

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 4-Year Regional Planning Unit Plan Program Years 2021-2024

Local Workforce Development Area(s)

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Analytical Overview of the North Central Coast Region.....	4
COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts	4
Employment Impacts.....	4
Industry-Specific Employment Changes	7
New Jobs and online Job Postings.....	9
Race and Ethnicity	10
Educational Attainment	11
Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment	13
Regional Industry Clusters.....	13
Career Pathways and Opportunities	15
Healthcare	16
Building & Design.....	17
Professional and Business Services	18
Finance, Insurance, Banking, and Real Estate (FIRE).....	19
Growth Industries and Pathways	20
Information and Communications Technology	20
Biotechnology and Biomedical Devices.....	21
Target Industry Occupational Gap Analysis	22
Sectoral Strategic Planning and Development.....	24
Enabling Upward Mobility for All Californians.....	25
Job Quality.....	25
Job Volatility.....	28
Equity and Economic Justice	30
Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services	31
System Alignment	31
Appendix A: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary	32
Appendix B: Public Comments Received that Disagree with Regional Plan.....	32
Appendix C: Signature Page	32

Executive Summary

This edition of the 4-year Regional Plan comes at a crucial time for the North Central Coast region and its local components. The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented impacts on the regional workforce and economy, and strategic recovery efforts can help ensure that the region rebuilds towards a more prosperous and equitable future. This Regional Plan aims to align Regional Planning Unit (RPU) members along specific approaches to achieve the vision and objectives provided in the State Plan. Fulfilling this vision will require partners to collaborate regularly across agencies, programs, and funding streams to align strategic efforts, investments, and service delivery activities to meet shared outcomes within common in-demand industry sectors.

The North Central Coast RPU focused on crafting a Regional Plan that would meet the state's formal guidance while also considering the temporary and permanent effects that the pandemic will have. RPU members are confident that the themes and objectives outlined in this plan will assist in the steady recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, while fostering relationships with partners, and working towards more equitable opportunities for workers in the region.

The North Central Coast RPU builds upon the following strategic goals provided by the state:

1. Fostering demand-driven skills attainment by:
 - a. Leveraging labor market data to uncover strategic opportunities and gaps in training and education.
2. Enabling upward mobility for all Californians by:
 - a. Investing in specific career pathways in key industries, working with regional partners and stakeholders, and ensuring access through AJCCs.
3. Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services by:
 - a. Collaborating closely with Community Colleges and Adult Education providers, Community Based Organizations, non-profits, industry and chambers representatives, and other local organizations.

A central component of this Regional Plan involves identifying target and growth opportunity industries and occupational pathways within those industries. The North Central Coast RPU's Regional Plan relies upon the following to drive findings and strategies:

- a. The most-up-to-date labor market information available to identify the current state of the volatile labor market and local economy;
- b. Engagement with regional and industry leaders to get details beyond labor market data; and
- c. Consideration toward macroeconomic influences and equity ramifications.

The foundational data that comprises this Regional Plan is the first step towards more informed decision and policy-making among the North Central Coast RPU and its regional partners.

Analytical Overview of the North Central Coast Region

This section of the Regional Plan discusses key metrics and characteristics of the regional labor force and resident population. Understanding these metrics—both before and during the pandemic—identifies key opportunities and challenges for the regional workforce, allowing for better strategy and decision making as the recovery continues.

COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts

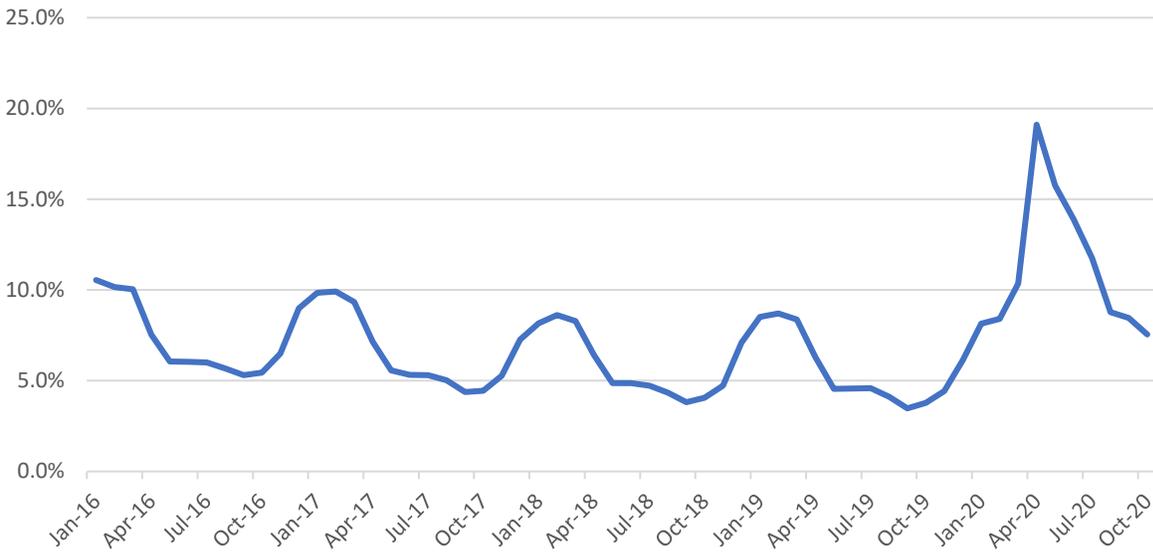
The COVID-19 pandemic has had unprecedented impacts on the global, national, and local economies. The spread of the novel Coronavirus across the U.S. led to unprecedented stay-at-home orders and economic turmoil. As of the writing of this report, the economic effects of COVID-19 and the associated public health orders are in flux. To best showcase the dynamic economic circumstance, this section utilizes propriety models developed by the research team as well as proprietary data aggregated and prepared by Opportunity Insights, a team of researchers at Harvard University. The Opportunity Insights data is compiled from a range of private sources, which provide a near real-time picture of national and local economies.¹

EMPLOYMENT IMPACTS

In April 2020, unemployment in the North Central Coast region reached peak rates nearly twice as high as any previous seasonal unemployment rate over the past four years. The highest non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in the North Central Coast region reached 10.5% in January 2016. In April 2020, unemployment in the region reached 19.1%, meaning about one in five were out of work. For comparison, in April 2019, unemployment was only 6.3% (Figure 1). While unemployment fell to 7.6% in October 2020, the rate is still twice as high as it was in October 2019 (3.8%).

¹ For more information about the Opportunity Insights data and methodology, please visit <https://www.tracktherecovery.org/>

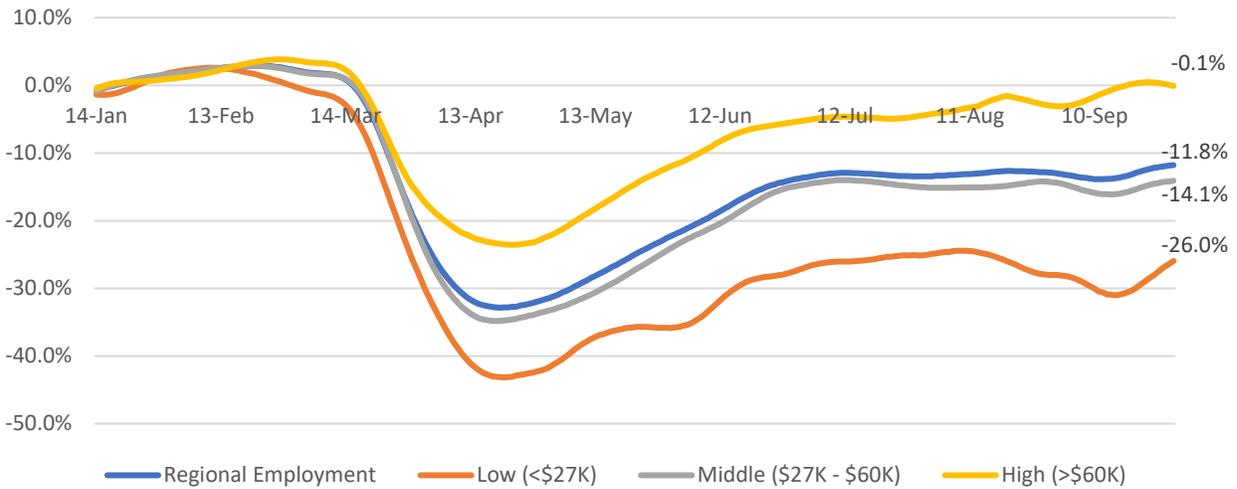
Figure 1. Monthly Unemployment Rates in North Central Coast region (2016 – October 2020),² Not Seasonally-Adjusted



The COVID-19 pandemic has had substantially different effects across different parts of the North Central Coast region's economy. Figure 2 highlights some of these disparities, tracking employment across worker income quartiles. The lowest-earning quartile of workers (those making less than \$27,000 per year) has seen a decline in employment that has fluctuated between 20-30% for several months. In contrast, the highest-earning quartile of workers (those making more than \$60,000 per year) has virtually recovered completely. This data tells us two very different stories of regional employment and highlights the local instance of a national trend: the 'K' shaped recovery. In a K-shaped recovery, higher-income workers and households recover quickly, while lower-income workers and residents suffer from longer-term unemployment and the subsequent economic impacts.

