



**Mayor's Task Force on
Hartford's Future Workforce**

Final Report

February 3, 2003

Contents

Executive Summary	Page 3
Introduction	Page 6
Labor Demand And Supply In The Capital Region	Page 13
The Regional Workforce System	Page 17
Best Practices And Program Models	Page 21
Recommendations	Page 23
Conclusion and Next Steps	Page 32
Attachments	Page 34

Executive Summary

Shortly after assuming office in 2001, Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez, in consultation with member organizations of the Capitol Region Partnership, declared as a priority the implementation of a comprehensive approach to economic, community and workforce development for the City and its surrounding region. The Mayor was particularly concerned with three issues:

- Too many young adult Hartford residents are unable to enter the local workforce successfully and build satisfying, productive and rewarding careers.
- Local employers need a consistent flow of qualified, competent and skilled employees.
- There is no coordinated, integrated and responsive training and education system that is capable of addressing these needs.

Hartford's Court of Common Council unanimously approved the Mayor's resolution to establish a broadly representative task force of community leaders, co-chaired by Hartford Deputy Mayor Veronica Airey-Wilson and Lewis Robinson, a Board Member of the United Way of the Capital Area. The Task Force worked from September – December 2002 and completed its final report for submission to the Mayor and Common Council on January 15, 2003.

The Task Force was charged to develop an action plan to build a well-educated and highly skilled workforce by focusing on 18-24 year olds who are not in school or gainfully employed. Execution of this plan is intended to:

- Afford career growth opportunities for this population;
- Allow existing businesses to grow and remain competitive; and
- Help attract new businesses.

To challenge the Greater Hartford community to action, underscore a seriousness of purpose, and establish a benchmark to measure success, the Task Force embraced an **overarching goal**:

By the year 2005, 92% of Hartford's 18-24 year old population will be actively and effectively engaged in pursuing their educational and career objectives and/or be gainfully employed..

We believe that the 12 recommendations presented in this report constitute a bold call to action. We believe that the Mayor needs a practical implementation plan to follow-through on these recommendations that: describes specific actions to be taken and assigns responsibility and timing; defines anticipated outcomes; and identifies the level and proposed sources of funding and resources required for implementation.

To that end, we believe the Mayor should convene an Implementation Committee of appropriate organizations, led by the Capital Region Workforce Development Board, to:

- Recommend to the Mayor the organization(s) which should be designated to draw up a work plan and implement each of the accepted recommendations.
- Review and approve the proposed implementation plans.
- Report to the Mayor on implementation progress and achievements on a quarterly basis.

Summary of Recommendations

Strategic Focus

1. Promote a dual-customer/sector-based philosophy as the framework to guide the development of program and service. Develop specific, practical standards to define this approach, reflecting national and local best practices and effective program models.
2. Focus career development strategies and resources that are outlined in the Task Force's *Occupations in Demand* and *Possible Career Paths* analyses. Update this information frequently to insure accuracy and timeliness.

Adopt the Task Force's employer-defined *Workplace Competencies* as the standard of entry-level employability in this region for young adults to satisfy in order to be able to pursue rewarding career opportunities.

3. Endorse the five-year strategic plan of the Capital Region Workforce Development Board's Youth Committee as a foundation on which to build specific strategies. Align implementation efforts with and encourage collaboration with the Youth Committee's efforts.

Best Practice Strategies

4. Expand and/or replicate local programs proven effective in addressing those 18-24 year olds who are not yet job-ready.
5. Expand and/or replicate local programs, such as the Hartford Construction Jobs Initiative, that have successfully implemented the sector-based model to move almost job-ready young adults into productive jobs.
6. Create a seven-step program for 18-24 year old Hartford residents assessed as being job-ready to help them plan career paths and support their work-related decision-making. Incorporate an assessment process reflecting the Task Force's *Workplace Competencies* to verify job-readiness for participation in the seven-step program. Use the Task Force's *Occupations in Demand* and *Possible Career Paths* to engage employers in assisting job-ready 18-24 year olds into jobs with career paths.
7. Establish programs that replicate relevant models proven effective elsewhere in addressing individuals who are not yet job-ready
8. Actively engage local employers in the implementation of Task Force recommendations. Develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory of local company-sponsored partnerships with educational institutions and community-based organizations to address workforce needs. Promote the expansion and replication of effective partnership models.

