



Local Plan

Program Year 2025–28

NOVA Workforce Board
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Local Overview

NOVAworks serves a dynamic, fast-paced, and innovative technology-driven community in the heart of Silicon Valley. The NOVAworks Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA), comprised of northern Santa Clara County and all of San Mateo County, has been the international center of technology and innovation for many decades. Home to industry leaders in hardware (Apple, Applied Materials, NVIDIA, HP, Intel), software (Adobe, Intuit, Oracle), and internet and social media (Meta, Google, LinkedIn), the modern tech companies in NOVAworks' area are lean and innovative with rapidly changing demands for skills and talent.

But the prosperity generating the region's technological innovation has not been universally experienced. Throughout the region, service and other low-wage workers have long struggled with access to basic needs: affordable housing, jobs with career ladders, access to education and, increasingly, food. While there has been general economic recovery for all the region post-COVID-19, the gap between wealth and poverty has continued to widen, thus threatening the region's long-term viability.

Given that much of NOVAworks is located within Silicon Valley, many of the NOVAworks customers experience the whipsaw hiring and layoff effects of the technologies industries' cyclical hiring and layoffs. In 2023, NOVAworks responded to 123 Worker Adjustment and Retraining (WARN) layoff notices from area businesses, affecting 12,235 employees. As a result, NOVAworks serves a higher percentage of workers laid off from their jobs and facing economic uncertainty than is typical in the State of California. As of December 2024, the NOVAworks job seeker population continued to reflect the common perception of Silicon Valley as a tech and innovation hub. Nearly 80% of NOVAworks' job seekers have a bachelor's degree or higher. Going forward, NOVAworks will continue to address the career navigation and training needs of these individuals' facing unemployment as well as maintain a focus on serving the region's many underemployed and economically disadvantaged individuals.

Furthermore, NOVAworks and regional partners have expanded and retooled approaches to address the needs of all workers, especially those who might be under-employed and in positions with limited career advancement opportunities. Workers such as waiters, restaurant managers, baggage handlers, and those employed in entry level healthcare are among those workers whose economic prospects are declining at an alarming rate. This trend further decreases the opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment to contribute their talents to Silicon Valley's innovation engine. Many of these individuals are from populations that have faced persistent social, education and economic barriers to success. Similarly, economically disadvantaged individuals living in coastal and rural areas often face multiple barriers to prosperity. Unlike their tech-savvy Silicon Valley neighbors, they lack access to diverse resources and professional networks that provide job referrals and vital labor market intelligence about future opportunities.

In the face of economic uncertainty, NOVAworks is accelerating initiatives to build regional partnerships, continuing to translate the economy to address the needs of job seekers,

incumbent workers, and employers. For example, NOVAworks is leading a consortium of three workforce boards and four community colleges in the Regional Equity and Recovery Partnership (RERP) to develop new and innovative approaches to meaningful technical skills training. Additionally, NOVAworks and Foothill College are piloting a new initiative to support high road hospitality partners in developing their non-native English-speaking staff. And NOVAworks continues to build a “Whole Person” workforce development model where a comprehensive set of support and career services are provided for all residents.

As the public workforce development provider for San Mateo and northern Santa Clara counties, it is incumbent upon NOVAworks to address the “tale of two cities” aspect of the region and focus both on promoting economic stability and creating new opportunities for individuals and communities who, because of persistent social and economic barriers, are disconnected from ladders to career mobility and advancement. These populations include older workers, women, individuals of color, economically disadvantaged workers, veterans, workers with disabilities and those who are formerly incarcerated/justice involved.

Workforce Development Activities in the NOVAworks Local Workforce Development Area (LWDA)

NOVAworks is strengthening the regional workforce and education systems to increase equity, transparency, and access to data and services for all customer groups. To achieve enduring regional prosperity, collaboration among all the partners in the region is critical. Driven by NOVAworks’ mission to serve as a strategic partner and catalyst for workforce development in San Mateo & northern Santa Clara counties, collaboration has resulted in convening employers, educators, and community leaders to design solutions that advance careers, support business growth, and promote regional prosperity.

NOVAworks leads a Stakeholders Group of 50+ regional organizations representing a broad range of core program partners, American Job Center of California (AJCC) partners and state of California strategic partners. Stakeholder group members provide coordinated services for multiple populations including dislocated workers, immigrants and English Language Learners, veterans seeking new careers, indigenous peoples, and individuals with disabilities. With NOVAworks providing coordination, the Stakeholders Group is a vital hub of information about labor market intelligence, training programs, unemployment insurance benefits, job search assistance, support services, food banks, legal assistance, and emergency resources. The Stakeholders Group facilitates referrals of mutual customers, shares job opportunities, coordinates staff training, and partners with employers to host recruitment events. Additionally, the NOVAworks manager who leads the Stakeholders Group also serves on the steering committee of the San Mateo County Union High School District Adult Education College & Career Educational Leadership Program.

The Bay-Peninsula Regional Planning Unit (RPU) includes NOVAworks, work2future (San Jose) and the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development. The partnering workforce boards come together regularly for both strategic planning purposes and to collaborate on special initiatives. At present, the partners are engaging in regional planning, completing a Regional Equity and Recovery Program grant, and two of the

partners are collaborating to promote quality jobs and advancement opportunities at the San Francisco airport.

NOVAworks and the other Bay Peninsula workforce boards are also very involved in the region's California Jobs First work, assisting with the strategic planning led by the non-profit organization, All Home, and supporting the development of multiple sub-regional tables. In collaboration with Working Partnerships USA, the workforce boards are providing backbone support to sub-regional initiatives.

NOVAworks is providing a wide range of workforce development activities in the two-county region. Either by providing the service directly or through supporting a leading partner organization, business and local talent customers are increasingly being connected with the resources they need to prosper in the region.

NOVAworks LWDA Workforce Strengths

The NOVAworks local workforce development area has many workforce strengths which play an important role in the region being dynamic. With its strong focus on technology, biomedical science, and education, the greater Silicon Valley region creates opportunities for many of its residents and businesses.

The NOVAworks region has a rich diversity that attracts individuals from all over the world. More than 25 ancestral backgrounds are represented among the 1.3 million people living in the NOVAworks LWDA¹. 40% of its residents are born outside of the United States and of those, 66% are coming from Asia¹. And there are more than 36 widely used languages spoken in San Mateo County and 48 in Santa Clara County¹. This high level of immigration is nearly twice the percentage of California (26.7%) and three times the percentage as that of the United States (13.9%)².

The foundation of this region's business success comes from its talented and educated workforce. Dedicated partners continue to create an education system with many entry points, high quality curriculum, and alternative access points for those adults looking to start or advance their careers. The NOVAworks area has some of the best higher education resources in the world. In addition to Stanford University and Santa Clara University, the region is home to nearby University of California state schools in San Francisco and San Jose, as well as six best-in-class community colleges. NOVAworks partners with many of the LWDA's 30 school districts in the area plus the adult education programs in San Mateo and northern Santa Clara counties. There are 145 approved programs on the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) plus numerous other private and non-profit training providers in the region. All these partners work to help form a highly educated workforce

¹ https://immigrantdata.org/indicators/languages-spoken?breakdown=top-languages&geo=04000000000006085&top_lang_group01=03

with over 60% of the LWDA’s population possessing a bachelor’s degree or higher², an average educational attainment rate that is significantly higher than the state of California³.

As a result, the NOVAworks LWDA supports significant industry presence with dozens of companies headquartered here, with representation from many others. San Mateo County and the seven NOVAworks cities in Santa Clara County are home to over 35,000 firms⁴ who employ 727,441 individuals². Among these firms, the region has an outsized representation, or location quotient, in the industries of Information, Service-Producers, Professional and Business Services, and Other Services⁵. In particular, the concentration of the Information industry is six times the national average⁴.

Along with high concentrations of industry and education come generally high levels of employment. 68% of the population age 16 and older is in the workforce². San Mateo’s unemployment rate is 3.6%⁶ while Santa Clara’s unemployment rate is 4.1%⁷. The combined Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services occupational fields have the most workers with 24.2% of the workforce, followed by combined Education, Health Care, and Social Assistance fields at 19.2%². The strong presence of industry is creating for many, but certainly not all, opportunities to earn a living wage and experience economic prosperity. 68% of the households earn more than \$100,000 annually; however, 73,282 households earn less than \$50,000 annually², well below the living MIT Living wage of \$68,619 (Santa Clara) and \$71,531 (San Mateo)⁸.