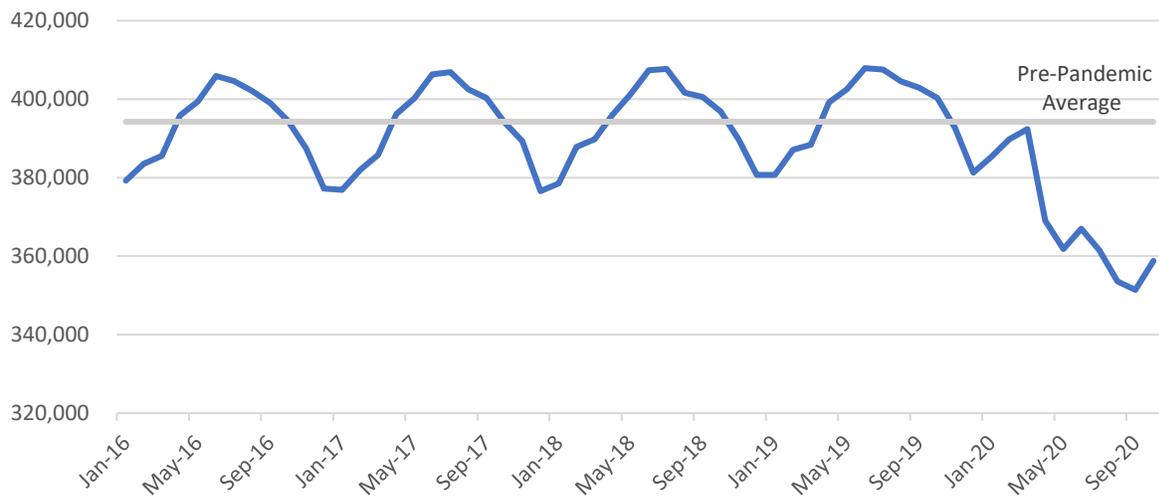
² Unemployment Rate and Labor Force Data Table. State of California Employment Development Department. Extracted December 10, 2020.

Figure 2. Change in Employment by Worker Income³



Along with a decline in jobs in the region, a record number of individuals are leaving the labor force. In fact, as of October 2020, the number of people in the labor force was 9.0% lower than the four-year historical average. Compared to October in 2019, there are 10.4% fewer people in the North Central Coast region actively working or looking for work (Figure 3). Similar to what was seen in the aftermath of the Great Recession, high unemployment rates and struggles to find work have led about 1 in 10 workers to leave the workforce altogether. Without a strong recovery, these workers may not return.

Figure 3. Labor Force Participation (2016 – October 2020)⁴



³ "The Economic Impacts of COVID-19: Evidence from a New Public Database Built Using Private Sector Data", by Raj Chetty, John Friedman, Nathaniel Hendren, Michael Stepner, and the Opportunity Insights Team. November 2020. Available at: https://opportunityinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/tracker_paper.pdf

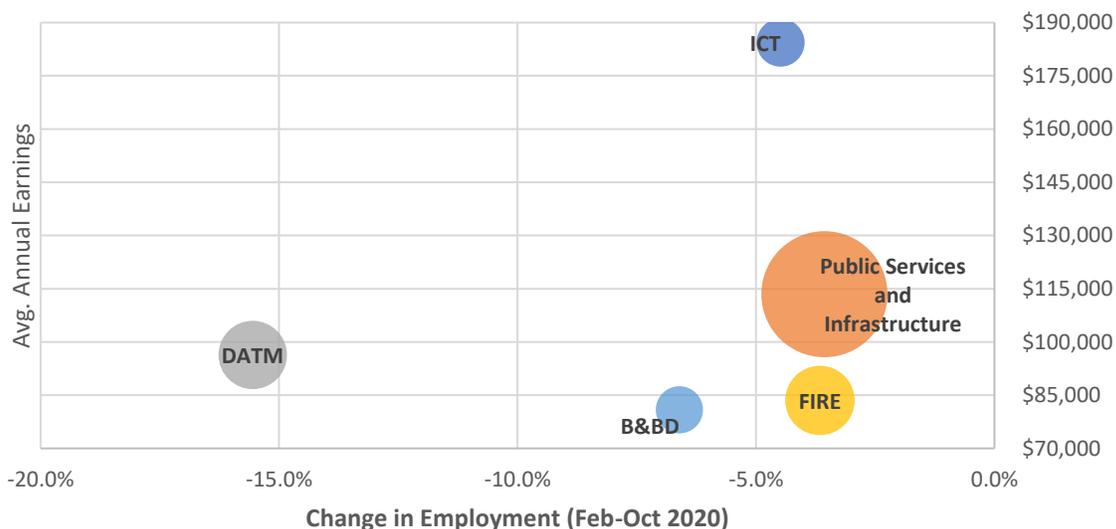
⁴ Unemployment Rate and Labor Force Data Table. State of California Employment Development Department. Extracted December 10, 2020.

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

BW Research developed a model to provide region-specific estimates of the labor market to better understand the industry-specific changes. These estimates, produced using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and local unemployment claims, showcase the disparate effects the Pandemic has had on regional labor markets. This analysis also provides insight into the industry clusters that may recover quickest as COVID-19 cases begin to wane.

An examination of industry clusters reveals that industry-specific employment losses are likely a driving force behind the pandemic's inequal employee-level impacts. Some of the lowest-earning industry clusters have seen the greatest negative impacts higher-earning industry clusters have seen more moderate declines in employment. Figure 4 highlights this phenomenon, where four of the five industry clusters with the highest average earnings have seen employment decrease by 7% or less.

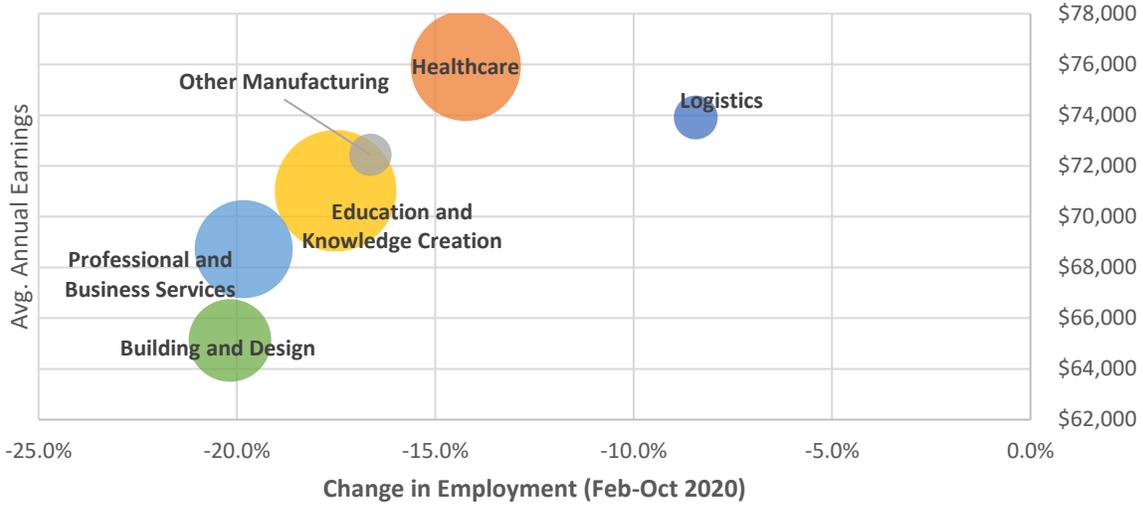
Figure 4. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects on High-Earning Industry Clusters (February-October 2020)



*Size of Bubble Reflects Absolute Change in Industry Employment

Mid-earning industry clusters have seen more severe changes in employment, with four of the six clusters declining by more than 15% between February and October of 2020 (Figure 5). Decreases in Healthcare employment are attributable to a decline in elective surgeries and personal care aides and assistants. The North Central Coast RPU Slingshot 4.0 RPI seeks to work with regional employers, economic development, and education providers to get a better understanding of how the Healthcare industry can better be supported through economic and workforce development activities.