Service Coordination

9. Enhance the capacity of Hartford's CT Works One-Stop Career Center System to play a key role in the delivery of critical services to Hartford's 18-24 year olds.

Program Capacity

10. Conduct a qualitative assessment of local service providers to:
 - Evaluate their ability to implement dual-customer/sector-based strategies;
 - Identify effective programs that can be expanded, replicated or improved to maximize limited public/private resources;
 - Identify gaps; and
 - Propose strategies to fill those gaps.

Provide technical assistance to build community-wide capacity to implement effective dual customer/sector-based efforts.

Advocacy for Results

11. Organize a “community-wide summit” to inform and engage key constituencies, build understanding and support, and align public and private resources behind this broad strategy, including: elected officials; public and private funders; employers; public, non-profit and community-based agencies and service providers; and community leaders.
12. Advocate with state and local public leaders to maximize the effective use of limited resources to achieve career goals for these young adults and meet employer needs.

Introduction

What is the Need?

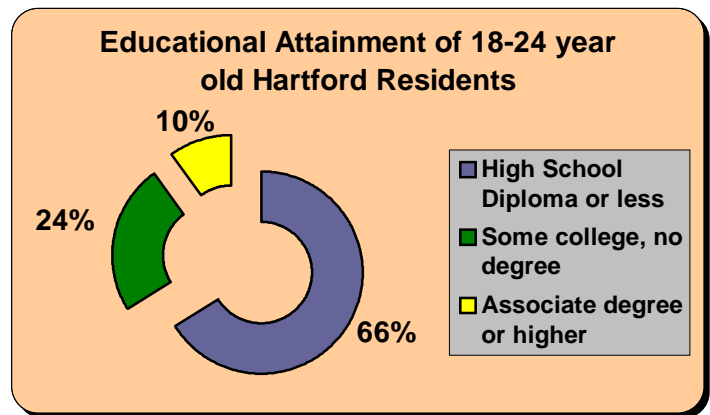
Like any other city, Hartford needs a stable, competitive workforce which responds to employer expectations and emerging markets if it is to be a vibrant community where people want to live, work and raise their families, and where businesses choose to locate. But our capital city faces unique challenges:

Hartford has the highest rate of poverty in the nation for cities with 100,000 or more residents. This poverty disproportionately impacts young people, who represent a higher percentage of the city's population than in surrounding communities.

Unemployment in the city is higher than national and regional figures, at 7.6%. The unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds is higher still, exceeding 14.5%.

Although improved in the last several years, school dropout rates for Hartford students remain high, particularly for young minority males. The cumulative four-year school dropout rate for the city's Class of 2000 was 28.3%, significantly higher than in any of the surrounding communities and in comparable Connecticut and northeastern cities.

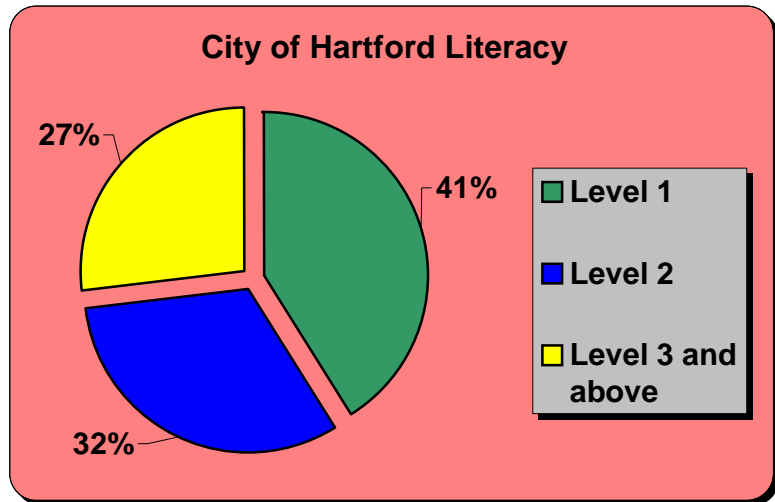
Young adults aged 18-24 represent a significant and growing percentage of the region's workforce. Young adult residents of Hartford aged 18-24 years represent nearly 5% of the regional workforce, but are increasingly unprepared for the rapidly changing demands of the workplace. Of these approximately 15,000 individuals, an estimated two-thirds have no more than a high school diploma, as demonstrated in the chart to the right.



