I performance indicators by May 9, 2002.
- Adopt additional leading and lagging performance indicators by June 30, 2002.
- Identify and hire data reporting/evaluation staff person (complete).
- Construct customer satisfaction surveys that directly address customer needs (job seekers, businesses, vendors, partners) by June 30, 2002.
- Implement surveys by July 1, 2002.
- Collect and provide data to staff on a continuing basis so that the organization can adjust as needed. Begin this process by July 15, 2002.
- Develop Charter Review Process and implementation timeline by 6/30/02.

The Charter for Career Center Operations expired in December 2001, and a new performance measurement system is in development stage. New Directions was asked

to and submitted a Charter Review Report on October 19, and a review of this report by Board members and WIB staff resulted in a six month extension for New Directions as lead operator for the Greater New Bedford and Wareham Career Centers. The Charter review process for FY02 will be completed by July 1, 2002. New Directions will complete a self-assessment and provide an updated business plan to the WIB to note significant operational and service delivery changes. Limited customer focus groups will be implemented this year (FY02) to begin to gather customer satisfaction data in the system. A regional performance measurement system will be developed in the remaining months of FY02. Another extension may be granted so that results of implementation will allow the Board to judge progress.

The Planning and Performance Measurement Committee of the Board reviewed the Individual Training Account (ITA) subsequent eligibility process during this fiscal year and agreed to adopt the State's six Statewide Minimum Performance Levels, with the stipulation that vendors must meet or exceed five of the six. Because of concerns locally and state-wide with the data and period of measure, the Board later acted to waive the stipulation this year and instead required that vendors meet at least two of the six standards. The committee further agreed to develop a local performance measurement framework for vendors that would include additional measures to the State's six and to communicate this through Technical Assistance meetings and vendor forums. Additional improvements will be made in the collection of data, as well.

The WIB's future Annual Review process will include the collection and analysis of customer satisfaction data accomplished through interviews, surveys and focus groups with job seekers, employers, vendors and partners. New Directions will be asked to complete self-assessments and business plan updates on an annual basis. Quarterly system updates will be provided by New Directions to the WIB and the WIB Assistant Director will review MOSES reports monthly and work with New Directions to address oversight concerns as needed.

4. *What steps will the LWIB take to ensure the development of Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with all required partners during FY2003? Are there additional non-mandated partners with whom the LWIB intends to develop an MOU?*

During FY2002, the WIB negotiated and signed Memoranda of Understanding with all ten required partners in Greater New Bedford and with eight required partners in Wareham. We still seek two additional Wareham Career Center required partnerships for Housing and Post Secondary Education. Partnerships are being pursued with South Shore Housing Authority and Cape Cod Community College. Wareham residents receive support services differently from agency to agency—they are often included in services to Cape Cod residents and at other times included in services provided to New Bedford residents. While Bristol Community College classes would be available to Wareham residents, Cape Cod Community College classes might be closer. We seek to offer as many services to One-stop customers on site as possible.

An associate partner MOU has been signed with MY TURN, Inc., which serves out-of-school youth in the Wareham community. Staff are out-stationed at the Wareham Career Center.

The Board continues to recognize that its mandate from the community is to go beyond Workforce Investment Act partners so that a comprehensive workforce development system can be designed and implemented. A meeting to negotiate a signed MOU with the Department of Transitional Assistance took place on March 13 and a signed Associate MOU is imminent.

Some additional affiliate partners have been added to the list in both New Bedford and Wareham. These include but are not limited to:

- *Immigrants' Assistance Center***
- *Bureau of Apprenticeship Training*
- *YWCA*
- *Consumer Credit Counseling Service of Southern New England****
- *Dress for Success****
- *Educational Opportunity Center (Center for Health and Human Services)****
- *Onset Community Collaborative (local human service & healthcare providers in Wareham)****
- *Habit Management Initiative (HMI-methadone clinic)*
- *Massachusetts Department of Mental Health****
- *Massachusetts Social Security****
- *Fair Labor (Attorney General's Office)****
- *Community Economic Development Center of Southeastern Massachusetts (CEDC)***

**Agency executive is a member of the WIB.

*** "Pilot partnerships" already in process at the Greater New Bedford Career Center

5. ***Please identify any required partners under WIA with whom you have been unable to execute a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Is there an expectation that an MOU will be signed in FY2003? Does the LWIB believe that negotiations are at an impasse?***

Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board, Inc., has been able to execute MOUs with all required partners. The Board revised its cost-share policy to facilitate the process. The new policy allows the Board to consider a state agency's total contribution to the workforce development system, in lieu of a cash contribution. As a result of this change, the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission has signed an MOU, and its Area Director, Peter Ricard, has joined the WIB.