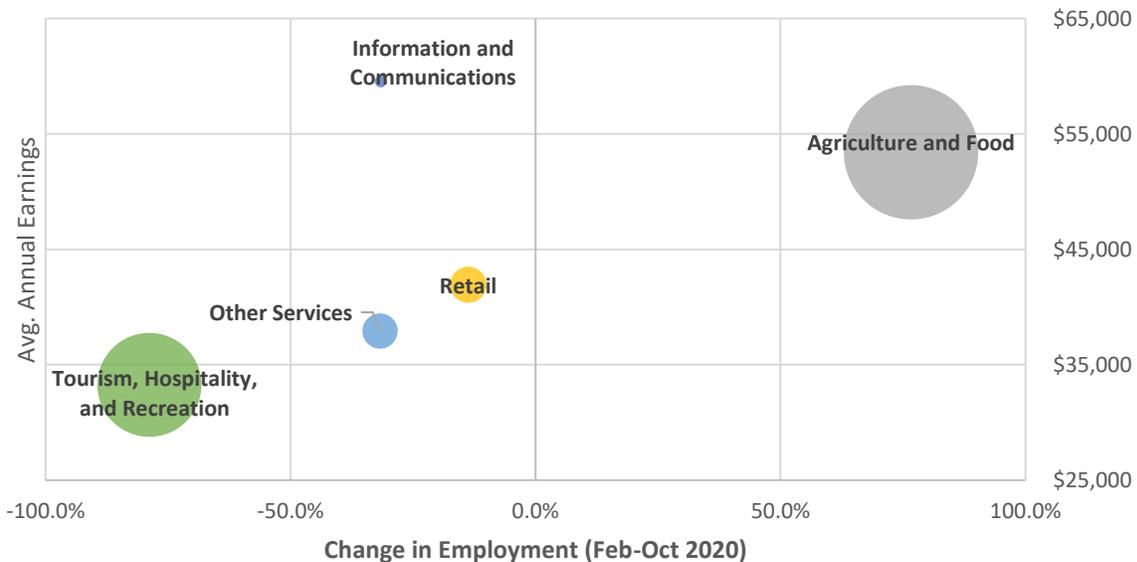
Figure 5. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects on Mid-Earning Industry Clusters (February-October 2020)



*Size of Bubble Reflects Absolute Change in Industry Employment

The industry clusters with the lowest average earnings are also some of the industries with the greatest swings in employment. Between February and October 2020, jobs in Tourism, Hospitality, and Recreation have decreased by approximately 80%. Conversely, the 77% increase in Agriculture and Food jobs is primarily driven by seasonal effects (Figure 6). Small businesses involved in serving food and beverages have been particularly hard.

Figure 6. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects on Low-Earning Industry Clusters (February-October 2020)

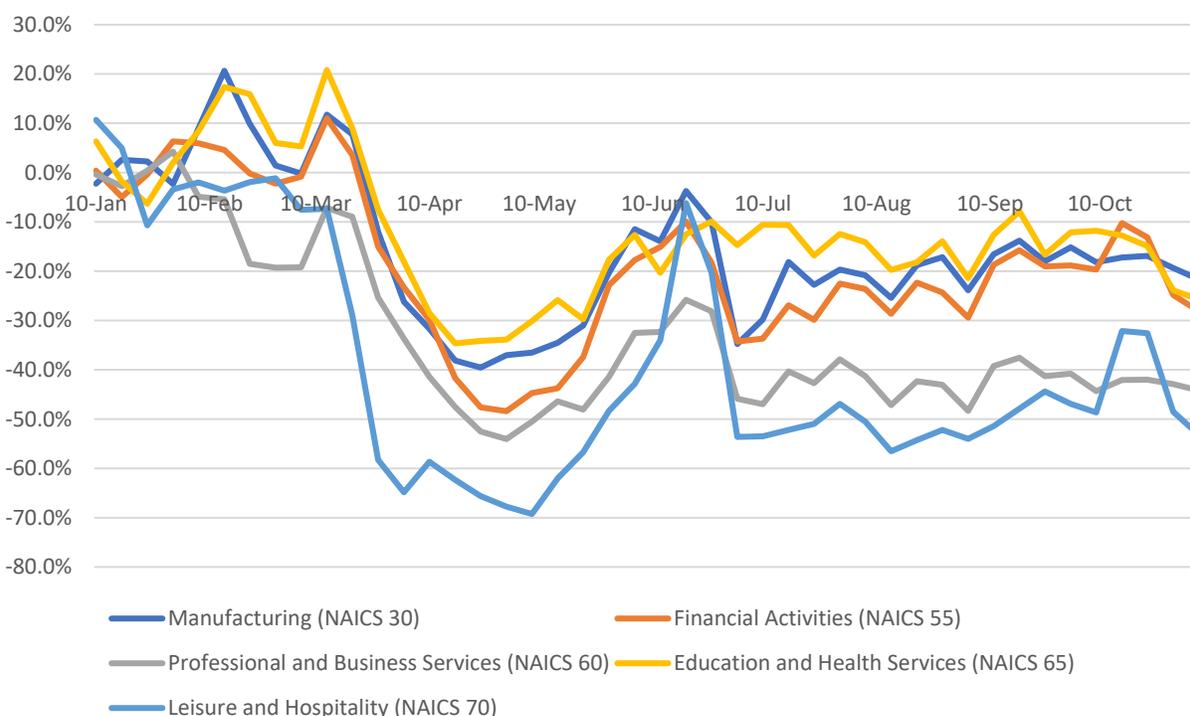


*Size of Bubble Reflects Absolute Change in Industry Employment

NEW JOBS AND ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

As employment in the North Central Coast region has fallen, statewide online job postings have slowed as well. Job postings data gathered from Opportunity Insights and Burning Glass reveals that different sectors of the economy have recovered at different paces. Statewide job postings in industries like Manufacturing, Financial Activities, and Education and Health Services have seen modest recoveries, though there were 20%-30% fewer postings in early November 2020 than in pre-pandemic January 2020. Job postings in Professional and Business Services, as well as Leisure and Hospitality, have suffered a more stagnant recovery, with jobs postings down by 44% and 53%, respectively (Figure 7). High unemployment and depressed hiring suggest prolonged hardship, particularly for lower-income workers in these industries.

Figure 7. Statewide Job Postings⁵

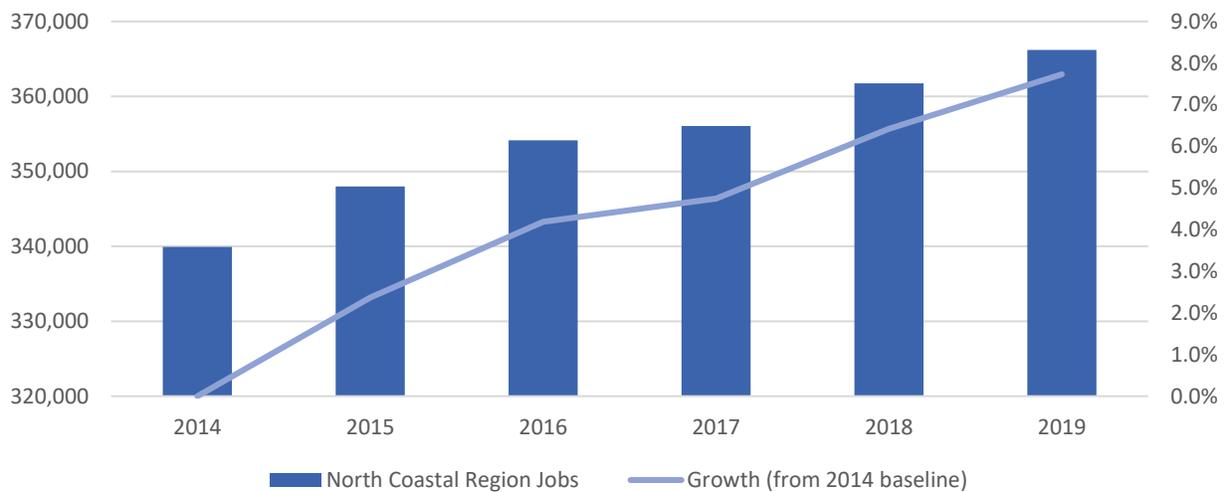


While the COVID-19 pandemic has had unparalleled impacts on the economy, considering the state of the economy before the pandemic is useful in considering what the recovery may look like and provide some guidance on how local policies can best leverage existing economic strengths.

⁵ Opportunity Insights “Tracking the Recovery”

Before COVID-19, the North Central Coast region saw a steady rise in employment between 2014 and 2019. More than 26,000 jobs were added during this time, amounting to a 7.7% increase in employment (Figure 8).

Figure 8. North Central Coast Region Employment (2014-2019)⁶



Race and Ethnicity

Two-thirds (67%) of the population in the North Central Coast region identifies as White, while half (50%) identify as Hispanic or Latino.⁷ More than one in five (22%) residents identify as some other race, including American Indian and Alaskan Natives or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (Figure 9). Those who identify as some other race have been the fastest-growing demographic in the region, nearly doubling as a proportion of the North Central Coast region population between 2013 and 2018 (Figure 10).

⁶ Emsi 2020.3

⁷ Note: The Census Bureau asks first about race (which excludes Hispanic or Latino) and then asks about ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino, or not). Thus, a respondent may identify as both White and Hispanic or Latino.