While many young adults live in the city, local job opportunities are increasingly located in suburban communities, and are difficult for Hartford residents to access because of limited transportation options.

Hartford suffers from one of the highest rates of teen pregnancy and parenthood nationally at 21.6%. During their teen years, 2,900 children were born to those that are currently 18-24 years old. The significant number of single-parent households (approximately 2,000 among 18-24 year olds) limits the ability of many young adults to continue their education and pursue career opportunities. The difficulty of finding affordable childcare is a major challenge to their ability to go to work.

The language barrier is a major challenge. Literacy rates in Hartford are low, complicated by the fact that in many Hartford households, English is not the primary language spoken. The number of non-native English speaking young adults in Hartford is increasing. Of the five levels of literacy, approximately 41% of Hartford residents 16 and older read at or below Level 1 literacy (about 1st or 2nd grade reading level). Most employers require reading proficiency at Level 3 (about an 8th grade level).



Significant numbers of the region's 20-24 year olds are leaving the area. Unfortunately, many of those who are departing are the best educated, further reducing the region's economic competitiveness.

It doesn't take an expert to link these conditions with the economic health of the metropolitan area. When people, especially young adults, are well educated and prepared for success in the world of work, everyone wins. Families stabilize, homeownership grows, neighborhoods bloom, businesses flourish, the tax base grows and the region is revitalized.

Despite these challenges, Hartford's 18-24 year olds are a major potential resource. Scores of success stories document that many of these young people contribute creatively and productively to their community, serving as powerful role models. The richness of their diversity -- representing various cultures, languages, nationalities, talents and skills -- are assets that can be developed to strengthen the competitive posture of our city and region.

But how do we develop and sustain a highly qualified and productive workforce? How do individuals, organizations and governments work together to expand economic opportunity for current and future city residents, as well as increase those residents' financial investment in the city, while enhancing the growth and commitment of the local business community?

A Critical Gap

Some may ask, "Aren't we addressing the situation now?" The preceding facts provide the answer. Local employers tell us that young adults must be ready and able to take advantage of opportunities to advance their skills on a continuing basis, and to pursue career paths that can lead to prosperity. They say that for Hartford to thrive, for our local economy to grow in a competitive environment, many more of the City's young adults must achieve this work-ready status. Unfortunately, too many of Hartford's young adults fall short of that objective.

In short, there is a critical **gap between needs and the resources to fill them**. Many local organizations – each with its own resources, accountabilities, mandates and constituencies – bear different levels of responsibility for addressing this situation. However, the scope of the present challenge exceeds the capacities of any one of these organizations. We believe that success in adequately preparing Hartford’s future workforce demands more effective coordination than exists today. It requires an overarching vision to guide all stakeholders, and leadership that will keep everyone’s eyes and efforts focused on a common goal.

Why a Task Force?

Shortly after assuming office in 2001, Hartford Mayor Eddie Perez, in consultation with member organizations of the Capitol Region Partnership, declared as a priority the implementation of a comprehensive approach to economic, community and workforce development for the City. The Mayor was particularly concerned with three issues:

- Too many young adult Hartford residents are unable to enter the local workforce successfully and build satisfying, productive and rewarding careers.
- Local employers need a consistent flow of qualified, competent and skilled employees.
- There is no coordinated, integrated and responsive training and education system that is capable of addressing these needs.

As a result, in May 2002 Hartford’s Court of Common Council unanimously approved the Mayor’s resolution to establish a broadly representative task force of community leaders. Appointed in August, the Mayor’s Task Force on Hartford’s Future Workforce members included:

- Representatives of the City’s Court of Common Council;
- The regional business community and large employers;
- The Hartford Public Schools system;
- Key state government agencies;
- Higher education;
- Community-based organizations;
- Non-profit service providers; and
- Local funding organizations.