As stated above, we still seek (2) additional Wareham Career Center required partnerships for Housing and Post Secondary Education. Partnerships are being pursued with South Shore Housing Authority and Cape Cod Community College.

6. MOU Activity Summary Form is attached (Attachment A).

C. One-Stop Delivery System

1. *Describe any changes in the vision of the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the LWIB related to the development of an integrated workforce delivery system.*

While efforts to re-structure the Greater New Bedford Workforce Development System continue to move toward the goals defined in last year's FY 2002 Plan Modification, the essential vision of the system remains the same for both the CEO, Mayor Kalisz, and the GNBWIB: An effective workforce development system is critical to the future of our region.

Mayor Kalisz supports the three key priorities established by the Board – Adult Basic Education, Employer Training Needs, and Frontline Service Delivery Improvements. He agrees that the Board should oversee all workforce dollars brought into the region through New Directions, the agency currently responsible for administering workforce funds in Greater New Bedford, and that the Board's oversight role should not be limited to those funds received by New Directions under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act. The CEO agrees with the Board that the region cannot rely solely upon funds from the Workforce Investment Act to support workforce development activities in the region. He agrees that the region must aggressively seek out new sources of revenue to support workforce development efforts in Greater New Bedford. He continues to support the Board by lobbying for such funding.

2. *If access to core services for all required partners is not available through at least one comprehensive OSCC in your region, please explain why.*

All core services are available at the Greater New Bedford and Wareham Career Centers.

3. *If there have been changes to the core services to be provided through the OSCC since your original plan submission, please describe.*

Two significant changes have occurred since last year's Plan Modification:

- Beginning in July, more group services will be offered to improve frontline delivery of services and move customers into the system more quickly.
 - Information Sessions will be held every half hour and will provide an overview of all Career Center services.
 - Orientations for prospective Title I customers will be scheduled on a regular basis and the intake/eligibility process will be started at this time. Customers seeking Title I services must attend an Information Session prior to attending an Orientation.
 - Customers can watch a continuous loop video describing Center services on a VCR/TV located in the waiting area.

- Vendor information, including performance data, will be available in the Resource Room.

4. *If there have been changes to the way your OSCC ensures universal access to services for employers and job seekers, please describe.*

The following improvements have been made since last year's Plan Modification:

- Mass Job Quest is now available; job seekers can self-register and self-refer to jobs in MOSES.
- Through Mass Talent Quest, employers can register, list job orders and run matches in MOSES.

5. *If there have been changes in the methodology used to determine appropriate service needs of customers, please describe and provide a revised customer flow chart and narrative.*

At this time, no changes have occurred in the methodology used to determine appropriate service needs of customers, and the customer flow chart has not changed. However, the Continuous Quality Improvement Process described in Question 10, below, may result in changes over the coming year; we will report on such changes as appropriate.

6. *Describe any changes in your planned services to youth.*

The Youth Council will continue to play a central role in planning youth programs, determining eligible youth providers, and in recommending funding. Toward this end, the Youth Council held two strategic planning sessions, which were facilitated by Commonwealth Corporation on January 18 and February 14, 2002. Using the State's Framework for Youth Council Development, the Council members analyzed each of the Ten Measures to determine what level we are currently at for each of the measures. Once this exercise was completed, the members selected six measures on which to focus our future efforts: the Youth Council planning process; community awareness and support; Youth Council composition; mission and vision; evaluation, measurement and accountability; and the resource base. Action plans are being developed to increase our service to youth in these areas.

The Youth Council has taken over responsibility for oversight of the Connecting Activities grant and is working to coordinate efforts and create better connections between the Connecting Activities staff, CS² entrepreneurs and the One-stop Career Center staff. School to Career Connecting Activities staff (two career specialists and the employer specialist) are all located at the New Bedford Area Chamber of Commerce. This co-location provides for better collaboration and teamwork among the staff.