Figure 9. Race and Ethnicity of North Central Coast Region Population (2018)⁸

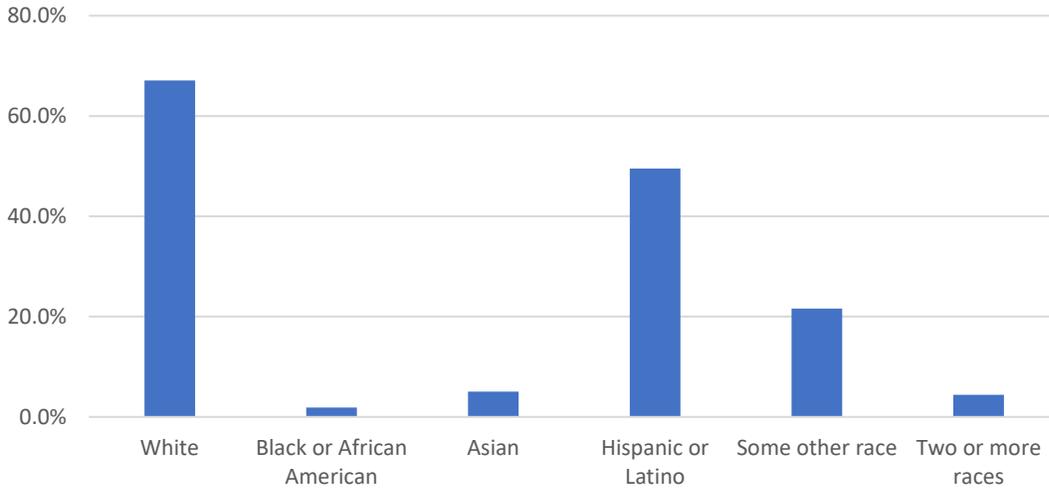
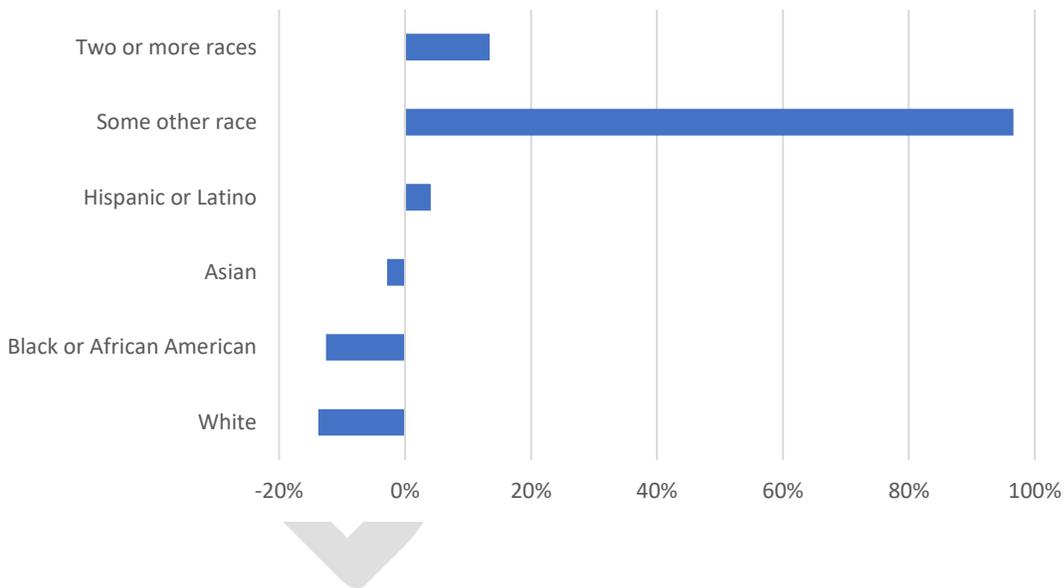


Figure 10. Change in Race and Ethnicity of North Central Coast Region Population (2013-18)⁹



Educational Attainment

About four in ten (42%) of North Central Coast region residents have attained at most a high school diploma or equivalent. Three in ten (30%) have a Bachelor’s degree or higher (Figure 11). Examining educational attainment by race reveals that White residents are twice as likely to have a Bachelor’s degree or higher than Black or African American residents and four times as likely as Hispanic or Latino residents (Figure 12). The North Central Coast RPU acknowledges

⁸ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.

⁹ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.

that remediating educational disparities between residents of different racial and ethnic backgrounds is crucial to improving career opportunities for all. The RPU will continue to work with regional K-12 and adult education providers to address these disparities.

Figure 11. Educational Attainment (Population Ages 25+) (2018)¹⁰

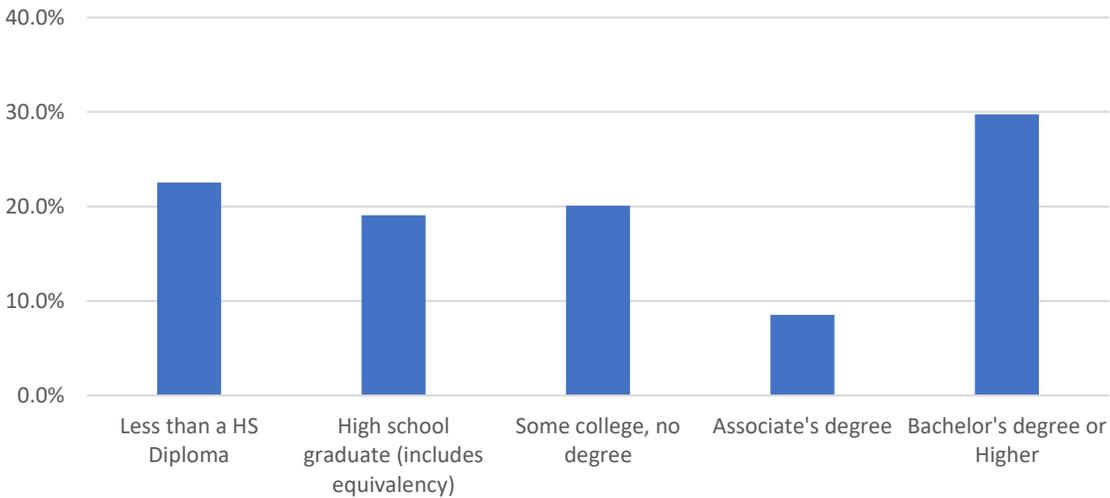
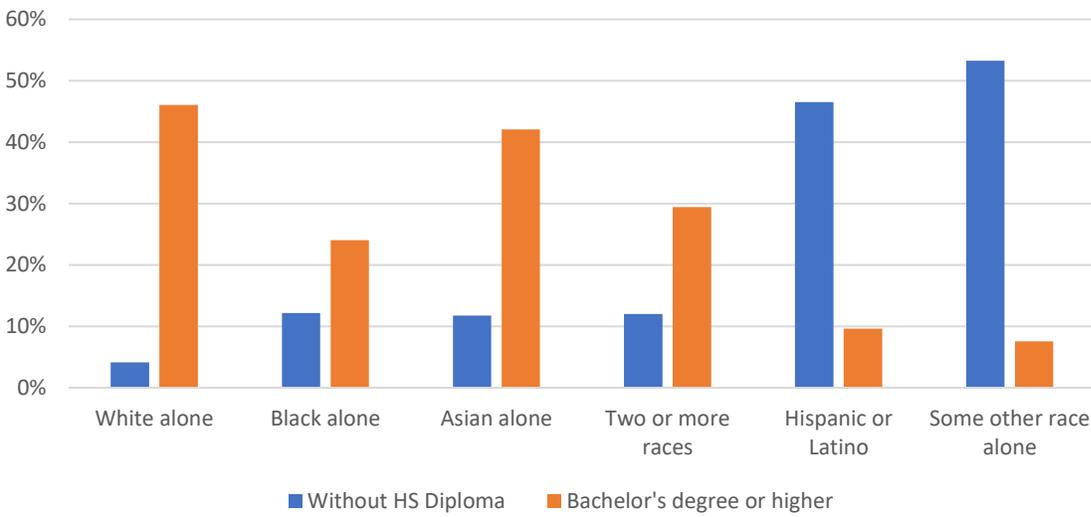


Figure 12 Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity (Population Ages 25+) (2018)¹¹



¹⁰ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.

¹¹ American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.

Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment

The North Central Coast RPU frequently catalyzes conversations between regional employers and regional education providers. The RPU knows that direct connections and communications between the supply and demand side of the talent economy can alleviate inefficiencies and increase the effectiveness of education and training programs available. Besides serving as the connector between these two groups, the RPU works to sponsor events like career fairs to help students get face—or screen time—with regional employers.

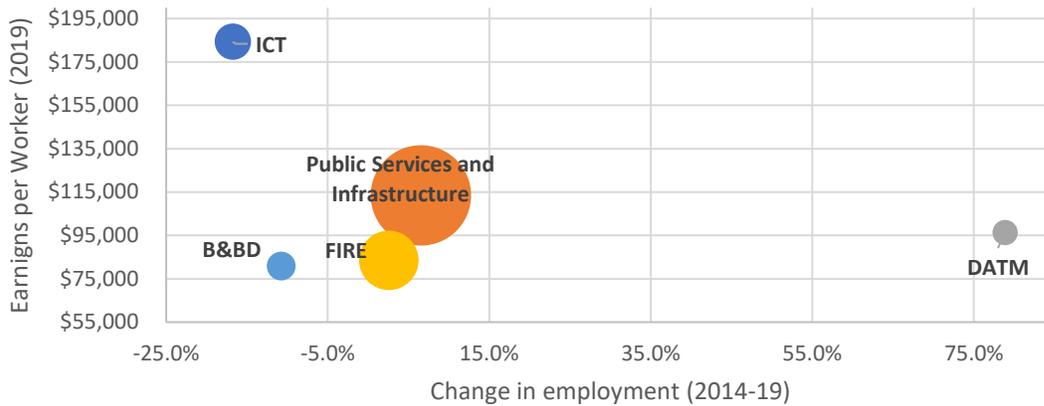
Focusing on opportunities that will provide workers with sustainable-wages and upward career mobility in established and growing sectors in the region is a top priority of the RPU. The RPU also recognizes that connecting job-seekers and High Road employers will play a crucial role in the North Central Coast Region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This section of the Regional Plan identifies key industry clusters and sustainable-wage occupational pathways within those industry clusters. This data will serve as guidance for the RPU and partners in the region.