Finally, NOVAworks is an innovative workforce development system that uses a highly collaborative approach to employer and partner engagement, resulting in robust services being offered throughout the local workforce region. A strategic use of hybrid services has created remote and in-person access points, resulting in increased accessibility of services to talent and partners throughout the region. The dedicated staff at NOVAworks is

² <https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/file/Census2022/dp2022-nova.pdf>

³ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/CA,US/PST045223>

⁴

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/milpitascitycalifornia,paloaltocitycalifornia,cupertinocitycalifornia,mountainviewcitycalifornia,sunnyvalecitycalifornia,santaclaracitycalifornia/PST045223>

⁵

https://data.bls.gov/cew/apps/table_maker/v4/table_maker.htm#type=5&year=2024&qtr=2&own=5&area=06081&supp=0

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<https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/cgi/databrowsing/localAreaProfileQSResults.asp?selectedarea=San+Mateo+County&selectedindex=41&menuChoice=localAreaPro&state=true&geogArea=0604000081&countyName=>

⁷

<https://labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov/cgi/databrowsing/localAreaProfileQSResults.asp?selectedarea=Santa+Clara+County&selectedindex=43&menuChoice=localAreaPro&state=true&geogArea=0604000085&countyName=>

⁸ <https://livingwage.mit.edu/> The single adult hourly salary for San Mateo County and Santa Clara county was multiplied by 2,080, the number of hours that a person working full time will be compensated for in one year.

committed to creating impact for all stakeholders in the region including businesses, talent (residents), and community partners. Led by a highly experienced management team with an average workforce development experience of more than 15 years, NOVAworks has established meaningful connections to local governments, industry associations, labor, community colleges, philanthropic organizations, and our many strong community partners. Through employing a systems approach, NOVAworks is playing an important role in increasing equity and economic prosperity for the economically- disadvantaged in San Mateo and northern Santa Clara counties.

LWDA Weaknesses and Opportunities for Growth

The greatest weakness facing the LWDA is an increasingly tenuous economy, particularly for low-income workers. Although the post-pandemic economic high has receded, there is persistent economic weakness for both the thousands of tech workers who have been laid off and the region's unemployed and underemployed. The job market of 2023 and 2024 was extremely volatile, creating the significant uncertainty for the 10,000+ individuals laid off in each of those years. Additionally, an increasingly higher cost of living means that many lower-income workers and small businesses are edging closer to greater levels of economic uncertainty.

The cost of living in NOVAworks LWDA area is 73.5%⁹ higher than the national average, according to a 2024 (second quarter) report by Chmura Economics & Analytics. Although the annual household income is \$229,493², the median household salary is lower at \$164,690², indicating that the region has a significant number of very high earners that are pushing the average salary higher than what most people are experiencing. Data by the California Employment Development Department show that 73,282 households, or 15% of the region, make less than \$50,000 annually². While nationally, 65% of households own their home¹⁰, this rate drops to 55%² in the NOVAworks LWDA. Most of the region is experiencing poverty rates ranging from 5 to 7%, with 7.8% for Santa Clara County and 7.2% for all of San Mateo County¹¹. While these rates are lower than the state's 12% rate of people in poverty, it still reflects over 60,000 LWDA area residents who are living in the harshest of conditions.

Residents living on the coast of San Mateo County, as well as those living in rural and agricultural areas of the region, face additional barriers to entering meaningful employment as they often lack the same transportation resources as those on the Bay side of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Additionally, traditionally lower student class sizes can sometimes prevent the scaling of in-demand community college programs in coastal communities. And finally, program enrollment can be stymied by some of the working patterns that make up much of the agricultural seasonal work rhythms. Although less

⁹ <https://jobseq.eqsuite.com/>

¹⁰ [U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/santaclaracitycalifornia,CA,sanmateocountycalifornia/PST045223)

¹¹

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/santaclaracitycalifornia,CA,sanmateocountycalifornia/PST045223>

populous than the rest of the NOVAworks region, the residents and business needs of the coast remain a priority area for increased support.

The post-pandemic recovery has uncovered weaknesses in the labor market and has accelerated trends toward a contingent workforce, outsourcing and replacing traditional job functions as well as entry-level positions with artificial intelligence, robots, and automation. Combined with widespread dislocation, this phenomenon is leading to increased food and housing insecurity.

In response, NOVAworks is continuing to work with regional stakeholders to fill gaps in the regional workforce and educational system and facilitate greater transparency for individuals seeking employment opportunities and for employers seeking talent. One regional goal is to better align regional workforce and educational resources to address employer needs for a San Francisco Bay Area-wide labor market. NOVAworks is increasingly collaborating with the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development and work2future to jointly run apprenticeships programs, sector-focused initiatives, and meet regional needs. NOVAworks will also partner with Adult Education to increase opportunities for English Language Learners to enter these high demand pathways, a strategy which fulfills both employer and community demand.

Additionally, NOVAworks is focused on building career pathways in 11 industrial sectors that are relevant to the LWDA. They include Accounting / Finance, Biotechnology, Child Development, Environmental Technology, Healthcare, Manufacturing, Marketing, Mental Health, Sales, Technology, and Transportation. The NOVAworks career services team has curated current information about viable career pathways in these high-demand industries and shares with our job seekers job titles, local employers, resources, and training information. Included in these resources curated for customers is the robust IBM SkillsBuild/Udemy platform, which offers online learning to all NOVA customers, not just those who are WIOA eligible. Customers use SkillsBuild to learn programming, new topics relevant to their field, and artificial intelligence (AI) as well as prepare for certification exams. The Business Liaisons reach out to industries and companies to become more familiar with skills and careers in each area and collect data that can be shared. As a result, NOVAworks can better inform partners and stakeholders and better serve job seeker and employer customers. There is a strong industry team focus on both current and future skills required in the various industry sectors.

As a part of an extensive Bay Peninsula workforce ecosystem, inclusive of community colleges and community-based organizations, NOVAworks continues to partner with the Bay Area Community College Consortium (BACCC) and constituent colleges to better align services. For example, NOVAworks has partnered with Mission College and College of San Mateo through the Regional Equity and Recovery Partnership (RERP) program to expand skill building opportunities for area talent. NOVAworks is also a participating member of the BACCC monthly meetings in which we collectively discuss regional education and workforce initiatives and explore opportunities to collaborate.

NOVAworks Strategic Vision

As NOVAworks leads during an upcoming uncertain economic and political era, it will continue to be guided by four fundamental principles. They are (1) enhance partnerships through the Stakeholder Group and other collaborations; (2) focus on meeting customer needs through a human centered design approach; (3) remain agile and responsive to the local economic conditions; and (4) advance equity by recognizing that “while genius is evenly distributed by ZIP code, opportunity and access are not.” (*Mitch Kapor, Kapor Center for Social Impact*)

NOVAworks and regional partners are putting these principles into action by integrating service delivery and braiding resources and creating a more efficient and transparent workforce system that consistently delivers superior service to job seeker and employer customers.

WIOA Core and Required Partner Coordination

- *How Local Boards and AJCC partners will coordinate the services and resources identified in their MOU, as outlined in WIOA Memorandums of Understanding (WSD18-12).*

WIOA Title II - Adult Education and Literacy

Despite the region possessing a higher-than-average percentage of bachelor’s degree holders, there are still many individuals who do not have a degree and need the skills and earning potential from basic education and skills training. To help meet this critical need, NOVAworks refers job seekers in need of basic education and literacy to local adult education providers. Several adult education providers are active members of the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group where they share service delivery strategies. The adult education providers also offer several career technical education certificate programs that are approved on the State Eligible Training Provider List. In addition, a representative of the adult education community serves on the NOVAworks Workforce Development Board.