The Youth Council has issued two RFPs, one for in-school youth and one for out-of-school youth, seeking proposals from qualified organizations interested in providing services to disadvantaged youth under WIA, with funding available for a single, year-round delivery of services. A bidders' conference and technical assistance meeting

was held, and twelve proposals were received in the WIB office on April 12, 2002. For the first time, the RFPs were posted on the WIB's website.

The Youth Council will actively pursue grants to increase its resource base and provide more flexibility in programming.

Our future plans are to reach out and create linkages to the juvenile justice system, DYS and DSS.

In FY03, the Youth Council will continue to explore how services to youth can be better coordinated with the Career Centers, with a goal of identifying specific services for youth that can be provided at the Career Centers. One such initiative in the planning stage is to create a Job Bank for youth at the Career Center.

7. Please list all current partners in your OSCC.

Greater New Bedford

- New Directions
- Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training (DET)
- Massachusetts Department of Education (MDOE)
- Job Corps
- People Acting in Community Endeavors (PACE)
- Bristol Community College
- Commonwealth Corporation
- New Bedford Housing Authority
- Coastline Elderly Services, Inc.
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)
- Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) (pending signature)

Wareham

- New Directions
- Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training (DET)
- Massachusetts Department of Education (MDOE)
- Job Corps
- People Acting in Community Endeavors (PACE)
- Commonwealth Corporation
- MY TURN, Inc.
- Old Colony Elderly Services
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)
- Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA) (pending signature)

8. *Please describe how you will coordinate services available through the OSCC with other workforce development, educational and youth programs in your region. For example: HIBs, ECCLI, USDOL Discretionary Grants, School-to-Career Connecting Activities for Youth, Youth Opportunity Grants, Workforce Training Fund, and Welfare to Work Discretionary Funds, BEST, and Adult Basic Education, etc.*

We have focused significant attention on creating a stronger, clearer view of the various components of the Greater New Bedford workforce development system as a *system*, by increasing opportunities for staff of the various entities to work and interact together. Integral to this effort has been coordination of programmatic activities with the Career Centers, to the greatest extent possible.

As grant opportunities arise, and the WIB convenes the various stakeholder groups, we always include Career Center representatives to ensure that opportunities for Career Center involvement are quickly identified, and we strive to support Career Center program objectives through grant activities; for example, we have incorporated into our H-1B Proposal, which is nearly ready for submission, two specialized career counselor positions that will be stationed at the Career Center, to provide access to Career Center and Partner programs; a similar position was included in our BEST Proposal. To heighten awareness of Career Center services, especially to employers, we convene meetings at the Greater New Bedford Career Center as often as is appropriate; if the attendees are new to the Center, we provide tours and information about Career Center services.

Career Center staff work closely with the Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), by providing services at the DTA offices, and this has proven to be very effective. The WIB is considering appropriate projects for Welfare to Work Discretionary Funds and USDOL Discretionary Programs for FY 2003.

The U. S. Department of Labor (DOL) has awarded Massachusetts a National Emergency Grant to help workers in the troubled fishing industry. The Greater New Bedford Fishing Families Assistance Center will receive \$1,742,542 of the state's \$5.9 million allocation. Working closely with the Greater New Bedford Career Center, a full array of services will be provided under this grant, including basic education and literacy skills, career counseling, assessment of interests and abilities, career exploration, occupational training, and support services to ensure a successful transition to a new career. Participants will be trained for careers in emerging industries that reflect their needs, interests, and transferable skills. A steering committee made up of workers, employers, representatives of the Greater New Bedford Career Center and the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board will assist in planning and oversight for the project implementation. The group will meet regularly and will include representatives from New Directions, the Fishermen's Survival Fund, the Seafarers' International Union, the Massachusetts Fishermen's Partnership, Marine Services, Inc., and a marine attorney.

Additionally, an NEG application has been submitted to the Department of Labor requesting \$2.3 million to provide services to 600 workers with significant barriers to

reemployment, who have been dislocated from four manufacturing facilities in our region, Volex Inc., Justin/Shepard Clothing Co., Inc., Madeira Twin Fashions, and Acushnet Rubber Company Inc. The service strategy of this proposal was designed collaboratively by staff of New Directions and the Greater New Bedford Career Center.