Regional Industry Clusters

Industry clusters are important because they provide a coherent picture of the local economy and opportunities for development or growth. Industry clusters can also have multiplier effects, as firms within clusters attract similar workforces, attracting more employers and creating a feedback loop that strengthens the local labor market. Focusing on specific industry clusters allows the RPU and other workforce development stakeholders to leverage the region's economic comparative advantages and develop robust education and training programs to support a qualified workforce. The North Central Coast RPU uses the data below to help inform, develop, and revise programs and initiatives.

Two of the five highest-earning industry clusters declined in size between 2014 and 2019. Figure 13 highlights the five highest-earning industry clusters in the North Central Coast region where workers in these clusters earn between \$83,500 and \$184,400 per year (including benefits) on average. These high-earning clusters, including Biotechnology and Biomedical Devices, Information and Communications Technology (ICT), and Finance, Insurance, Banking, and Real Estate (FIRE) often require highly educated and technologically-skilled workers.

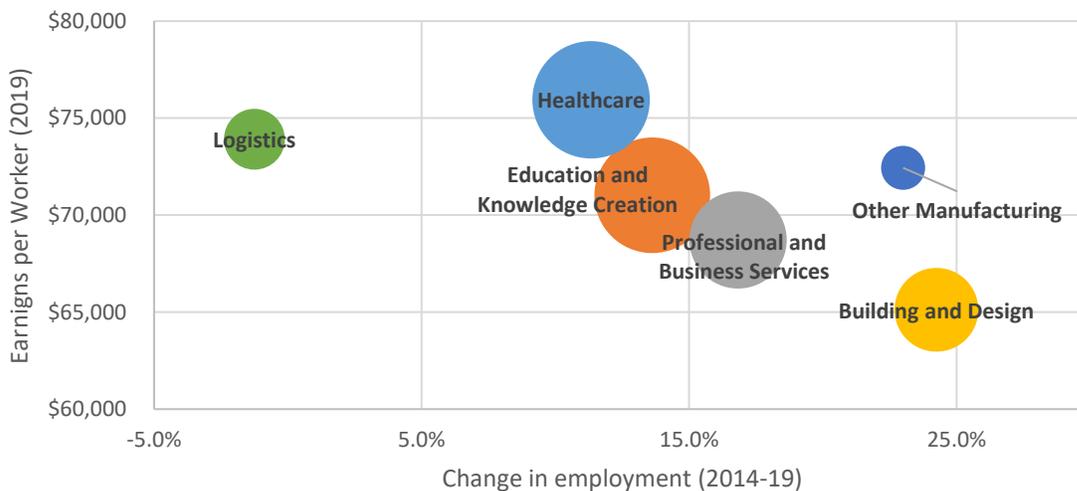
Figure 13. Highest-Earning Industry Clusters in North Central Coast Region¹²



*Size of Bubble Reflects Relative Number Employed in Industry

Mid-earning industry clusters saw strong growth between 2014 and 2019. Of the six industry clusters with average annual earnings between \$76,000 and \$65,000 per year, Logistics is the only industry cluster that declined in employment between 2014 and 2019. The highest growth industry clusters were Building and Design and Other Manufacturing, which includes the production of durable goods and materials (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Mid-Earning Industry Clusters in North Central Coast Region¹³



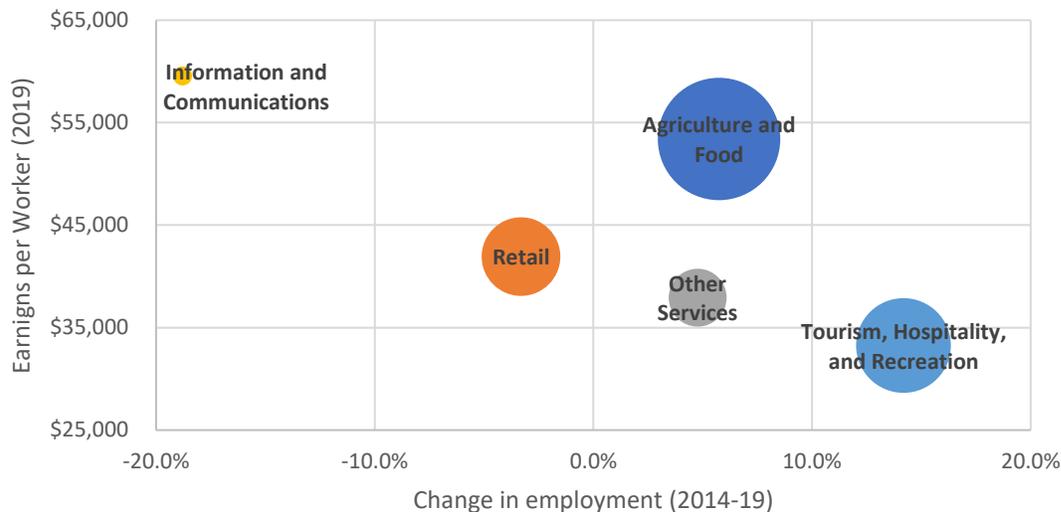
*Size of Bubble Reflects Relative Number Employed in Industry

¹² Emsi 2020.3

¹³ Emsi 2020.3

Workers in the five lowest-earning industry clusters in the North Central Coast region earn an average of \$33,000 to \$60,000 annually. Aside from Tourism, Hospitality, and Recreation, which grew by 14% between 2014 and 2019, these industry clusters saw moderate and even negative growth before the pandemic (Figure 15). Importantly, these industry clusters have also been among the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 15. Lowest-Earning Industry Clusters in North Central Coast Region¹⁴



*Size of Bubble Reflects Relative Number Employed in Industry

Career Pathways and Opportunities

While the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped national and regional economies, there remain several pathways and opportunities in resilient industries and occupations for workers entering, re-entering, or advancing in the workforce. The following analysis highlights some of the key occupations and career pathways within key industries selected for their pre-pandemic growth, wages, resilience, and upward mobility.

These pathways highlight two of the RPU’s target industry clusters (Healthcare and Building and Design) along with two other key industry clusters (Finance, Insurance, Banking, and Real Estate and Professional and Business Services). This section also includes two growth industry clusters with relatively small footprints in the region but have exhibited strong recent growth and present opportunity for development in the future. These industries were selected for their relatively high average earnings, and entry-level roles that typically provide living wages and strong potential for upward mobility.

¹⁴ Emsi 2020.3

HEALTHCARE

The Healthcare industry cluster includes industries and firms that provide medical diagnoses and treatment and includes allied health roles. Table 1 highlights a few key pathways within healthcare that offer family-sustaining wages and upward mobility. Community colleges and other training institutions in the North Central Coast region offer a range of healthcare opportunities to students. Healthcare is also a central focus of the Slingshot 4.0 RPI in the North Central Coast region. The Slingshot 4.0 RPI plans to develop a region-wide Healthcare strategy with industry champions from each local region to develop benchmarks and tracking systems to better monitor the progress of Healthcare-related employment initiatives. This effort will also include a survey of the professional development training programs available within the region. Table 8 on page 24 provides greater detail into regional openings and completions for top occupations within healthcare.

Number of Jobs in North Central Coast Region: 36,900

Table 1. Healthcare Career Pathways ¹⁵

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Patient Services <i>This segment includes workers who attend and provide medical care to patients</i>	<u>Certified Nurse Assistant CNA</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$18.80 Typical Education: Postsecondary nondegree award	<u>Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$29.35	<u>Registered Nurse</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$66.85 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Medical Administration <i>This segment includes activities centered around the administration of healthcare activities</i>	<u>Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistant</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$21.25 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	<u>Health Technologists and Technicians</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$26.57	<u>Administrative Services and Facilities Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$42.89 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

¹⁵ EMSI 2020.3

Diagnostic Services <i>This segment works to find and diagnose the root causes of medical ailments</i>	<u>Medical Assistants</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$19.25 Typical Education: Postsecondary nondegree award	<u>Radiological Technologists and Technicians</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$51.74	<u>Physician's Assistant</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$71.99 Typical Education: Master's degree
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BUILDING & DESIGN

The Building & Design industry cluster consists of firms and industries that design, construct, and repair buildings and infrastructure. Table 2 below highlights three career pathways that offer accessible entry-points, living wages, and upward mobility. Education and training providers around the North Central Coast region offer a range of programs to help students prepare for careers in Building and Design fields. Table 7 on page 22 highlights regional completions and annual openings for key occupations within the industry cluster. The RPU's also facilitate a pre-apprenticeship program which gives participants relevant hands-on experience and OSHA and first-aid certifications.