When the California Department of Education requests applications for adult education Title II education and literacy activities, NOVAworks disseminates those applications to experts on staff and to its workforce board for review. NOVAworks will make recommendations to the applying agency to promote alignment and concurrent enrollment as appropriate. NOVAworks will also ensure that Title II program applicants have been given access to the NOVAworks Local Plan as they are developing their funding applications. NOVAworks will continue to inform Adult Education partners about relevant updates to the Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL) and support partners in maintaining program compliance and access to training funds.

NOVAworks eagerly awaits the forthcoming California Master Plan for Career Education. It can leverage its resources to play a supporting role in improving coordination and access to public benefits which so many area residents need to access training. NOVAworks will work closely with adult education partners as well as other education partners to accelerate career awareness and skill building in the region.

WIOA Title III - Wagner-Peyser

NOVAworks has regular meetings with EDD Wagner-Peyser staff to discuss service delivery ideas and issues. EDD staff and NOVAworks closely coordinate services to businesses issuing Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) notices ahead of a mass layoff. EDD and NOVAworks coordinate outreach to the employer and coordinate services to the workers facing loss of employment.

EDD staff also actively participates in the NOVAworks Stakeholder Group meetings. Wagner-Peyser and NOVAworks staff collaborate to deliver rapid response orientations to impacted workers.

In addition, an EDD regional manager serves on the NOVAworks Workforce Development Board. Representatives from the EDD LMI division provide NOVAworks staff with labor market information for grant applications and reports.

WIOA Title IV - Vocational Rehabilitation

The California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) is a member of the NOVAworks Stakeholders group. DOR representatives from both Santa Clara and San Mateo counties regularly participate in stakeholder group meetings. The Stakeholders Group provides a forum for coordinating referral of customers and cross training staff. NOVAworks representatives participate in DOR convenings in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties through Local Partnership Agreements. Additionally, a DOR representative makes twice per month visits to NOVAworks to provide on-site services. In addition, the District Administrator for DOR serves on the NOVAworks Workforce Development Board.

Carl Perkins Career Technical Education

Driven by a mission of facilitating career mobility and enhancing people's ability to live and work in Silicon Valley, NOVAworks connects with industry and education to provide the linkages our partners need to ensure demand-driven programs are business informed and successful.

NOVAworks participates in multiple initiatives and groups related to secondary and post-secondary education programs to ensure coordination of strategies and avoid duplication of services. These include:

- Bay Area Community College Consortium (BACCC)—NOVAworks participates in planning for region.

- ACCEL—NOVAworks participates in San Mateo County Union High School District Adult Education College & Career Educational Leadership Program steering committee meetings.
- South Bay Consortium for Adult Education—NOVAworks participates and has provided career navigation training on career assessment, resume development, networking and using LinkedIn.
- Northern Santa Clara County Adult Education Consortium—NOVAworks participates in the consortium’s quarterly meetings.

In addition, several adult education and college staff members are active in NOVAworks Stakeholders Group meetings and regularly share program information with NOVAworks staff.

As education sectors face potential funding losses in the future, the role of collaboration between education, industry, and workforce development is critical. NOVAworks actively reaches out to community colleges, universities, and private training providers to provide technical assistance for adding and updating programs on the State Eligible Training Provider List, as well as contracting for training services. NOVAworks also shares its Job Connector platform and best practices for connecting with employers online for AJCC partners to provide these resources to their customers.

Title V Older Americans Act

NOVAworks works closely through MOUs with Title V Older Americans Act service provider, Felton Institute, to provide career navigation, placement assistance and employability skills training for older workers (age 55+). The Felton Institute and NOVAworks actively make cross referrals to each other’s respective organizations, ensuring participants are able to take advantage of all available services. Through its Stakeholders Group, NOVAworks makes the Felton Institute’s services available to a broad constellation of providers in the LWDA. Through this collaborative partnership, we will continue to conduct joint outreach to residents and workers 55+ and combine training and support resources, especially given impending technology shifts due to artificial intelligence.

NOVAworks also works with other organizations such as Peninsula Family Service that serve older adults.

Job Corps

NOVAworks coordinates with the San Jose Job Corps Center to provide education and vocational training to assist low-income young adults launch their careers. The two agencies also provide job search workshops for youth at other partner agencies. Job Corps is represented on the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group.

Native American Programs (WIOA Section 166)

NOVAworks has a partnership with the Strong Native Workforce Development Program, who is an active member of the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group. NOVAworks looks forward to working with this organization in future initiatives.

Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (WIOA Section 167)

NOVAworks will continue its successful partnership with local WIOA Section 167 grantee, Center for Employment Training (CET), for services to eligible Migrant Seasonal Farmworkers (MSFs). For over 50 years, CET's contextual training has prepared students for jobs according to employer needs. As a partner, CET has developed an important alliance that has increased farm worker access to the workforce system. CET brings years of experience working with MSFs and a wealth of staff knowledge to the system. Through collaborations, CET has ensured and will continue to ensure that MSFs receive full access to WIOA services.

Veterans

The Veterans Administration (VA), NPower, and Swords to Plowshares are all members of the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group. The VA provides a full range of services to veterans. NPower provides tech training and internship opportunities for veterans. NOVAworks additionally supports local technology manufacturer, Western Digital, as they have built a Veterans-facing website and have developed a robust engagement plan for attracting Bay Area veterans. NOVAworks also collaborates with the Santa Clara County Office of Veteran Services.

Youth Build

N/A — No provider in NOVAworks LWDA.

Trade Adjustment Assistance Act

Although TAA was officially paused in 2022, NOVAworks stands ready to partner with EDD again if reinstated.

Community Services Block Grant

NOVAworks coordinates with Sacred Heart Community Service to provide services to disadvantaged individuals and families including employment assistance, public benefits screening, financial coaches, housing assistance, food, and clothing. Sacred Heart Community Service also participates in the Stakeholder Group. In addition, NOVAworks works closely with the County of San Mateo who offers a variety of Community Services Block Grant-funded services to the community.

Housing and Urban Development

NOVAworks coordinates with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority to provide information about the Housing Authority’s programs and services and provides information about Housing Authority services to other AJCC partners. An executive from the Housing Authority serves on the NOVAworks Workforce Development Board. NOVAworks continues to work with multiple organizations to help area residents secure more affordable housing, a critical need for the LWDA.

Unemployment Compensation

Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants are referred to NOVAworks by EDD staff and through notices included with their UI benefits providing information about nearby AJCCs. NOVAworks assists individuals with understanding California Training Benefits to continue their UI benefits during training. TAA recipients are co-enrolled in WIOA to access career advising, case management, and other NOVAworks services.

In addition, NOVAworks continues to partner with the UI program to provide outreach to targeted populations relative to participation in grants they would otherwise not be aware of. EDD’s UI division can assist with outreach to individuals approaching the end of their UI claim.

Second Chance

N/A — There is no Second Chance provider in NOVAworks LWDA.

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families/CalWORKs

NOVAworks participates in cross training with AJCC partners on services provided by the County of Santa Clara Social Services Agency and the County of San Mateo Human Services Agency. Both agencies are members of the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group.

- *How the Local Board and AJCC partners will work towards co-enrollment and common case management as a service delivery strategy, as outlined in Strategic Co-Enrollment– Unified Plan Partners (WSD19-09).*

Co-enrollment and common case management is a critical practice for the NOVAworks LWDA, given the high number of partners and colleges offering complimentary and supplementary services. NOVAworks is continuously developing career pathways with education entities, which makes it critical to effectively announce new programs and resources to community organizations who may serve interested individuals with a need to weave service strategies together. Local talent utilizing services from multiple regional

partners receive the best experience when the referrals are made quickly and professionally. Instead of duplicating steps and creating more delays for talent to join the program, NOVAworks' coordinated enrollment process leverages existing information from partners and facilitates customer-service focused hand-offs between partners. Talent being referred from one organization to another can expect quick responses from staff and consistent follow-through of communication.

NOVAworks utilizes an innovative service delivery strategy which prioritizes expediency in connecting local talent to the services and trainings they need to secure meaningful employment. The enrollment process removes obstacles and time delays by making enrollment seamless and dedicating staffing resources to guide the talent quickly and professionally through the enrollment process. NOVAworks pioneered a hybrid enrollment process during the pandemic and has continued to offer in-person and remote activities to ensure career advancement services are as accessible as possible. Interested individuals can complete an interest form on the website or simply walk in to one of our two locations in either Sunnyvale or San Mateo (city). NOVAworks staff will then contact them to review services and required registration documentation.