This Task Force was co-chaired by Hartford Deputy Mayor Veronica Airey-Wilson and Lewis Robinson, a Board Member of United Way of the Capital Area. Technical assistance and support were provided by three co-sponsoring organizations: Capital Region Workforce Development Board (CRWDB), United Way of the Capital Area (UWCA) and Hartford’s Department of Human Services (DHS), with additional support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation as part of its Making Connections Initiative. See **Attachment A** for a roster of Task Force members and support staff.

What Was Our Purpose?

Our charge was to develop an action plan to build a well-educated and highly skilled workforce by focusing on 18-24 year olds (our target group) who are not in school or gainfully employed.

Execution of this plan will:

- Afford career growth opportunities for this population;
- Allow existing businesses to grow and remain competitive; and
- Help attract new businesses.

In addition, any recommended actions should:

- Have high-impact potential;
- Produce results quickly;
- Be capable of implementation within available resources;
- Reflect identified best practices capable of replication in Hartford; and
- Correspond to identified occupational and career opportunities in the regional economy.

Conducting our work from September through December 2002, we were guided by four organizing principles:

- **Socio-economic data** describing the characteristics and circumstances of the target population would be analyzed to inform consideration of strategic options.
- **Best practices** would be determined by analyzing strategies and program models proven successful in addressing the employment-related circumstances of urban young adults, both nationally and locally.
- **Employer-responsive** recommendations would recognize that their expectations must be satisfied.
- **Work groups** would clarify employer expectations and identify career opportunities in developing strategies for different segments of the City's 18-24 year old population.

What Should the Plan Do?

- Afford career growth opportunities for the area's young adults, ages 18-24;
- Allow existing businesses to grow and remain competitive;
- Help attract new businesses;
- Have high-impact potential;
- Produce results quickly;
- Be capable of implementation within available resources;
- Reflect identified best practices capable of replication in Hartford; and
- Match occupational and career opportunities in the regional economy.

How Did We Work?

We began with an analysis of best practices, which was underwritten with financial assistance from the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections Initiative. The Casey Foundation first contracted with Jobs for the Future (JFF), a national workforce development research firm, to conduct a scan of best-practice examples. JFF's work identified five specific models of effective programming that connect initiatives for youth-at-risk to economic development, and lessons learned which had potential relevance to Hartford and our work. JFF supplemented this research with case studies of those five program models. See **Attachments B and C** for a scan of best practices and case studies.

This information was supplemented with an analysis conducted by UWCA staff. They reviewed literature and current research from national sources about best practices in workforce development programs and policies that support out-of-school, 18-24 year old urban youth. A summary is addressed later in this report, and UWCA's paper is included as **Attachment D**.

We felt that an essential next step was to understand the workforce-related expectations of local employers. As a result, a **Local Employers Work Group**, chaired by Richard McAloon, Vice President of Human Resources at Hartford Hospital, was asked to:

- **Define a standard** for generic entry-level employability in the regional economy;
- **Identify and prioritize** current and projected employment opportunities that were industry- and occupation-specific; and
- **Verify specific employability standards** for those priority industry clusters/sectors and occupations.

Next, we analyzed characteristics of our target market and divided it into three broad categories, as defined by educational attainment and work-related competencies:

- Job-ready,
- Almost job-ready, and
- Not job-ready.

We established corresponding work groups that developed recommendations for preparing more individuals for rewarding careers in the local economy. This also addressed local employers' needs for a qualified and productive workforce. Each of the work groups invited local subject-matter experts to participate in their efforts to insure that a broad array of views and relevant expertise was built into the process of analysis and deliberation.

- A **Job-Ready Work Group**, chaired by Hartford Public Schools Superintendent Robert Henry, addressed the circumstances of those young adults who are, for the most part, qualified to enter the local job market, and are competent to meet the employability standards as defined by the Local Employer Work Group.
- An **Almost Job-Ready Work Group**, chaired by Capital Community College President Ira Rubenzahl, dealt with those individuals who should be able to meet these requirements within six-to-ten months, qualifying for full-time work at a semi-skilled or paraprofessional level, leading to a viable career path.