Number of Jobs in North Central Coast Region: 14,600

Table 2. Building and Design Career Pathways¹⁶

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Design and Pre-Construction <i>This segment includes the drafting, designing, and planning stages of the construction process</i>	<u>Architectural and Civil Drafters</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$31.27 Typical Education: Associate's degree	<u>Project Management Specialists</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$32.71	<u>Civil Engineer</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$53.56 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Construction <i>This segment includes the foundation work, wiring, and building process</i>	<u>Construction Laborers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$22.34 Typical Education: No formal education credential	<u>Electrician</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$31.03	<u>Construction Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$51.74 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

¹⁶ EMSI 2020.3

Maintenance & Operations <i>This segment includes maintenance, repair, and operational activities required to maintain facilities and infrastructure</i>	<u>General Maintenance and Repair Workers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$21.66 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	<u>First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$36.01	<u>General and Operations Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$51.91 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
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PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Firms in Professional and Business Services industries provide a range of services, including legal, accounting, landscaping, consulting, and other specialty services. Table 3 provides a few examples of career pathways within the Professional and Business Services industry cluster. These pathways offer accessible entry-points, living wages, and strong opportunities for wage growth and upward mobility.

Number of Jobs in North Central Coast Region: 21,000

Table 3. Professional and Business Services Career Pathways ¹⁷

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Legal <i>This segment includes careers that provide legal services to individuals and organizations</i>	<u>Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$21.44 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	<u>Paralegals and Legal Assistants</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$24.80	<u>Lawyers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$66.75 Typical Education: Doctoral or professional degree

¹⁷ EMSI 2020.3

Administrative

This segment includes the support and administrative services provided to a wide range of companies

Billing and Posting Clerk

Median Hourly Earnings: \$22.34

Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent

Project Management Specialist

Median Hourly Earnings: \$32.71

General and Operations Managers

Median Hourly Earnings: \$51.91

Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

Accounting

This segment includes accounting, bookkeeping, and auditing services

Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks

Median Hourly Earnings: \$23.56

Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent

Project Management Specialist

Median Hourly Earnings: \$32.71

Accountants and Auditors

Median Hourly Earnings: \$37.14

Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

FINANCE, INSURANCE, BANKING, AND REAL ESTATE (FIRE)

The Finance, Insurance, Banking, and Real Estate industry cluster includes industries and firms that specialize in financial management and transactions, insurance and actuarial activities, and real estate transactions. Table 4 highlights several career pathways across a range of industries within the cluster. Each of these pathways has entry-points that are accessible to high school or community college graduates, offer living wages, and have opportunities for career progression and advancement.

Number of Jobs in North Central Coast Region: 8,200

Table 4. Finance, Banking, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE) Career Pathways ¹⁸

Entry-Level**Mid-Level****Senior Level**

¹⁸ EMSI 2020.3

<p>Banking <i>This segment includes the staff that work at banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions available to the public</i></p>	<p><u>Tellers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$16.12 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent</p>	<p><u>Loan Officer</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$26.20</p>	<p><u>General and Operations Manager</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$51.91 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree</p>
<p>Real Estate <i>This segment includes activities centered around real estate transactions</i></p>	<p><u>Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$34.52 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent</p>	<p><u>Real Estate Sales Agent</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$30.83</p>	<p><u>Real Estate Brokers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$64.26 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent</p>
<p>Insurance <i>This segment includes roles within the insurance industry</i></p>	<p><u>Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$21.41 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent</p>	<p><u>Insurance Sales Agents</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$19.79</p>	<p><u>Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$39.24 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree</p>

Growth Industries and Pathways

The following industry clusters and career pathways are highlighted because they currently employ a relatively small share of the workforce, but their recent growth, wages, and innovative fields make these industry clusters potential growth opportunities for the region. While opportunities in these industries may presently be fewer and further between, the RPU monitors employers and stakeholders in these industries, prepared to offer support in training and preparing a workforce to meet any rising demand.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

While the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) industry cluster has seen an overall employment decline in recent years, specific industries within the cluster have seen strong growth and offer opportunities for niche specialization. The growth in ICT has primarily

been driven by custom computer programming and services, though there has also been some growth within manufacturing of specialized audio, video, and broadcasting equipment.

Number of Jobs in North Central Coast Region: 3,200

Table 5. Information and Communication Technologies Career Pathways¹⁹

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Computer Systems <i>This sector includes the design, testing, creation, and support for various computer systems.</i>	<u>Computer User Support Specialists</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$29.68 Typical Education: Some college, no degree	<u>Web Developers and Digital Interface Designers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$42.36	<u>Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$52.34 Typical Education: Bachelor's Degree
Sales <i>This segment includes the sales and support services provided to the computer service providers</i>	<u>Customer Service Representatives</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$18.87 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	<u>Sales Representatives of Services</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$25.10	<u>Sales Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$44.72 Typical Education: Bachelor's Degree

BIOTECHNOLOGY AND BIOMEDICAL DEVICES

With just over 2,000 workers in the Biotechnology and Biomedical Devices (B&BD) industry cluster, this cluster is small but shows promising areas of growth and specialization. Between 2014 and 2019, industries like Drugs and Druggists' Sundries Merchant Wholesalers, Medicinal and Botanical Manufacturing, and Medical Laboratories have seen notable growth. The growing cannabis sector is likely a driving force behind some of these industries.

Number of Jobs in North Central Coast Region: 2,100

Table 6. Biotechnology and Biomedical Devices Career Pathways²⁰

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
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¹⁹ EMSI 2020.3

²⁰ EMSI 2020.3

Operations <i>This sector includes the day-to-day management of operations</i>	<u>Shipping, Receiving, and Inventory Clerks</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$17.87 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	<u>Business Operations Specialist</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$32.71	<u>General and Operations Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$51.91 Typical Education: High School Diploma
Sales <i>This segment includes the sales and support services provided to the manufacturers</i>	<u>Customer Service Representatives</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$18.87 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	<u>Sales Representatives</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$31.74	<u>Sales Managers</u> Median Hourly Earnings: \$52.56 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

Target Industry Occupational Gap Analysis

Examining the pipeline of regionally-developed talent and comparing it to the regional demand for respective occupations is a useful method for gauging the region's ability to produce and develop talent. The RPU will work with regional employers in these industry clusters to verify and remediate any talent gaps.

A review of the 20 most common occupations among the Building and Design industry cluster reveals that several occupations are likely under-supplied by regionally-developed talent. Table 7 highlights that there are five annual openings for Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks for every relevant regional completion. Other occupations, such as Construction Laborers, may not require specific training programs, but folks who complete those programs may have an advantage in the job market relative to those who do not.

Table 7. Regional Supply and Demand for 20 Most Common Building and Design Occupations

SOC Code	Description	2019 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	Regional Completions²¹	Annual Openings per Completion
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	5,879	1,054	0	-
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,585	898	0	-

²¹ Regional completions and openings are matched by a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) and Standard Occupation Code (SOC) crosswalk developed by the Department of Education. Regional completions are aggregated and tabulated by EMSI.

43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,947	532	76	7.0
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	3,834	371	997	0.4
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	3,631	492	94	5.2
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,250	284	0	-
47-2031	Carpenters	1,804	240	0	-
47-2061	Construction Laborers	1,532	225	18	12.5
41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	1,352	234	4	58.5
47-2111	Electricians	1,039	163	36	4.5
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	684	91	0	-
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	652	118	0	-
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	639	87	124	0.7
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	586	99	0	-
47-2081	Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	440	74	0	-
13-1051	Cost Estimators	435	59	972	0.1
11-9021	Construction Managers	409	43	949	0.0
47-2181	Roofers	378	55	0	-
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	307	46	0	-
47-2161	Plasterers and Stucco Masons	295	48	18	2.6

Healthcare is another target industry cluster with several occupations that may be under-supplied by regionally-developed talent. For example, there are more than eight openings for every regional completion for programs applicable to Nursing Assistants, and there are nearly four openings annually for every Dental Assistant completion (Table 8). Since not all training programs are included in this table, and regional completions vary significantly year over year—particularly when considering the impacts of the pandemic on enrollments—it will be important to gather more detailed data from training and education providers themselves to accurately identify challenges and opportunities.

The Healthcare industry cluster is also the primary industry cluster identified in the North Central Coast Region’s Slingshot 4.0 RPI. The RPI includes a thorough review of the relevant training and education programs available throughout the region. This review will help better illuminate any gaps and opportunities for existing or new Healthcare programming. The 4.0 RPI also includes greater partnership and communication with regional education, economic development, and industry partners. This enhanced communication will ensure that all stakeholders are working together to get workers trained and into open healthcare positions.

Table 8. Regional Supply and Demand for 20 Most Common Healthcare Occupations

SOC Code	Description	2019 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	Regional Completions	Annual Openings per Completion
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	8,875	1,911	48	39.8
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	5,585	898	-	-
29-1141	Registered Nurses	4,336	313	217	1.4
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	3,947	532	76	7.0
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	3,033	432	-	-
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	2,370	269	-	-
31-9092	Medical Assistants	1,802	254	371	0.7
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	1,782	277	-	-
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	1,328	201	25	8.1
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	1,274	178	52	3.4
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	1,233	180	189	1.0
31-9091	Dental Assistants	972	126	33	3.8
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	897	88	61	1.4
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	764	100	94	1.1
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	733	94	-	-
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	681	91	193	0.5
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	661	63	18	3.5
29-1228	Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	582	61	15	4.0
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	515	66	1,261	0.1
29-1123	Physical Therapists	372	32	-	-

Sectoral Strategic Planning and Development

The North Central Coast region is a newly formed RPU that is working to increase collaboration and cooperation across new members, partners, and organizations. Despite its nascency, the region already has a few initiatives and collaborations. One such initiative is a pre-apprenticeship program that serves as an entry point into a range of Building and Design careers. There are also several opportunities for residents of one county to participate in out-of-county programs and several local initiatives geared towards target industry clusters.