When talent is referred to NOVAworks by a community partner, the AJCC center staff secure as much preliminary information as possible to facilitate the exploratory discussion. NOVAworks streamlines enrollment with partners by building data sharing language into all its MOUs which it seeks to complete with partners.

Following orientation and completion of the registration process, customers meet with a career advisor for a review of their job plan and an in-depth discussion of needs and goals. The advisor and customer work together to refine the job-search plan and begin the process of identifying recommended services to assist them toward re-employment and their personal career goals. Job seekers then meet with a career advisor as often as they deem necessary. This customized, intensive interaction allows job seekers to continue to refine their job plan as their situation and goals demand. Staff provides support and encouragement, as well as relevant information to help move the individual forward. This personalized attention and the direction provided by these face-to-face meetings (offered in-person or via Zoom) is critical for a successful job search.

At any point in the process, a career advisor may refer a customer to a partner organization for services, discuss coordination of services with that organization, or pursue skills training. NOVAworks has a critical role to play in making sure residents are prepared to enter job training programs or are ready for a next step with an additional community partner.

Cross-referrals and co-enrollments are noted in the database to assist in coordinating services to shared customers. The NOVAworks Stakeholders group addresses issues such as co-enrollment when they meet on a quarterly basis.

- *How the Local Board and AJCC partners will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.*

NOVAworks offers the region a hybrid approach to service delivery, making career coaching, workshops, networking meetings and employer presentations available remotely or in-person. The hybrid service model makes services more accessible to regional job seekers and employers and AJCC partners. The hybrid model has also enabled NOVAworks to convene presentations featuring labor market experts from around the country and globe.

NOVAworks services play an important function in connecting someone to meaningful employment. Given that NOVAworks closely works with employers, the AJCC staff gain important industry intelligence which can help local talent improve their chances of success in finding a good job that is aligned in a high growth career pathway. Additionally, the NOVAworks team uses employer feedback to provide professional skills development opportunities for members, thus helping them be successful not just in the job search but also advance on the job after they are hired.

For those customers choosing to access services remotely, NOVAworks facilitates orientations, workshops, and individual coaching sessions on the Zoom platform. Additionally, an encrypted platform that enables remote registration documents to be sent securely is used to help remote customers complete the WIOA application process and provide documentation, as required by EDD Workforce Services Directives.

NOVAworks offers two main technology tools to help job seekers identify their career advancement action steps and connect with employers. First, MyPlan is a career navigation platform (<https://novaworks.org/myplan>) that serves as the hub of the organization's remote service delivery model. MyPlan allows job seekers to access topical videos, data, and job-search resources remotely. Information can be viewed as frequently as needed, and customers can visit the site from any location and at any time. This 24/7, remote access allows customers to become more familiar with relevant content in support of their job-search efforts. NOVAworks actively shares MyPlan with all regional partners and promotes its use through the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group.

NOVAworks' service area includes rural and coastal portions of San Mateo County, where residents face more significant transportation barriers. The NOVAworks staff will continue to develop partnerships with coastal organizations as well as explore new options for meeting with customers on regular or specific time intervals. Even with the various remote options available to customers, many job seekers from rural and agricultural regions prefer to begin services in-person and will consider using the option to take advantage of remote services later.

Second, in 2024, NOVAworks launched Job Connector, an AI-supported talent matching tool which facilitates connections between job seekers and hiring businesses.

<https://novaworks.org/seeker/job-connector>. Customers create a profile on the Job Connector and then an algorithm makes recommendations to various jobs posted on the site. Similarly, businesses are offered access to Job Connector as a no-cost resource and as another place to source talent, alongside CalJOBS. Algorithms make talent suggestions to businesses to review resume and profile. Feedback has been very positive and over 1,000 NOVAworks members have registered on the site. Both employers and talent can also turn off the algorithms at any point and see the full variety of opportunities on the website. Job seekers always have access to the Job Connector and can set up alerts to be notified of new jobs added or that meet their criteria. Many job seekers access Job Connector on their smartphone, making it a truly portable resource.

Finally, NOVAworks continuously works with training providers to increase the accessibility of their services and trainings. Several of our ETPL and RERP training providers offer online classes, which are popular with those who cannot commute or need flexible scheduling.

- *How the Local Board and AJCC partners will coordinate workforce and education activities with the provision of appropriate supportive services.*

NOVAworks provides supportive services to regional talent to remove barriers for individuals seeking meaningful employment and career advancement. NOVAworks is continuously interested in building relationships with current and new community-based organizations that will result in a stronger service delivery model. NOVAworks, AJCC partners, and new community-based organizations meet to identify service needs and share information around the supportive services that each organization offers. A customer centric referral method between the organizations will be established that makes handoffs easy and establishes a method for tracking referral data. Once the agreement is complete, NOVAworks will conduct staff training so that the team members working with talent know how the new partner fits into the service strategy and how to make referrals.

The Local Board and AJCC partners will additionally coordinate services through NOVAworks' quarterly Stakeholder meetings in which partners share current and new resources. The quarterly meeting is designed to maximize exposure to the many resources that are available to the public through community-based organizations and education.

Once coordination efforts are completed, NOVAworks then uses a consistent and formalized approach to ensure all new customers, whether referred from a partner or a walk-in, are made aware of the resources available to them. When a new area resident visits NOVAworks, supportive services are discussed throughout the NOVAworks service-delivery customer flow, beginning with the first appointment between the job seeker and career advisor for an initial discussion of needs. At this meeting, the needs and goals of the

individual are discussed, and relevant referrals are offered as options. Supportive services are especially critical to customers enrolled in training programs to ensure they have the support needed to attend and complete training while experiencing reduced or no income.

Supportive services are designed to support customers who are facing barriers to employment by providing them with accessing a broad array of ancillary services that will facilitate their completion of education and training programs and job search activities leading to successful employment. Services may include childcare, health care, transportation vouchers, payment for books, uniforms and course equipment, assistive technology for individuals with disabilities, licensing fees, housing assistance, cost of living and emergency assistance, financial services, and counseling. NOVAworks also collaborates with organizations that specialize in these services to support shared customers. Examples include:

- Affordable Care Act information
- Focus Forward Initiative with the Santa Clara County Housing Authority
- Work Incentive Planning and Assistance (WIPA) appointments conducted onsite by Center for Independence of Individuals with Disabilities
- California Department of Rehabilitation referrals
- Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) paratransit information
- San Mateo County Health
- San Mateo County Human Services
- Free income tax assistance referral

A final benefit resulting from an effective coordination of services is the maximizing of business relationships and sharing of industry intelligence. Employers sometimes struggle to respond to the wide variety of requests they receive to collaborate from partners such as workforce development, education, community-based organizations, economic development, industry associations, etc. Given NOVAworks' business services team and strategy, it can play an important coordination role by bridging the gap between many non-profit providers and hiring employers. NOVAworks can bring industry relationships and intelligence to the Stakeholders group and help partners of the larger system gain more experiences with some of Silicon Valley's top businesses. NOVAworks already hosts online networking events as well as supports in-person career fairs and will expand access to these in the upcoming year.

- *How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the physical accessibility of facilities, programs and services, assistive technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).*

The nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions in Section 188 of WIOA and Title 29 CFR Part 38 prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief, and for beneficiaries' only, citizenship or participation in a WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. Additionally, Section 188 requires that WIOA programs are physically accessible to individuals with disabilities and provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals to ensure equity of access. NOVAworks has policies and procedures in place relative to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity and has language in its subrecipient contracts to assure compliance with the provisions. NOVAworks has a designated EO officer who conducts accessibility evaluations of physical space, monitors readiness of accessibility equipment, and provides quarterly training to the staff.

NOVAworks continues to review its Career Center assistive technology to ensure it has the most current versions of software and physical devices and that software is compatible with current computer systems. NOVAworks comprehensive career center is in the newly built Sunnyvale City Hall and has state of the art audio assistance devices. NOVAworks affiliate site has all required assistance technology and coordinates with the comprehensive center in addressing accessibility questions.