- The **Not Job-Ready Work Group**, co-chaired by the Deputy Mayor and Mr. Robinson, focused on steps that should be taken to help prepare out-of-school and unemployed 18-24 year olds for jobs in local companies.

Attachment E shows the membership rosters of the four work groups.

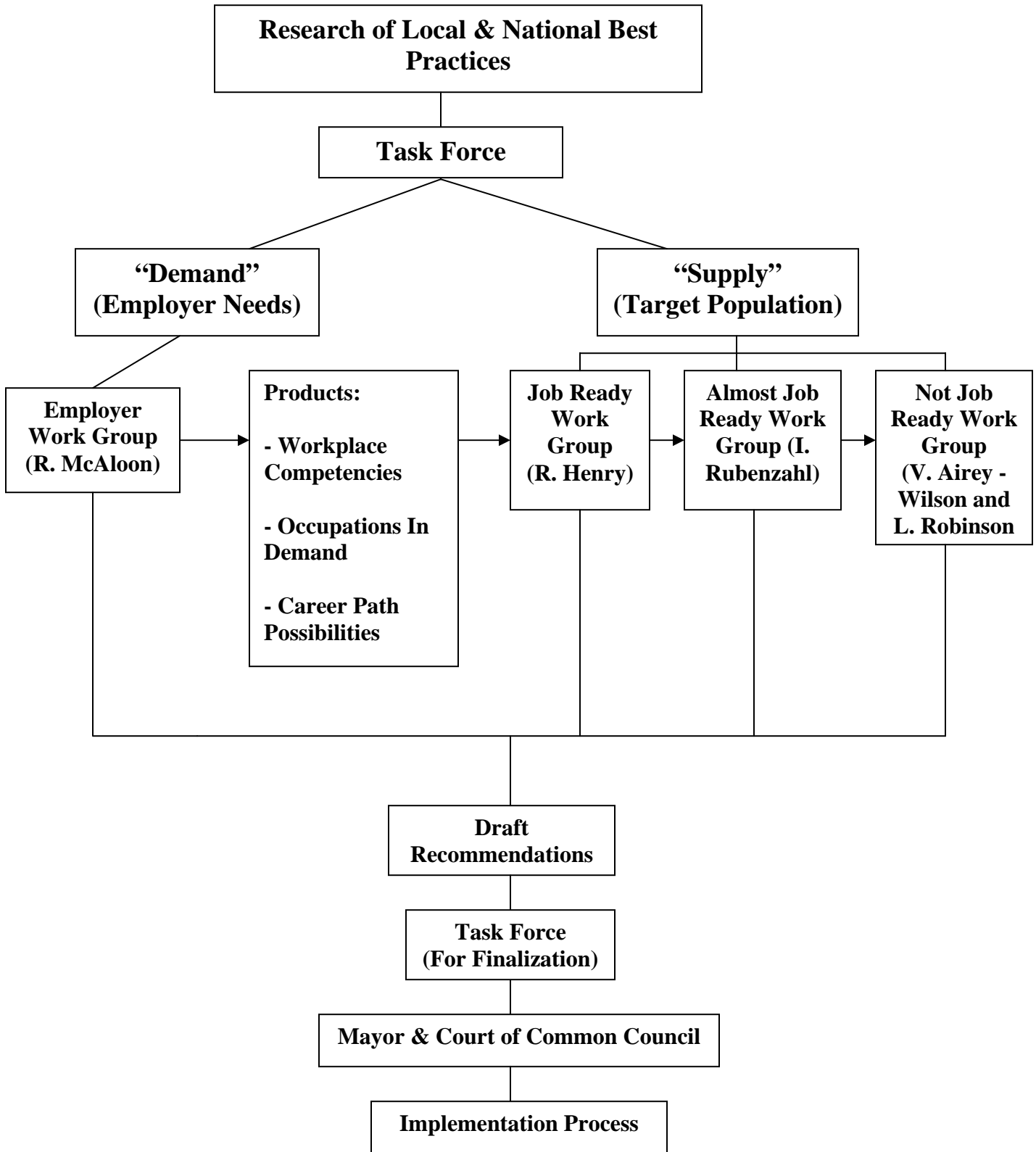
From mid-September through mid-November the work groups:

- Collected and reviewed relevant information;
- Studied relevant best practices;
- Analyzed circumstances in Hartford;
- Considered options; and
- Prepared recommendations for deliberation by the whole Task Force.