While the RPU is still largely in the preliminary planning and organization stage, the RPU and local leadership have a common set of goals around driving sector-specific initiatives in in-demand industries. The first goal for the RPU is to assess programs and opportunities available at the local level. Once the extent of local programs in existence is known, the RPU aims to

identify opportunities for expanding well-performing local programs into region-wide offerings. Additionally, there is an opportunity for this process to reveal gaps in regional opportunities and addressing any gaps or deficiencies.

Another goal of the North Central Coast RPU is to continue to understand the region in the context of the surrounding environment and the larger state. The North Central Coast region's proximity to the Bay Area—a central powerhouse of economic and innovation activity in the state and the country—is not unnoticed. The North Central Coast RPU continues to work with the Bay Area Community College Consortium to best understand the talent needs of the broader part of the state.

The North Central Coast RPU is also looking to set up a joint venture between the four community colleges in the region (Cabrillo College, Gavilan College, Hartnell College, and Monterey Peninsula College). This joint venture aims to develop educational programs together, work with employers on a regional and local scale, and enhance programs in key industry clusters and in-demand occupations across the region. Ultimately, this joint venture would facilitate cooperation and collaboration across community colleges, removing any geographical or programmatic territorial concerns.

Enabling Upward Mobility for All Californians

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare and exacerbated existing inequalities. In a region like the North Central Coast region with high costs of living and a high proportion of lower-skill and lower-wage workers, job quality and upward mobility have elevated importance. Improving job quality and the ability for upward career progression for those in entry-level roles will be essential determinants of the North Central Coast region's recovery. This section of the Regional Plan focuses on how the North Central Coast region can improve the economic security for its residents through support and collaboration with High Road employers and improving accessibility to High Road jobs for historically underserved populations.

Throughout this report, several industry clusters and career pathways were highlighted. The North Central Coast RPU prioritizes training programs within these select industry clusters and career pathways so that the result of the programs is often a High Road job, regardless of the employer. In cases where a High Road job may not be a typical outcome for that occupation, the RPU aims to work specifically with employers who support the tenets of High Road employment; living wages, benefits, good working conditions, and adequate hours with predictable scheduling.

[High Road Workforce System and Job Quality](#)

Job quality is an important measure of a region's labor market. A region may have a lot of jobs, but if most of those jobs pay low wages and require relatively little skill and education, the regional workforce and economy is likely to suffer. To determine job quality, the research team

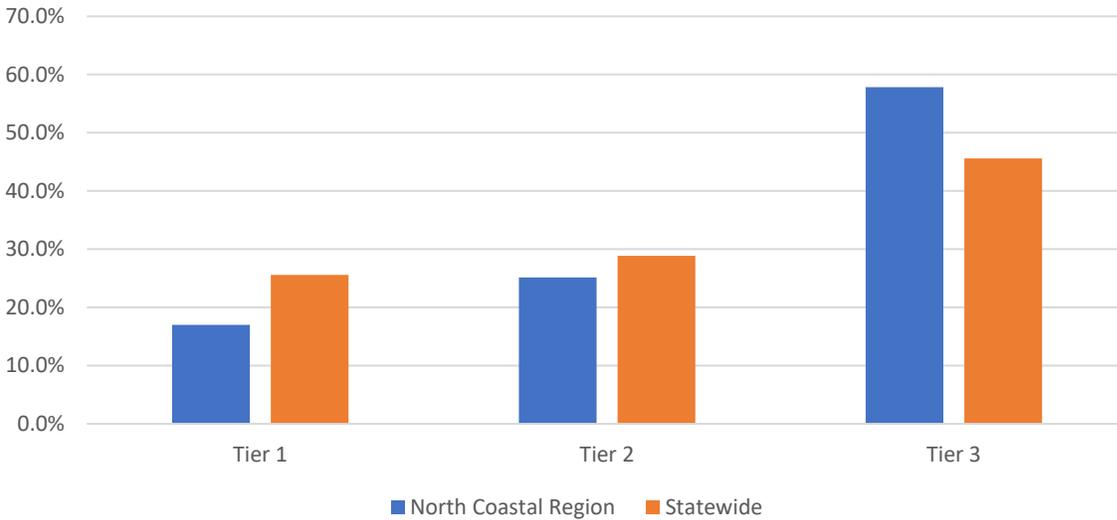
examined wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Occupational Employment Statistics (OES). Occupations within 3-digit NAICS industries were assigned tiers based on median annual earnings. Looking at occupations within specific industries allows for differentiation between a medical equipment sales representative and a sales representative of office products. Since wages are strongly correlated with a job’s skill, education, and experience requirements, wages provide an intuitive metric to assess job quality.

Table 9. Job Quality Definitions

Tier 1 Occupations	Tier 2 Occupations	Tier 3 Occupations
<p>Tier 1 occupations are typically the highest-paying, highest-skilled occupations in the economy. This occupational category includes positions such as managers (e.g., Chief Executives and Sales Managers), professional positions (e.g., Lawyers and Physicians), and highly skilled technology occupations, such as scientists, engineers, computer programmers, and software developers.</p>	<p>Tier 2 occupations are typically the middle-skill, middle-wage occupations. This occupational category includes positions such as technicians, teachers, office and administrative positions (e.g., Accounting Clerks and Secretaries), and manufacturing, operations, and production positions (e.g., Assemblers, Electricians, and Machinists).</p>	<p>Tier 3 occupations are typically the lowest-paying, lowest-skilled occupations that have historically provided the largest portion of employment in the region. These occupations include positions such as security guards, foodservice and retail positions, building and grounds cleaning positions (e.g., Janitors), and personal care positions (e.g., Home Health Aides and Child Care Workers).</p>

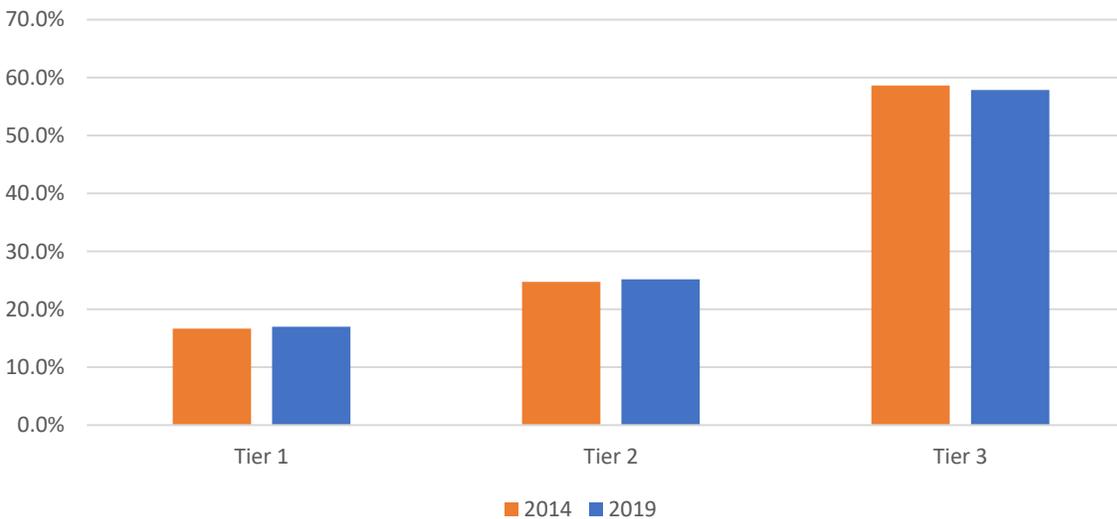
Job quality in the North Central Coast region is lower than the statewide average. The region has 27% more lower-skill, lower-paying Tier 3 jobs than the statewide average. More than half (58%) of all jobs in the region are Tier 3. The North Central Coast region also has 34% fewer higher-skill, higher-paying Tier 1 jobs (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Job Quality (2019)²²



Between 2014 and 2019, the North Central Coast region saw a slight increase in job quality. The share of higher-skill, higher-paying Tier 1 and Tier 2 jobs increased as a proportion of the overall labor market while the share of lower-skill, lower-paying Tier 3 jobs declined (Figure 17). The growth in job quality in the North Central Coast region is similar to that seen statewide.