Additionally, NOVAworks monitors contracted partners annually to ensure their centers are accessible and ADA compliant. NOVAworks continues to become more knowledgeable in this space and works with both the Department of Rehabilitation and other organizations specializing in services to individuals with disabilities. They inform NOVAworks about what would be most useful to individuals they might refer for job search assistance.

- *How the Local Board and AJCC partners will comply with WIOA Section 188 and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 regarding the programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, assistive technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, as outlined in Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Procedures (WSD17-01).*

The nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions in Section 188 of WIOA and Title 29 CFR Part 38 prohibit discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, political affiliation, or belief, and for beneficiaries' only, citizenship or participation in a WIOA Title I financially assisted program or activity. NOVAworks has policies and procedures in place relative to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity and has language in its subrecipient contracts to assure compliance with the provisions. NOVAworks has a designated EO officer who conducts annual accessibility program monitoring and provides quarterly training with the staff.

The NOVAworks Stakeholders Group meets quarterly and shares information relative to their programs and services so that partners can go back to their teams and educate their staff. The Department of Rehabilitation is a member of the Stakeholder Group and provides training to the group, as do AbilityPath, Momentum for Health and several other agencies representing individuals with disabilities. The Department of Rehabilitation also comes to NOVAworks twice a month to provide coaching services to customers.

State Strategic Partner Coordination

- *How the Local Board will coordinate with County Health and Human Services Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who access CalFresh Employment and Training services.*

Partnerships for service delivery

NOVAworks engages and works with local county human service agencies and other CalFresh Employment and Training (E&T) partners to support CalFresh customers on their journeys to sustainable employment and upward mobility.

CalFresh offers Employment and Training (CFET) services for Santa Clara and San Mateo counties both directly and through partners. The direct program provides employment assistance to CalFresh eligible employable clients who are out of work or underemployed. The primary goal of this program is to immediately direct clients toward available employment to prevent or end their dependency on public assistance. NOVAworks' AJCC is a key partner with CalFresh as their wrap-around services that provide opportunities and support for relief from poverty. Additionally, CalFresh is a source of referrals for NOVAworks and other area workforce boards.

The Santa Clara County Social Services Agency external CFET program services are provided by the following partners: Center for Employment Opportunities, Goodwill of Silicon Valley, Sacred Heart Community Service, San Jose Conservation Corps + Charter School, Working Partnerships USA (Trades Orientation Program), Gavilan College, and JobTrain. These partners provide the following components: job search training, workfare, work experience/internships, education, apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships, on-the-job training, and job retention.

In San Mateo County, all E&T services are provided by San Mateo County Human Services. Components include specialized training, job search workshops, computer/fax access and individual support. Customers are directly referred to NOVAworks or can be referred through the website. NOVAworks brings additional service coordination to San Mateo County through its participation in the County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) working group, which is creating a strategy to first scan the community's SDOH assessment resources. Once the resources are mapped and understood, an enhanced service delivery plan will be created for the county.

Additionally, CalFresh partners from both counties are members of the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group. The Stakeholders Group is comprised of a broad cross-section of the workforce development community including:

- Adult education partners
- California Department of Social Services (CDSS)
- Community-based organizations serving youth, persons with disabilities, formerly incarcerated, veterans, disadvantaged, and immigrant workers, among others
- Community colleges
- Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)
- Employment Development Department (EDD)
- Organizations offering county CalWORKs & Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits
- Veterans Administration

The Stakeholders Group is a valuable forum for members to share information about their respective programs to provide additional resources and enhance success for this population. Stakeholders Group partners continue to strengthen referral mechanisms and initiatives to enhance services.

Braiding resources and expanding services

In Santa Clara County, third party program services use non-federal dollars to fund their CFET program. To leverage CalFresh funding and provide access to no- or low-cost training, County staff in both counties refer customers to community resources as appropriate, such as the ACCEL consortium of adult education providers in San Mateo County. Individuals referred to the NOVAworks AJCCs may have access to additional grant-funded resources, such as career training.

Through the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group, the local workforce system partners learn of programs and organizations serving types of CalFresh populations and ways to access and leverage these resources. In response to the pandemic, NOVAworks has provided access for partner staff to attend remote workshops and other NOVAworks services. This has greatly expanded NOVAworks' reach. With remote services, NOVAworks is also seeing customers from locations that had difficulty accessing onsite services.

Sector pathway programs

CalFresh participants working with NOVAworks have access to other career pathway programs through WIOA funding. The NOVAworks Stakeholders Group affords all members the opportunity to learn of each other's training resources and share in program development as appropriate.

Supportive services

NOVAworks and partners share data about assets and challenges to build a comprehensive set of service options for residents entering the workforce system. CalFresh participants are automatically eligible for supportive services from NOVAworks. Supportive services may include assistance with transportation, costs associated with school/training, interview clothing, and tools of the trade to start employment.

Retention strategies

For co-enrollees, CalFresh partners and AJCC staff track attendance and progress for individuals in training programs and provide follow up services to individuals reporting placement to assist participants with retention and career advancement. Services include career coaching, professional skills training, and networking. Referrals are made to community partners for services as needed.

- *How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Child Support Agencies and other local partners who serve individuals who are non-custodial parents.*

NOVAworks and Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) staff in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties maintain an ongoing dialog to assure a comprehensive provision of services to non-custodial parents. NOVAworks offers supportive services and skill building trainings funded by WIOA to equip parents with the tools to access meaningful employment. NOVAworks is positioned to help non-custodial parents retain the job through the provision of follow-up career services.

In addition to formal collaboration, the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group is a means for local child support agencies to share information about their respective programs to provide additional resources and enhance success for this population. The group also provides professional development through cross-training and is a forum for sharing labor market intelligence such as occupations and industries in demand that will facilitate customer progression into livable wage jobs and careers. The NOVAworks Stakeholders Group can help facilitate information sharing so that all workforce partners serving this population are aware of the tools that DCSS can legally use to support participation, such as “forgiveness programs” when parents are working to reunify with their children.

NOVAworks and partners continue to work on details for braiding resources and coordinating services between partners serving the same customer, including referral and information-sharing mechanisms. In Stakeholder meetings, community-based organizations speak with each other to understand their programs and explore ways to work together to serve the non-custodial parent population.

Currently referrals from the local child support agency (LCSA) office and the Family Court occur primarily through email with partner staff but NOVAworks continues to explore innovative ways to make and receive individuals referred from partner agencies.

- *How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Partnership Agreement partners, established in alignment with the Competitive Integrated Employment Blueprint, and other local, regional, and statewide partners who serve individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities.*

DOR/AJCC connections for service coordination and outreach

NOVAworks has points of contact at the Department of Rehabilitation in both San Mateo and Santa Clara counties who provide linkages to service providers and/or supportive services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) who are vocational rehabilitation customers. NOVAworks and DOR (as well as other agencies) continue to monitor and enhance processes for referrals and information sharing. Adult education providers are interested in mechanisms for sharing assessments and opportunities for co-enrollment.

NOVAworks is starting a new partnership with Disability Belongs (formerly Respectability), a nonprofit organization that helps companies find talented individuals with disabilities. In addition to supporting company hiring, engagement and retention goals, Disability Belongs prepares workplace leaders, hiring managers and employees to integrate and value people with disabilities through onsite and web-based inclusion training.

AJCC staff training

There are several ways that NOVAworks Job Center staff increase their knowledge about serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and of the programs and resources available in the area. NOVAworks collaborates with a wide range of agencies, beyond the AJCC required partners, and convenes a quarterly meeting of these stakeholders to discuss service coordination and provide professional development and capacity building. Speakers are invited regularly to provide information to the group on topics of interest to all.

In addition, NOVAworks' career advisor staff have professional development for working with special populations. NOVAworks staff attend DOR's training on disclosing disabilities and participate in online learning. NOVAworks staff also attend various trainings provided by partners, such as Disability Belongs. Staff also receive quarterly training by the NOVAworks EO Officer on best practices for making an inclusive and accessible environment for all Californians, especially those individuals who have a disability.

In 2024, NOVAworks welcomed a new representative from the California Department of Rehabilitation to the NOVAworks workforce board and looks forward to future collaboration to better advocate and serve individuals with disabilities.