Other efforts (ECCLI, ABE, etc.) continue as described in last year's FY02 Plan Modification.

9. *Please describe the results of your customer feedback mechanisms during the past year and how you have utilized this feedback to make changes in your OSCC.*

As was stated under Question 3 above, we have begun to develop specific customer feedback mechanisms and plan to implement by July 1. Our Planning and Performance Measurement Committee, the WIB's Assistant Director for Operations Oversight and Career Center Director and staff are developing appropriate measures. We have continued to use the following three customer satisfaction measures during the past year:

- Evaluations are conducted for each workshop presented at the Career Center; the workshop coordinator and Center managers review these and adapt or otherwise improve the workshops based on customer input and needs. Workshop evaluations completed by 905 participants (through October 2001) showed that 92% of customers rate the workshop as good or excellent on all four criteria: effectiveness of presenter, increase in knowledge, usefulness of materials, and overall opinion of seminar.
- The MOSES database contains a feedback screen for employers and job seekers to provide comment on services although staff have not fully employed this mechanism.
- The public uses the suggestion box located in the Career Center Resource Room, and the Career Center Director reads all the customer comments. This mechanism yielded approximately 70 responses in a 4-month period—88% rated competence of staff as excellent, 87% evaluated staff courtesy and attitude as excellent and 92% rated the service as prompt. These forms are available in Spanish and Portuguese, as well as English.

The WIB and operations staff will continue to refine these mechanisms to yield the feedback needed for continuous improvement.

10. What continuous quality improvements have you implemented during the past twelve months? Describe any future activities you have planned for the next twelve months.

A comprehensive continuous quality improvement (CQI) plan for the region has been implemented in the last six months. The plan will include three cycles of training for system staff. Each cycle will produce changes and improvements to identified topic areas most pressing in our region. In February 2002, a half-day introductory session for Board members and key workforce development staff occurred. System staff then identified eight CQI facilitators and fifty CQI participants for Cycle I. On March 1 and March 8, eight operations staff completed two full days of facilitator training and identified CQI team topics with direct benefits geared toward employers, job seekers and partners. CQI Teams meet weekly, and the process will culminate in June with suggested implementation plans. Cycles II and III will follow into the winter of 2002-2003. Cycle I team topic areas are listed below:

Topics

- Increase the number of job orders received from employers that can be acted upon in a timely manner.
- Decrease the amount of time between a job order coming to the Career Center and when a referral is made.
- Increase the number and percent of businesses that receive follow up services.
- Increase the number and percent of job seekers that receive follow up services.
- Increase the number of job seekers who use the resource room and meet intended purposes of the resource room.
- Increase the number of job readiness skills of each job seeker.
- Decrease the processing time for WIA Title I eligibility while maintaining or increasing accuracy of determination.
- Increase the consistency of the numbers of successful referrals between and across partners.

D. Training Strategy

Describe only significant changes from the overall training strategy for youth, adults and dislocated workers outlined in your Fiscal Year 2001 Plan and subsequent modification. Indicate how any changed strategy relates to your analysis of the types of education and training appropriate for your labor market area (taking into account labor market changes that may have occurred over the course of the year).

The training strategy for FY 2003 will need to be adjusted for a number of reasons. Serious cuts in formula allocations will limit the amount of training funds available, especially to serve dislocated workers. The dislocated worker formula allocation for FY 2003 is 36% lower than FY 2002, and the allocation for adults is 4% lower. At the same time, the number of job seekers in need of training is expected to be higher than in the previous year. During FY 2002 New Bedford's unemployment rate was the highest in

the state. Our region experienced several plant closings and has applied for, through CommCorp, a National Emergency Grant to serve 600 dislocated workers from Volex Interconnect Systems, Madeira Twin Fashions, Justin Clothing and Acushnet Rubber Company. About half of these participants are non-native English speakers and require long-term services. At this writing, we have not been advised whether this grant proposal will be funded by DOL (we have been told that it could be several weeks before we hear a response). Many other companies also had layoffs during the current recession. By the end of February 2002, the two Career Centers in our area had served more than 7,000 job seekers, a 64% increase over the same period last year. Many Title I job/training seekers will be carried into FY 2003 because training funds were exhausted before the end of the third quarter and they will have difficulty finding new employment with their current skills because of the sluggish economy.