Figure 17. Change in Job Quality (2014-2019)²³



²² Emsi 2020.3

²³ Emsi 2020.3

Job Volatility

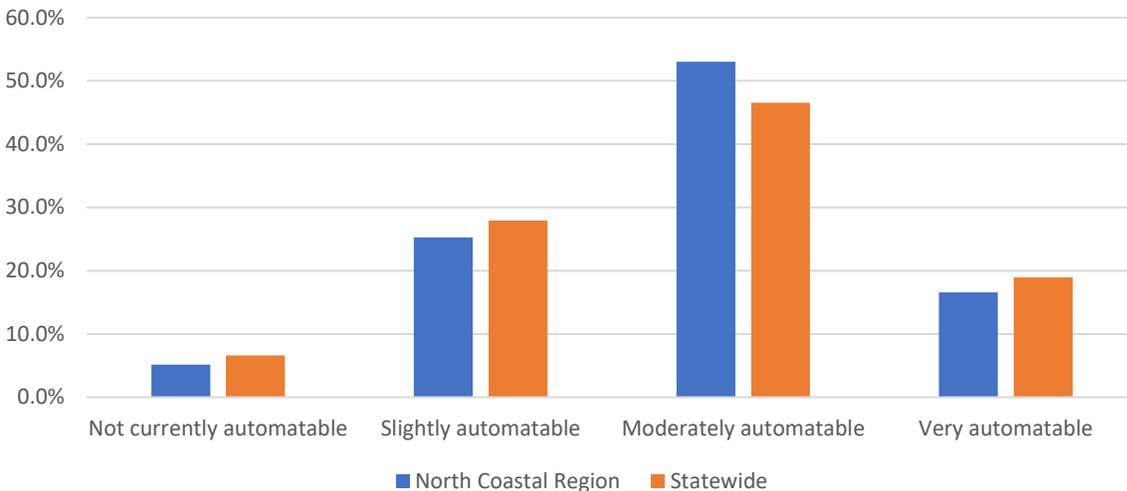
The research team developed a job volatility index that ranks occupations based on the share of their skills and abilities that can be replaced by modern technology. To do this, the research team examined O*NET data that contains occupation-level survey data on 26 different skills. These skills were examined on their relative importance to the job and their complexity. The scores for each of these skills were then aggregated within each occupation, resulting in a metric that demonstrates the relative risk an occupation has of change due to technological advancement.

Tier 1 Automation Volatility	Tier 2 Automation Volatility	Tier 3 Automation Volatility	Tier 4 Automation Volatility
<p>Tier 1 occupations have a very low share of activities that can be replaced or heavily augmented by technology within five years. These occupations include Coaches and Scouts, Surgeons, and Chief Executives.</p>	<p>Tier 2 occupations have some tasks that can be automated, though automation will likely expand these roles rather than replace them. These occupations include Pest Control Workers, Graphic Designers, and Energy Auditors.</p>	<p>Tier 3 occupations have a moderate share of work that can be replaced by technology. These occupations include Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers, Dishwashers, and Travel Agents.</p>	<p>Tier 4 occupations are the most at risk of automation. A large share of work activities can be replaced or heavily augmented by technology within five years. These occupations include Slaughterers and Meat Packers, and Sewing Machine Operators.</p>

A majority (53%) of occupations in the North Central Coast region fall under the 'Moderately Automatable' category. This category includes Farmworkers and Laborers, Cashiers, and Retail Salespersons. For many of these roles, automation already exists in some capacity; there are self-driving tractors, self-checkouts, and abundant online shopping. While these technologies are unlikely to entirely replace these roles in the near future, they may suppress hiring and wages over time as technologies decline in costs. The North Central Coast region also has a greater share of these workers than the statewide average (Figure 18). A recent survey of employers revealed that many businesses have already adopted or are considering adopting additional automation of tasks or roles within their company. Tracking job volatility due to

automation will become an increasingly important metric as technology advances, and the RPU will consider this metric in future planning.

Figure 18. Occupational Volatility Due to Progressing Technology



The North Central Coast RPU and its local members believe that High Road jobs that offer living wages, benefits, and support the quality of life are an essential component of workforce development. The RPU has worked to enhance the awareness and availability of high-quality jobs and is working to develop strategies, including working with community colleges to drive High Road jobs forward. The RPU strives to support and promote opportunities that lead to high-quality jobs and formalizing these commitments in the future.

To date, the RPU has conducted several research efforts to understand where High Road jobs are and the pathways that provide entryways into these occupations. This knowledge is the first step in prioritizing job quality. The research allows the RPU to work deliberately with employers and community colleges to help fill gaps in training and skills that lead to these High Road jobs.

The North Central Coast RPU is also thinking about job quality in the context of the post-COVID-19 economy. Data, including some of the data in this regional plan, reflect devastating losses among many lower-paid and lower-quality employment opportunities. The RPU sees this disruption as a call to action and an opportunity to help workers transition to entry points among in-demand and higher-quality positions. With research in-hand, the RPU can lead the development and support of specific programs that lead to high-quality jobs.

Survey data from regional employers also suggests that many businesses are looking to re-shore their supply chains, increasingly looking for suppliers within the state and the North Central Coast region. Should this trend continue, the North Central Coast region may see an increase in demand for the production and distribution of raw materials and input goods, bolstering demand for typically well-paying manufacturing and distribution roles. The RPU will continue to monitor the situation and act proactively to ensure there is a workforce that is prepared to meet these new demands.

Equity and Economic Justice

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed some of the existing racial and economic inequalities in the North Central Coast and the broader country. These events have added greater importance to the RPU's role in ensuring access and equal opportunities are available to all interested, regardless of their race, ethnicity, or economic status. The newly formed North Central Coast RPU has prioritized formalizing a policy around equal access to opportunities.

One such initiative is the North Central Coast RPU's Slingshot 4.0 RPI, which is focused on development and better tracking of Healthcare industry education training and outcomes. The RPI also focuses on enhanced communication across stakeholders in the Healthcare industry cluster. The Healthcare industry cluster provides a unique opportunity to provide High Road employment opportunities to North Central Coast residents of all backgrounds. The Healthcare industry cluster in the North Central Coast Region is one of the most-representative industry clusters in the region, with proportions of Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, and Asian workers that are equivalent to the overall workforce. Women are also heavily represented in the Healthcare industry; 75% of Healthcare workers in the North Central Coast Region are women. Thus, Healthcare presents the perfect opportunity for equitable employment that has strong career pathways, earning potential, and upward mobility. Supporting and enhancing the Healthcare industry offers one of the most robust opportunities to advance all of these goals simultaneously.

The RPU relies upon demographic and census data to identify and target outreach efforts to specific populations in need throughout the North Central Coast region. North Central Coast One Stops are intentionally located in areas closest to populations most likely to use them and are the RPU's primary point of contact with in-need populations. This makes One Stops and their work crucial to ensuring programs and opportunities are available to all who seek them. This includes providing services or referring customers to other providers so that an individual with multiple needs can receive supports for each of their needs. The RPU will support the One Stop operators throughout the region to hold regular meetings and communicate openly, sharing best practices, challenges, and partnership opportunities.

The RPU also aims to encourage outreach and support regular meetings between Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), One Stops, and other stakeholders. CBOs and their grassroots-level work within communities are often the RPU's greatest asset in accessing target populations. CBOs also often offer a range of support services to these individuals, who often face multiple employment barriers. Removing all barriers a job seeker has gives them their best chance of success. Removing these barriers also requires cooperation and coordination across several parties, including CBOs, One Stops, educational institutions, and support services like childcare and transportation. The RPU intends to help foster communication and connections between these stakeholders to mitigate barriers and maximize job seekers' chance of completing their program and entering the workforce.

The North Central Coast RPU also continues to support the "Prison to Employment" or "P2E" program, which assists formerly incarcerated individuals in navigating the array of barriers in

the re-entry process. P2E helps formerly incarcerated individuals access support services, earn and learn opportunities, select career pathways, and braided resources. This program is made possible through the collaboration and coordination of dozens of stakeholders. Many of these stakeholders are CBOs and non-profits, such as the Central Coast Goodwill, the 5 Cities Homeless Coalition, Community Solutions, MILPA Collective, and Veteran’s Transition Center, among others. The RPU also worked with several local Departments of Corrections, state agencies, educators, and employer champions. The North Central Coast aims to carry this extensive collaboration into other initiatives around the region going forward.

Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services

This section of the Regional Plan discusses the current state and future aspirations for cooperation and collaboration by regional partners to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of resources and to serve target populations better. As a newly formed region containing parts of old systems, the North Central Coast RPU is in the position to build off collaborative efforts that worked well in the past while also building new systems with new partners.

System Alignment

The North Central Coast RPU has begun discussions around identifying and aligning the priorities of the newly formed RPU. While some of these discussions are around creating a new MOU, cost referrals, and training referrals, the RPU is also discussing opportunities to expand collaboration around joint rapid response and employer engagement. One area of interest is the introduction of a region-wide virtual job fair. All traditional job fairs have been canceled due to public health concerns, but a region-wide virtual job fair has the opportunity to expose residents from all three counties to a wide range of employers who are hiring. The RPU is also working on the update to the regional website to incorporate the new partner to the North Coastal RPU . The regional website provides a list of region-wide services, programs, and initiatives that business and job seekers can access.

While formal details of administrative cost-sharing agreements are still being discussed, the RPU has developed a regional procurement structure for consultants, including a regional RFQ for One Stop operators. The use of the region-wide consultant procurement system has saved the local partners time and effort, eliminating the need to re-procure services for each RPU member. The RPU is also discussing the potential to jointly fund a regional coordinator. The regional coordinator would work to rescale and revamp program monitoring.

Appendix A: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Appendix B: Public Comments Received that Disagree with Regional Plan

Appendix C: Signature Page

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