

CAPSTONE PROJECT TITLE

Sub Regional Economic Development Plan that includes Pipeline of Skilled Workforce "Collaboration with WDB"

The Issue:

While Contra Costa County is a vibrant workforce area currently experiencing an unemployment rate below the state and national average at 4.8%, opportunities are not equitable sub-regionally across the county. East Contra Costa County has pockets of unemployment as high as 8.2% and disproportionate pockets of disconnected youth as well. The Northern Waterfront extends approximately 50 miles from the City of Hercules to the City of Oakley, encompassing Martinez, Concord, Pittsburg, and Antioch. The Northern Waterfront Economic Development Initiative is a regional cluster-based economic development strategy that leverages existing competitive advantages and assets by focusing on advanced manufacturing sub-sectors in five targeted clusters (adv. transportation fuels, bio-tech/bio-medical, diverse manufacturing, food processing and clean tech). The WDBCCC seeks to partner with the Northern Waterfront Initiative and support the development of a skilled pipeline of workers that will attract employers with high wage jobs from a variety of skills, entry to advanced level, in order to ensure a strong, vibrant economy in all of Contra Costa County.

Why Capstone Project:

This project is a perfect opportunity to enhance collaboration and leverage resources, including human capital, between WDB, Economic Development, Education, and Public-Private Sector businesses along Contra Costa County's northern shoreline. Our goal is to support the Northern Waterfront Initiative which aims to revitalize historic industrial waterfront which contains 61% of the County's industrial zoned land and contributes 1/3 of the County's Gross Regional Product (GRP). The goal is to **double the number of advanced manufacturing jobs by 2035** and, due to the multiplier effect, create **18,000 total jobs**.

What we are doing:

- The WDB has chosen collaboration with Economic Development as one of our priorities for 2017-2020 Strategic Action Plan. We are forming an ad-hoc committee that will look into the work currently underway on the NWF Initiative to identify how we could best support these efforts.
- Current board members in the selected sectors that are located along the NWF region have expressed their enthusiastic interest and offered their support to collaborate on this.
- We have invited the local community college to be a part of the discussion around training.
- We will leverage our membership with economic development advocacy groups, relationship with cities & economic development, chambers of commerce, community organizations and businesses to attain desired outcomes.

Challenges:

- This is a long-term project and therefore it is vital that we hold regular meetings and events to keep partners engaged.
- This project spans a wide region of the county so meetings can be a challenge.
- Connecting skilled workers can be challenging due to access to qualified candidates and restriction with colleges sharing data on their students.
- Access to a shared CRM / database for skilled workforce resumes is challenging.
- Funding Challenges.
- Funding limitations to get things moving quicker.
- Local issues with zoning and new permitting processes delays timeline.



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