



## **Workforce Snohomish's Sector Development White Paper**

### **Sector Development / Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant Goals**

Developing sectors related to local job creation.

#### **Background Summary**

Sector Development is a Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration push to conduct regional planning and develop sector strategies for the locally identified significant economic sectors nationally. These strategies will be developed to provide activities focusing public and private regional resources to in-demand career pathways that result in stronger economic development within each sector of the economy resulting in opportunities in employment within in-demand occupations. This initiative is supported by Snohomish County Economic Development, Economic Alliance of Snohomish County, and a list of local city economic development departments, chambers, and other business agencies.

#### **Objective**

The objectives of developing sector-specific strategies locally in the growing Snohomish County region are to identify the business needs within the local target sectors in regards to their workforce; to align the local training, public, and community resources to address these identified business workforce needs; identify fields of steady career progression to the local populace to create sustainable employment pipelines into family wage opportunities within the local sectors.

#### **Purpose**

The objectives will result in the investment in a higher skilled local workforce and lead to advancement of the international competitiveness of the local workforce, culminating in the continued elevating of the economic advantage of conducting and operating businesses within Snohomish County.

#### **Sector Selection**

The Sectors have been selected from combing regional organizations (Snohomish County Executive's Office, Snohomish County Blueprint, Puget Sound Regional Council, Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board, Employment Security Department Washington State, and Department of Commerce) sectors and prioritizing them by the sectors to benefit from local workforce development within each sector locally.

The following is in a priority order:

- 1) Retail and Whole Sale
- 2) Healthcare
- 3) Manufacturing/Aerospace
- 4) Tourism and Recreation
- 5) Transportation and Construction
- 6) Technology/Cybersecurity
- 7) Energy/Clean Tech
- 8) Professional and Business Services
- 9) Agriculture, Fisheries and Forest Products

### **Way Forward**

Sector Development will be a long term and continual process of maintaining employer engagement and refocusing local resources to address their ever-changing workforce needs, both in the short and strategic time frame and within each of the local critical economic sectors.

### ***Forming Sector Focus Groups***

Within the target sectors, various means will be used to build active groups of representatives within the sector specific business community. These groups may be formed around a preexisting convener from industry sector membership organizations, committees, panels, or subgroups of other organizations. The method for convening will be determined by the particular sector's business community. If a natural preexisting convener is not present locally, a convener for specific sector focused group may be a representative from a local organizations, such as, the Economic Alliance of Snohomish County, Workforce Snohomish, Snohomish County Trade and Economic Development, or another regional organization. Each sector-specific focus group will be determined by what form best engages their participants. This non-uniformed approach across the sectors will lead to local resources being used more beneficially, because it avoids duplicative efforts or groups and forms complementary organizational structures that fit the diversity of each local area sector and thereby efficiently utilizes resources to reach the end goal of forming an active association of invested participants within each sector.

### ***Purpose for Forming the Focus Groups***

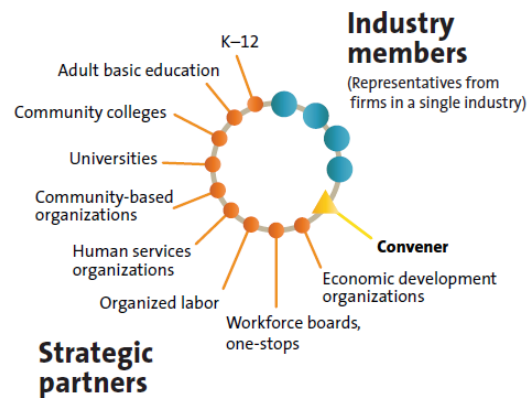
From the industry members of these participant groups within each sector, groups will evolve over time to form sector focus groups, panels, and committees depending on the sectors level of engagement and participation. Once these groups are formed they will meet in annual intervals with the support of outside convening agencies in order to maintain a relevant operational viewpoint of the sector's current needs.

The primary focus of the sector-specific meetings will be to support employers in identifying current and predicted workforce related issues directly from the employers within each sector. To call out the diverse workforce related issues (skillsets, experience, certificate, legal, educational, and recruitment) within the various specific occupations in each sector. Having a cross section of the sector's employers confirm from their operation viewpoint concerns other businesses within

the sector are experiencing or foreseeing, and having confirmation or dispelling issues being assessed based on the local economic and workforce statistical data. By this means, a more complete picture of current business workforce needs and workforce pipeline issues can be revealed and documented.

### ***Using the Sector Information***

The recorded business input and feedback will allow the local community strategic partners (Outlined in the graphic on the right) to digest the current operational business environment within each sector. From the position the strategic partners can identify possible solutions to issues. From the solutions the group can recognize means to align its members' resources of educational, public, and private organizations around the defined solutions and open the needed workforce pipelines for the sector, leading to the further development and competitiveness of the sector.



### ***Benefits of Sector Development***

Over time, the feedback loop of the operational viewpoint of businesses and the success of the community partners' solution to workforce issues will allow ongoing refinement to each sector's workforce pipeline and thereby the sectors' economic development. Thus mitigating both the lack of skilled workers and potential employees being trained within a not-in-demand skillsets; increasing the efficiency in the local return in the public and private investment developing the current and future local workforce.

With an ongoing market alignment of the local workforce training, resources will flow more in line with in-demand skill sets, leaving potential employees better positioned to hold necessary and desired skill sets needed within each sector, thereby raising the productivity of businesses and prospective employee's wage potential. This process will result in higher employment stability.

Investment into a workforce holding locally demanded sector-specific needed skill sets will further provide a competitive advantage to conduct and operate businesses within Snohomish County, not just within the region but within the global workforce marketplace. These results lead to sustaining and growing employment opportunities well into the future as businesses continue to stay in and relocate to Snohomish County.

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