- *How the Local Board will coordinate with community-based organizations and other local partners who serve individuals who are English language learners, foreign born, and/or refugees.*

NOVAworks continues to build partnerships with organizations who specialize in individuals who are English language learners, foreign born, and/or refugees. For example, the Immigration Institute of the Bay Area (IIBA) provides immigration legal support and will be a referral source for individuals who are ready for a new phase of their career. NOVAworks partners with Upwardly Global who serves recent immigrants with specialized services. Upwardly Globally offers services particularly geared towards individuals who have a degree earned or technical skill learned in another country. In another example, NOVAworks with the local adult education consortia, ACCEL and the two consortia in Santa Clara County, provides workforce services which complement the training that English learners receive. NOVAworks customers can similarly attend adult education training and services which have strong customization to English learners.

NOVAworks has recently completed a “Whole Person” pilot program that provided a broad menu of workforce interventions to individuals in 12 low-income zip codes across the two-county region. Since the pilot was funded with non-federal dollars, immigration status was not a factor in enrollment. The 25 pilot participants received intensive workforce services provided by NOVAworks staff in partnership with the County, public libraries, municipal governments, and community-based organizations. All but three of the participants identified as either Latinx, Black or Asian-Pacific Islander. Each participant received customized job search assistance including career focus, career exploration, resumé development, and interview preparation. The Whole Person approach continues to be a promising practice for individuals who will benefit from multiple services that might go beyond traditional career center services.

NOVAworks is additionally the recent recipient of a James Irvine Foundation grant to pilot unique and innovative workforce models. With continued flexible funding from system partners, the “whole person” approach has strong potential to be scaled across the three-county region and increase services to all English learners.

- *How the Local Board will coordinate with Local Veteran Affairs, community-based organizations, and other local partners who serve veterans.*

NOVAworks is committed to ensuring that Veterans and eligible spouses know the full variety of services that are available to them and that they receive priority access. Through

strong partnerships with organizations like the County of Santa Clara Veterans Services Office and the County of San Mateo Veterans Services Office, NOVAworks connect Veterans with workforce development services and additional community resources.

To enhance collaboration and streamline support, a local Stakeholders Group is convened on a quarterly basis. This group shares program updates, coordinates services, and discusses the needs of mutual customers to ensure seamless referrals and comprehensive support. Regular participants include our local EDD office, Swords to Plowshares, NPower, and the Palo Alto Veterans Affairs office.

NOVAworks also engages directly with Veterans through partnerships like the Foothill College Veterans Resource Center, where we tabled at a resource fair to provide information about workforce development services available to them. Additionally, NOVAworks participates annually in the Santa Clara County Veterans Stand Down event. During this three-day event, daily workshops are hosted on interviewing and resume building and a resource table is staffed to share information about our full range of services.

- *How the Local Board will collaborate with the Strategic Planning partners to address environmental sustainability.*

NOVAworks takes climate sustainability seriously and strongly understands the importance of making changes to our way of living today to mitigate the negative environmental consequences that face future generations. It is also understood that the individuals who often experience the worst effects of climate change are underserved and disenfranchised populations.

To be a positive change agent in this space, NOVAworks has been collaborating with partners since 2023 to address environmental sustainability. Also, with other community-based organizations, labor, businesses, and economic development, a consortium of organizations is working towards meeting industry and workforce needs to support a climate neutral transition through the development of a green infrastructure workers assessment. Through the co-convening of the Green Infrastructure Workforce Assessment (GIWA), one of the JobsFirst subregional tables, NOVAworks has actively engaged with a wide variety of partners representing labor, economic development, clean energy, workforce, community, and education. The subregional table identified challenges and opportunities for achieving a climate neutral transition and as a result, now understands many of the aspects involved with the concept of building a green jobs initiative. However, there is still much to learn, including, hearing more from the workers and community members who are directly affected by California's electrification processes. Mindful of how past economic transitions can inequitably affect underserved populations, the efforts of the green infrastructure group will center worker voice and meaningfully engage industry. Three of the Bay Peninsula's California's Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) organizations, including Silicon Valley Clean Energy, Peninsula Clean Energy and San Jose Clean Energy, have been actively involved in the process and are helping to set up

conversations in the green energy space. Once this study is funded and completed, the results will be shared broadly in the region. These results will be particularly helpful for the many education and training partners who play a central role in creating green training programs. The RPU will work with area stakeholders to build training pathways that lead to equitable transitions for workers of fossil fuel industries.

Operationally, NOVAworks is taking many small steps to operate in a more environmentally sustainable manner. NOVAworks uses reusable cookware for staff events, uses online meetings to avoid traveling in gas vehicles, and will begin exploring “green economy” occupations to promote career pathways to education and other training providers. Additionally, NOVAworks is housed in the Sunnyvale City Hall, the first LEED Platinum certified and Net Zero Energy city hall in the country. Completed in 2023, the all-electric building produces as much energy as it uses thanks to the 1,400 solar panels on its rooftop. The building exemplifies environmental sustainability through its drought-tolerant landscaping, water-efficient irrigation methods, battery-based emergency generators, and use of responsibly sourced and environmentally friendly building materials to lower the building’s carbon footprint.

WIOA Title I Coordination

- *Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to gain and expand proficiency in digital fluency and distance learning.*

NOVAworks provides intentional professional development to staff in a variety of modalities. First, staff have access to LinkedIn Learning which contains a library of more than 21,000 courses, many of which are focused on a digital skill. Additionally, NOVAworks provides funds for staff to pursue development each calendar year. Third, NOVAworks builds professional development into regular monthly meetings, such as facilitating peer to peer training in how to use popular artificial intelligence tools. NOVAworks allocates time for staff to attend conferences, leadership cohorts, and take one of the many professional development trainings offered by the City of Sunnyvale or California Workforce Association.

- *Training and/or professional development that will be provided to frontline staff to ensure cultural competencies and an understanding of the experiences of trauma-exposed populations.*

NOVAworks leadership secures guest speakers and organizations that engage staff and discuss various aspects to inclusion, equity, and developing more empathy for the multi-faceted experiences of trauma-exposed populations. Articles, videos, and online trainings

are shared with staff in meetings and informally throughout the year. Also, the Career Services Team holds a daily “standup” meeting where the team coordinate services and address significant customer needs in real time. Additionally, staff have access to a variety of inclusion trainings through the City of Sunnyvale.

- *How the Local Board will coordinate workforce investment activities in the Local Area with statewide rapid response activities, as outlined in Rapid Response and Layoff Aversion Activities (WSD16-04).*

Due to the volatile nature of the Silicon Valley economy and constant labor market churn, NOVAworks experiences large numbers of regional dislocations. NOVAworks has wide-ranging expertise in providing rapid response (RR) services. The process includes a goal of 24-hour response to companies issuing WARN notices to quickly assess needs and determine the best means of providing information on AJCC services to affected workers. NOVAworks coordinates closely with the local EDD Workforce Services division, which provides staff to co-facilitate rapid response orientations, ensuring a seamless and comprehensive support system for all parties involved.

We collaborate with employers facing workforce challenges to assess their needs and explore alternatives to layoffs. Our solutions include on-the-job training, incumbent-worker training, and apprenticeship programs, which empower employers to upskill their teams through professional development opportunities. Our team actively engages with regional partners and local Small Business Development Centers, to stay informed about programs that support business growth and stability. In cases where layoffs are unavoidable, NOVAworks leverages tools like Econovue and JobsEQ—which offers real-time employer data—to identify related employers in the region, facilitating rapid re-employment opportunities for affected workers whenever possible.

NOVAworks collaborates closely with neighboring WDBs, including work2future, Alameda, and San Francisco, to support employees affected by layoffs across multiple locations or residing in neighboring areas. This partnership ensures impacted workers are informed about local AJCC services tailored to their needs and in their local area. Additionally, NOVAworks coordinates with WDBs statewide when layoffs span several regions, streamlining efforts through a single company contact. As an active member of the Bay Area Rapid Response Roundtable, NOVAworks plays a leadership role in regional workforce initiatives and actively participates in quarterly meetings and annual conferences.