In FY2003, we will continue to use Title I funds to offer a mix of core, intensive and training services. Enhanced up-front assessment of participants will be conducted to determine what skills each job seeker needs to become employed or re-employed so that the use of limited training dollars will be maximized.

These facts have led the Board to conclude that several policy issues must be given careful consideration at this time, to ensure that resources are used as effectively as possible. These issues, which will be taken up by the WIB's Planning Committee in the next few weeks include the following:

- Reassessment of the current \$5,000 cap on ITAs.
- Analysis of feasibility of asking customers to contribute to the cost of their training.
- Assessment of the role of New Directions in providing prevocational and other intensive services, and the cost-effectiveness of implementing them in-house.

Training strategies will continue to be refined through dialogue with employers and community experts, through sector initiatives and in focus groups, forums, one-on-one discussions, etc.

Occupational skills training. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) will be used according to the priorities established by the Board in the FY2001 plan for serving adults. Availability of ITAs for dislocated workers may be very limited because of funding cuts, and other funding sources must be sought. The Educational Opportunity Center (EOC), a new affiliate of the Career Centers, will provide assistance to participants in locating financial aid, whenever available.

School-to-career programs. Beginning in FY03, an Employer Services staff person at the Career Center will provide career search information, job search workshops, software and Internet instruction in occupations and industries, job referral, resume assistance, job placement, and follow-up to both WIA- and non-WIA-eligible youth. As a result of cuts in DET funding, Connecting Activities staff will coordinate field trips to the Career Centers for high school sophomores.

Entrepreneurial training. We will create a linkage with the Entrepreneurial Training program currently offered by Community Economic Development Center of Southeastern Massachusetts, to better serve customers who may be interested in starting their own business.

On-the-job training. No change

Employed worker training. A key priority this year will be to aggressively market the Workforce Training Fund to employers. Additionally, the Board and New Directions are working with a health care industry team to help alleviate some of the skills shortages in this industry, particularly for nurses and other professionals. We will be submitting an H-1B grant application to train current employees as well as some unemployed individuals as Licensed Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses, and Radiology Technicians.

Skills upgrading and retraining. Six long-term care facilities in the area collaborated with New Directions and submitted a successful Extended Care Career Ladder Initiative (ECCLI) Round Two grant application that was implemented in FY 2002. It is anticipated that this grant will continue into FY 2003. Management training for current employees is included in addition to CNA training for current or new employees.

Job readiness training. GNBWIB and New Directions are considering plans to provide more in-depth job readiness training activities as intensive services in FY 2003. These may range from employability skills and life skills workshops to short-term computer skills training, and internships and other career exploration activities.

Adult basic education and literacy activities. Lack of basic skills is one of the most serious problems facing workforce development in the New Bedford area. Approximately 37% of Title I participants in FY 2002 did not have a high school diploma or GED. New Directions has operated a Learning Center to provide adult basic education, GED preparation and academic remediation for those who need to improve their reading or math skills before entering a training program. For the last three years, Bristol Community College has operated the center under a contract with New Directions. Because of reductions in funding, innovative approaches to funding classes are being sought; one such innovation will use \$15,000 in WIA incentive funds plus \$10,000 in DOE MOU funds coupled with private foundation grants (Verizon, Polaroid, etc.).

Customized training. The Employer Training Needs Workgroup of the WIB Planning Committee is studying skill needs identified in the WIB's Survey of Skills for Critical and Emerging Industries to determine those skills that would be most transferable across industries. Programs will then be designed to address these needs.

E. Youth Activities

- 1. How will your youth program and its activities be connected to the One-Stop delivery system, including which youth services, if any, will be provided through the One-Stop Career Center? If not provided through One-Stop Career Centers, where and how will they be provided?***

Career Center staff provide Intake and Eligibility determination services to WIA Title I Youth as well as job placement services to 18-21 year olds. In addition, on a part-time basis, an Employer Services staff person provides career search information, job search workshops, software and Internet instruction in occupations and industries, job referral, resume assistance, job placement, and follow-up to both WIA- and non-WIA-eligible youth.

