

The City of St. Louis Workforce Investment Board Strategic Plan

April 2007



Board Vision and Mission

The St. Louis Workforce Investment Board's vision is:

A vibrant regional economy in which every jobseeker has the skills needed to match available jobs and every job has a qualified employee. The workforce system enables this vision through a series of high quality services that

- **Increase employment**
- **Increase retention**
- **Increase earnings**
- **Increase the skills of individuals**
- **Enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the region.**

In support of this vision, the Board has adopted the following mission statement:

To develop and supply a quality workforce that meets the economic and labor market needs of the region by providing leadership and promoting collaboration among public, private and elected official partners.

Role of the City of St. Louis Workforce Investment Board

The specific roles of the Board are:

- **Strategic Planning** – Identifying workforce development issues, setting priorities among possible goals and planning appropriate action to resolve key issues.
- **Policy Development** – In partnership with stakeholders and the broader community, establishing workforce policy with a commitment to providing leadership.
- **Oversight of the Local System** – Creating and ensuring accountability and quality from workforce system service providers.

Significant Trends and Workforce Issues

- **Changing Workforce Needs** – As the regional St. Louis economy diversifies, changes and grows the workforce must also evolve to keep pace.
- **Visibility, Accessibility and Efficiency of Workforce Development Services** – Workforce development services historically have been targeted to the unemployed. While this group should continue to receive high-quality services, the needs of those employed and looking for higher skill level and higher paying jobs must receive

more attention in the future. Many of these people are not familiar with the career opportunities and employment and training resources available in St. Louis.

- **Demographic Changes in the Workforce** – The percentage of the population age 65 and older will increase dramatically over the next few decades. The shrinkage of the core working-age population adds additional pressure to an already tight labor market. At the same time, successful inclusion of the immigrant population into economic and social structures will be an important resource in meeting labor market needs in the coming decades.
- **Tapping a Diverse Population For a World Class Workforce** – There are a large number of working-age adults in the community who are not working. Many of them are not working because they are not aware of potential job opportunities. This under-utilized community resource includes youth, people with disabilities, welfare recipients, people lacking a high school degree, ex-offenders and others not in the labor force. Through soft skill acquisition and vocational training, these groups can join the labor force in greater numbers both enhancing the diversity and skill level of the workforce and improving the quality of life in our community.

Strengths of St. Louis Economy

- Diverse economy
- Steady economic growth
- Post Secondary Educational Structure
- Arts/Cultural Center
- Diverse Population
- Sports Teams
- Home to 20 Fortune 1000 companies of which 8 are Fortune 500 companies
- Low Cost of Living
- Leader in Health Care
- Transportation Center
- Agriculture
- Bio-Medical Research

Challenges to the St. Louis Economy

- Continue Efforts to Improve Labor/Management Relations
- Develop Greater Consistency in the Level of Quality Education in our Public School Systems
- Develop Quality in All Transportation Modes
- Expand Efforts at Regional Cooperation
- Provide Relevant Training and Upward Opportunities for Unskilled Workforce
- Embrace Diversity for Economic Growth

Goals and Objectives for the St. Louis Workforce Investment Board

The Board has set four goals for itself in 2007-08. These goals are:

- 1) Establish the WIB as a leader in addressing community workforce issues. Strengthen partnerships with individual companies, economic development agencies, education agencies and workforce organizations in the St. Louis region.
- 2) Work with one or two **key** business sectors to identify and help solve workforce issues of common concern.
- 3) Identify regional issues impacting workforce and develop plans to address at least one of the issues.
- 4) Create a Board that provides strategic leadership and effective oversight of the local workforce development system.

Goal #1 – #4 To Be Completed by Ad Hoc Committees