In the November 20, 2024, workforce development planning meeting, community members expressed a desire for more employer collaboration, especially around connecting community-based organizations to employer hiring and skill needs. NOVAworks will build in more employer spotlights and industry intelligence into the quarterly stakeholder meetings to share industry intelligence.

NOVAworks collaborates closely with the Employment Development Department (EDD) to provide comprehensive RR services. The teams communicate on a weekly and even daily basis when conducting rapid response activities and supporting companies and workers going through a lay-off. As part of this partnership, NOVAworks and EDD co-host bimonthly RR open sessions, offering valuable information about EDD programs and NOVAworks workforce development services. These webinars are promoted through multiple channels, including the NOVAworks website, impacted employers, EDD communications to unemployment claimants, and local economic development departments, ensuring broad outreach to those who can benefit from these resources.

- *A description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the Local Area.*

This includes how the Local Board will ensure that priority for adult career and training services will be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient, as outlined in WIOA Adult Program Priority of Service (WSD24-06). Additional priority groups may need to be considered to serve the local area better. The Economic and Workforce Analysis section of the State Plan identifies workforce targets such as low-wage or high-unemployment industries that could be relevant to the local area's needs.

The NOVAworks Job Center in Sunnyvale is the comprehensive AJCC in the local area and operates per guidance from the California Employment Development Department (EDD). In alignment with EDD and the California Workforce Development Board's (CWDB) 2024-2027 Unified Strategic Workforce Development Plan, NOVAworks is leading its region on a path from great to excellent as it builds sector strategies for businesses and talent, works with education to identify and support career pathways for students and adults, and works with a broad consortium of partners to develop regional partnerships. These and other initiatives, are a force multiplier for regional workforce boards and serve as the formula for equitable impact in the LWDA.

NOVAworks, along with its affiliate center service provider in San Mateo County, Central Labor Council Partnership, provides WIOA Title I adult and dislocated services in San Mateo and northern Santa Clara counties.

NOVAworks has fully embraced the dual customer model as the best method to meet the needs of the region's job seekers and employers. NOVAworks engages businesses and

industry associates to understand the hiring needs of the region and then works backwards to develop trainings and services for the region's residents. The NOVAworks service strategy emphasizes access to services for customers of all skill and income levels and works with partners to build a variety of routes to enter high demand career pathways. By creating a wide door for recruitment, this approach allows partners to refer job seeker customers regardless of their eligibility category, thus ensuring a full range of skills and talent for employers to access. Additionally, NOVAworks can bring this business intelligence and relationships to its base of partners to empower them with real-time updates on in-demand fields, skills, and jobs. When partners are equipped with real-time information, they can play a critical role in the dual customers model by helping meet the region's talent needs. NOVAworks staff build resources and initial step trainings for talent who are on public assistance, basic skills deficient, or economically disadvantaged. An industry-driven approach to workforce development creates the most viable opportunities for adult and target populations and those who have traditionally been underserved by workforce and education systems. All customers are then guided through all services that they choose to access.

Serving dislocated workers is a critical priority for NOVAworks as our LWDA sees some of the highest numbers of layoffs in the state. Over the last year, NOVAworks received over 120 WARNs affecting 16,470 people. Although our population is only 3.3% of the State's population, we received nearly 10% of the total WARNs for the state and contained 10% of the total people affected by layoffs. The NOVAworks business services team aggressively reaches out to companies laying off workers to offer layoff aversion assistance to the company and replacement support to the affected workers. The Career Services team is trained to engage career professionals and position the public workforce system and all its services as valued resources. For these reasons, NOVAworks consistently achieves some of the highest Dislocated Worker outcomes in the State.

NOVAworks is committed to continuous improvement and is constantly assessing and reinventing its services in response to feedback directly from customers, on surveys, and from community partners. One example of being responsive to the needs of industry is in the development of the human resources hotline. NOVAworks sometimes receives questions about worker situations that go beyond the team's knowledge base. To support businesses seeking human resources-related guidance, in 2024, the Business Services team launched a human resources hotline for LWDA employers. The hotline provides expert advice on a variety of employee situations which helps ensure worker rights and employee situations are handled as fair as possible.

The AJCC is also tuned into market demand and changing economic conditions which shape our services and modes of delivery. The Networking Hour remote workshop is an example of the innovative approach employed by NOVAworks to meet a perceived need for more peer-to-peer support by laid off individuals. NOVAworks sees all customers as assets and teaches networking as one key to career success. NOVAworks not only provides resources to customers, but the program utilizes job seekers as networking resources for each other while they are seeking employment and as program alumni. NOVAworks' capacity to

customize its services to reflect local demand and its networking expertise are among the factors that differentiate NOVAworks among workforce agencies.

NOVAworks also collaborates with the three community college districts and ten adult education providers in its region relative to employment and training activities. In addition to providers of services for the general population, the region is home to many specialized service providers for niche populations. Often an employment and training component is part of their models.

Many other groups are participants in the NOVAworks Stakeholders Group, including, but not limited to, Department of Rehabilitation, Employment Development Department, Goodwill of Silicon Valley, and Momentum for Health. The group meets regularly to discuss service coordination, address challenges, and provide cross training.

In addition, NOVAworks recognizes the need to expand access to apprenticeships and awareness of the apprenticeship model. NOVAworks is a leader of California Apprenticeship Initiative (CAI), a consortium promoting the growth of regional apprenticeships including semiconductor apprenticeships. NOVAworks is also well connected to labor market intelligence and actively markets apprenticeship opportunities to both youth and adult job seekers.

NOVAworks also participates in two Multi-Craft Core Curriculum Construction pre-apprenticeship collaborative initiatives, in partnership with the Santa Clara and San Benito Counties Building & Construction Trades Council, San Mateo County Building & Construction Trades Council, Working Partnerships USA, work2future and College of San Mateo.

As stated in WIOA Section 134(c)(3)(E), with respect to individualized career services and training services funded with WIOA adult funds, priority of service must be given to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, or individuals who are basic skills deficient. Priority of service status is established at the time of eligibility determination and does not change during the period of participation. Priority does not apply to the dislocated worker population.

The WIOA adult funding priority of service does not affect or negate the priority of service provided to veterans and eligible spouses. Veterans and eligible spouses continue to receive priority of service among all eligible individuals; however, they must meet NOVAworks' Veteran's Priority of Service criteria. Thus, for adult services, the program's eligibility determination must be made first, and then veteran's priority applied.

The NOVAworks WDB has approved an adult priority of service policy and procedures in compliance with WSD15-14. Priority of service for adults meeting eligibility under the priority categories is implemented at the NOVAworks AJCCs in the following manner:

- a. When requesting advising appointments, eligible adult priority customers are served first, including Veterans.

- b. When registering for job-search workshops, eligible adult priority customers are approved first.

Eligible adult priority customers have priority for NOVAworks-funded training over all other registered individuals.

- *A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the Local Area, as outlined in WIOA Youth Program Requirements (WSD17-07). This includes any strategies for increasing the digital literacy and fluency of youth participants, including those youth with disabilities.*

The NOVAworks Job Center in Sunnyvale is the provider of youth services for San Mateo and northern Santa Clara counties. The NOVAworks Young Adult Program is focused on providing all 14 of the WIOA-mandated youth service elements to any eligible youth in our two-county service area, regardless of barriers. NOVAworks offers young adults in the LWDA a series of WIOA's 14 youth program service elements including:

- Comprehensive guidance and counseling
- Entrepreneurial skills training
- Financial literacy education
- Occupational skills training
- Supportive services
- Adult mentoring
- Follow-up services
- Leadership development opportunities
- Paid and unpaid work experience
- Services that provide labor market information
- Education offered concurrently with workforce preparation
- Postsecondary preparation and transition activities
- Alternative Secondary school
- Tutoring

NOVAworks supports young adult participants through flexible modalities including offering in-person services at our Sunnyvale office or virtual sessions via Zoom. Additionally, we meet young adults in their own communities, connecting with them at coffee shops, libraries, adult education centers, and partner agency locations to provide accessible and personalized assistance. NOVAworks' network of high schools, adult schools, community colleges, and partner programs provides a strong educational pathway for youth. Counseling and disability resource centers at the community colleges provide specific support to students throughout their studies. NOVAworks has strong connections with the GED high school equivalency /diploma programs to help support youth who have

not been successful in the mainstream education process to earn their diploma and move forward to post-secondary education and/or employment.