- 2. Describe how your service delivery design will assure that Title I Youth Activities are provided not as a stand alone activity, but as part of an array of services available in the local area including, for example, School-to-Career, local education providers, Job Corps, CBOs, and juvenile justice programs. Please include the following:***

- Referrals and coordination with appropriate service, training and education programs that have the capacity to serve Title I Youth either on a sequential or concurrent basis to Title I Youth Activities;***
- Referrals and coordination with appropriate service, training and education programs that have the capacity to serve youth who are not eligible for, or otherwise cannot be served in Title I Youth Activities.***

The service delivery system in place for Youth Services both at the Career Center and New Directions' Youth Department collaborate with other programs/agencies where appropriate to ensure that all youth are provided the opportunities for the services they need. Referrals are made to Connecting Activities staff, school departments, and to Job Corps, YouthBuild or other Community Based Organizations as appropriate. In addition, we are currently investigating the possibility of providing services to court involved youth at the New Bedford Juvenile Resource Center.

Describe whether your Youth Council has completed any of the following activities, and whether it has taken the results of such activities into account in developing a WIA youth service plan:

Analytical Activity	Youth Council has completed this task	Youth Council has used the results in developing a WIA service plan
(a) An analysis of the education, workforce, and youth development status of the youth population within the local workforce investment area.	No — FY03 Activity	
(b) A ‘map’ or documentation of available federal, state, local, and private programs and resources available in your local workforce investment area to support youth development.	Yes, a continuing activity – Youth Council has a list of local, state, federal funding sources and programs	Local resource guide has been distributed to all school districts.
(c) An inventory, description or assessment of the type and availability of youth development services available in your local workforce investment area, together with an identification of service gaps.	No — FY03 Activity	
(d) Development of coordinated service planning across youth development resources (<i>i.e.</i> , beyond Title I WIA funds).	Yes, continuing activity	Youth Council is making connections with DSS, DYS, CA, to integrate services
(e) A process for identifying successful providers of local youth activities.	Yes, surveys of youth	Youth Council uses monitoring reports to determine viability of programs
(f) A process for encouraging program improvement by local youth service providers.	No — FY03 Activity	

**Greater New Bedford Workforce Development System
Implementation of Structural Re-design
Fiscal Year 2003**

Background

The Fiscal Year 2002 Greater New Bedford plan submitted to the State in May 2001, defined the process that the Greater New Bedford Workforce Investment Board had undertaken to assess the local workforce development system. As a result of the assessment, an implementation plan to redesign the Governance, Administration and Operation segments of the system to provide policy guidance, to assure appropriate firewalls and to provide the highest quality direct client services was defined.

A significant part of the plan was to distinguish a separate Grants Administration unit from the direct client services provided; both activities are currently within the organization called New Directions. The plan was to be implemented by January 1, 2002.

A variety of issues raised during the year precluded the actual implementation on January 1st. However, with support from the Chief Elected Official of New Bedford, the GNBWIB will go forward with a July 1, 2002, implementation of the conceptual design referenced in the FY 2002 Local Plan.

Overview of the Greater New Bedford Workforce Development System

As planned, the GNBWIB added an Assistant Director for Operations Oversight to their staff, to provide the support necessary to the direct client service providers within the system and to provide WIB oversight to assure the quality assurance required for this Governance entity. This staff member will continue, during FY 2003, to develop partner relationships, support the separation of the Grants Administration from the Operations services, support CQI and many other activities to encourage cost efficiencies and coordination of services.

The Grants Administration, to be called the Department of Workforce Development Administration (DWDA), will, as planned, be a distinct unit reporting to the City of New Bedford with indirect relationships with the GNBWIB and New Directions as the lead program operator for WIA Title I and other programs. DWDA will have the responsibility of administering all related workforce development funds as designated by the GNBWIB and the Chief Elected Official.

New Directions will no longer be the Title I administrator, but will continue to be a Title I direct service provider and lead partner for the Greater New Bedford Career Centers with direct reporting responsibility to the City of New Bedford, and with indirect relationships with the DWDA and the GNBWIB. New Directions will continue to operate programs under a variety of workforce development funding mechanisms.

Much work has gone into the clarification of assignments related to this separation of functions. The attached draft Memorandum of Understanding, to be executed on July 1, 2002, defines the roles of each entity in this new structure.

Other activities, as part of the Greater New Bedford structural re-design and as delineated in the FY 2002 plan, have been implemented or are in the process of implementation. Many of these activities have been outlined in the responses within this document as action steps taken or planned for FY 2003.