NOVAworks serves youth who are not connected to the educational system through outreach to transitional housing and parenting programs, the Department of Social Services foster youth network, CalFresh, local shelters, youth centers, and partner agency referrals. Our goal is to help disenfranchised youth build stronger connections within their communities while guiding them toward economic self-sufficiency and long-term stability.

NOVAworks has a successful partnership with LinkedIn to support youth employment in our community through grants and youth opportunities. Thanks to this partnership, many young adults have gained exposure to the LinkedIn staff and campus. Program services include career exploration, mentoring, and training on personal branding, networking, and developing a professional online presence. Additionally, NOVAworks hosts social media pages where youth can be connected to job opportunities in our area.

There are multiple quality programs in our local area for individuals with disabilities. NOVAworks partners with local WorkAbility programs to support youth with disabilities in their transition from high school to post-secondary education, training, and/or employment. Regional community colleges and San Jose State University also provide robust support through their disability resource centers. NOVAworks empowers youth to take full advantage of these resources, fostering self-advocacy skills to ensure they have access now and in the future. NOVAworks is also closely connected to the Department of Rehabilitation, which offers counseling and financial assistance to help individuals complete educational and training programs ranging from short-term certifications to four-year degrees.

NOVAworks took over directly offering services in 2023 and used the opportunity to re-imagine the young adult program, rebuilding the program from the ground up. NOVAworks has initiated a strong emphasis on work experience, helping participants gain valuable insights into the fundamentals of workforce engagement. Through subsidized employment opportunities lasting 200 to 400 hours per individual, we collaborate with nonprofits, private sector businesses, and government organizations to create meaningful placements. Additionally, we are emphasizing employment in the public sector given the strong need that regional governments entities are experiencing as well as the high quality of jobs that come with public service jobs. Finally, NOVAworks has contracted with a third-party payroll service to act as the employer of record, handling onboarding and payroll, and assuming all liability to ensure a seamless experience for host sites.

- *The entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds as determined by the Chief Elected Official (CEO) or the Governor and the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.*

The entity responsible for disbursing NOVAworks' grant funds is its administrative and financial entity, the City of Sunnyvale. Under a Joint Powers Agreement, the City of Sunnyvale is designated as the Joint Powers Agency, the jurisdiction of which is the cities of Cupertino, Los Altos, Milpitas, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Santa Clara, and Sunnyvale, and the County of San Mateo. The Joint Powers Agency is administered solely by the City Council of the City of Sunnyvale, which has the authority to receive and expend funds. The City of Sunnyvale delegates responsibility to operate workforce development services to NOVAworks.

NOVAworks follows local, state, and federal regulations governing its procurement of employment and training activities, services, and programs, including the selection of service providers when appropriate. Procurements are conducted through an open and competitive process and are documented with the rationale for the method of procurement, selection of contract type, contractor selection or rejection, and the basis for the selection. The City of Sunnyvale has the authority to enter into sub-grants, contracts, and other necessary agreements. Through a competitive procurement process, NOVAworks contracts out WIOA services provided in San Mateo County and continues to deliver career services at the NOVAworks AJCC in Sunnyvale.

- *A description of how the Local Board fulfills the duties of the AJCC Operator and/or the Career Services Provider as outlined in Selection of AJCC Operators and Career Services Providers (WSD22-13). This should include the name (s) and role (s) of all entities with whom the Local Board contracts.*

For forty years, NOVAworks has been a career services provider for adults and dislocated workers through the NOVAworks AJCC in Sunnyvale. It has a stellar track record of delivering quality services, achieving performance measures, winning competitive funding, possessing a deep knowledge of the local labor market, enjoying a history of extensive collaboration with local partners and stakeholders, and exhibiting prudent efficiencies. In 2017 and 2021, NOVAworks applied for and was approved by the State to serve as a Career Services Provider for the AJCC Job Center in Sunnyvale, a comprehensive AJCC Center. As per State Directive WSD22-13, NOVAworks will be reapplying to serve as a Career Services Provider for the AJCC Job Center in Sunnyvale. NOVAworks has contracted-out career services in San Mateo County to the Central Labor Council Partnership that operates an Affiliate AJCC Job Center. NOVAworks customers may access services at either AJCC.

As stipulated by the State, the role of the AJCC Operator is to coordinate the service delivery of required AJCC partners and service providers and ensure the implementation of partner responsibilities and contributions agreed upon in the Memorandums of Understanding. In 2018 and 2021, following an unsuccessful competitive procurement, NOVAworks applied for and was approved by the State to serve as the AJCC Operator for the NOVAworks workforce development area through sole source procurement. As per State Directive WSD22-13, NOVAworks will be reapplying to serve as the AJCC Operator

through sole source procurement. NOVAworks will continue to coordinate the service-delivery activities of the AJCC required partners and service providers by convening and facilitating quarterly partner meetings to ensure effective delivery of services to shared customers. In addition, NOVAworks will build relationships and serve as a hub for information sharing across partners to promote cohesiveness and continuity.

- *Closing.*

NOVAworks wishes to thank the many community leaders and organizations who contributed to the local planning process. Their input and feedback on the services provided has been an important lens by which former plans were reviewed and improved. NOVAworks greatly values its partnerships with a great number of organizations in San Mateo and northern Santa Clara counties. It is through the collaboration and forming meaningful partnerships that the greater LWDA is able to function and thrive in providing local job seekers with customized employment and training solutions. The potential workforce challenges facing our community over the next four years are significant. It is incumbent upon the region's stakeholders to collectively excel and individually perform if equity, customer service, and opportunity is to be achieved for the entire region.

Appendices

Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Mode of Outreach	Target of Outreach	Summary of Attendance	Comments
Public Board and Executive Board Committee Meetings	NOVAworks Board Members	30 board members & NOVAworks staff	Board members introduced to the planning process
Board Survey	Workforce board	Research questions sent to 22 NOVAworks board	Board responded to six planning questions
Stakeholder Survey	Community stakeholders	Research questions sent to 122 NOVAworks Stakeholders	Stakeholders responded to six planning questions
Regional Workforce Planning Meeting on November 20, 2024	Community stakeholders across NOVAworks region	More than 200 stakeholders invited to event. Stakeholders attended in-person and online	Meeting was combined with regional planning meeting but had online local breakout rooms so that NOVAworks stakeholders could convene
Public Comment	Community stakeholders across RPU region	233 Regional stakeholders invited	Public notification period is from December 16, 2024, through January 16, 2025

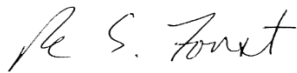
Public comments received that disagree with Local Plan

Name	Organization	Summary of Comment
Amanda Anthony	Redwood City	Comments discussed ideas for reorganizing the plan’s layout and accessibility of relevant information. Additionally, comments underscored the importance of engaging non-bachelor’s degree holding residents as well as encouraging the plan expand focus on San Mateo County residents.
Drew Gamet	Cabrillo Unified School District	Comments discussed the need for the plan to include more reference and support to the rural, coastal, and agricultural residents of San Mateo County.
Lori Riehl	Freemont Union High School District	Comments highlighted the importance of support for English Language Learners who need support in getting their foot into the door of highly competitive industries, greater communication around ETPL changes, and opportunities for Adult Education to support the dual customer model.

Signature page

This local plan is submitted for the period of PY 2025-28 in accordance with the provisions of the WIOA. The local plan was approved by the NOVA Workforce Board at its January 22, 2025, meeting and by the Sunnyvale City Council, as the local Chief Elected Official, at its February 25, 2025, meeting.

**Local Workforce Development Board
Chair**



Signature

Rosanne Foust
Name

NOVA Workforce Board Co-Chairperson
Title

January 22, 2025
Date

**Local Workforce Development Board
Chair**



Signature

Andy Switky
Name

NOVA Workforce Board Co-Chairperson
Title

January 22, 2025
Date

Local Chief Elected Official

Signature

Honorable Larry Klein
Name

Mayor, City of Sunnyvale
Title

Date