All members then reviewed the proposed recommendations and adopted a final version. This summary report was subsequently drafted in late December and formally endorsed by the Task Force at its final meeting on December 19, 2002 and was submitted to the Mayor and Court of Common Council.

As described in the final section of this report, it is our hope and expectation that upon consideration of this report, the Mayor and Common Council will endorse the development of a detailed implementation plan and a process to follow through on the recommendations endorsed by City Hall.

How the Process Worked



Labor Demand and Supply in the Capital Region

The Task Force was determined from the outset to match the needs of young adults preparing for rewarding jobs and career opportunities with local employers' workforce requirements. That's why the "demand-side" of the labor market was so essential to our work. We call this a "dual-customer" philosophy since we must meet the needs of two customers: employers and employees.

What is Employability?

The Local Employer Work Group was called upon to produce two deliverables: a practical, employer-defined **standard of employability** to serve as an objective benchmark which 18-24 year olds must achieve to pursue successful careers; and a **portrait of job and career opportunities** in the regional economy.

The work group – representing several major local employers, as well as Connecticut's Commissioner of Labor – developed a standard (subsequently endorsed by the entire Task Force) that focused on **five workplace competencies**:

- Basic Skills:** The ability to read, write, demonstrate proficiency in mathematics, speak and listen well, and demonstrate English language proficiency.
- Learning/Thinking Skills:** The ability to learn, reason, think creatively, make decisions, and solve problems.
- Information Use:** The ability to acquire and evaluate data, organize and maintain work, interpret information and communicate about it, and use computers to process information.
- Interpersonal Skills:** The ability to work on teams, teach others, serve customers, work without supervision, follow instructions, and work well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.
- Personal Qualities:** The ability to demonstrate self-management, dependability, positive attitude toward work, adaptability, appropriate dress, honesty and integrity.

The other work groups adopted this description of "workplace competency" as an objective that all 18-24 year olds must strive to achieve for eventual success in the workplace, regardless of their present circumstances. The complete "*Workplace Competencies*" outline is included as **Attachment F**.

Where is Employment Opportunity?

The Local Employer Work Group also developed an analysis of present and future **occupations in demand** in the Capital Region* and possible career path opportunities for some of those targeted occupations. We were particularly interested in identifying occupations that:

- Have a substantial number of annual openings;
- Provide access and reasonable compensation at the entry-level; and
- Have discernible and attainable pathways to long-term, rewarding career opportunities.

To describe occupations in the regional economy currently in demand and likely to remain so over the next five years, the work group developed a composite list from:

- The top 25 occupations in demand in terms of total annual openings (excluding those requiring a Master’s degree or above) according to the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL);
- Occupations in demand found on at least two of three specific lists developed by CTDOL classified by total openings, by growth, and/or by growth rate; and
- Anecdotal information provided by local employers.

The Local Employer Work Group then identified:

- The industries in which these occupations exist;
- Education and training required to qualify for employment in each of the positions;
- Actual and projected annual number of openings in each occupation; and
- The average hourly wages for each of these jobs.

This analysis recognized six major industry clusters with significant relevant employment opportunities:

- Health and biosciences;
- Government, education and human services;
- Business and finance;
- Construction - technologies and design;
- Technologies - manufacturing, communication and repair; and
- Retail, tourism, recreation and entrepreneurship.

From these six clusters 41 occupations were identified which met the threshold criteria noted above, and then analyzed possible pathways leading from some of these occupations to related jobs with more stringent qualifications requirements and higher financial rewards. (See **Attachment G**) These “products” became the foundation for gathering objective information about employment opportunities and employer expectations, thereby framing the demand-side of the regional labor market equation.

* The Capital Region Workforce Development Board’s region includes the following municipalities:

Andover	East Hartford	Granby	Rocky Hill	Tolland
Avon	East Windsor	Hartford	Simsbury	Vernon
Bloomfield	Ellington	Hebron	Somers	West Hartford
Bolton	Enfield	Manchester	South Windsor	Wethersfield
Canton	Farmington	Marlborough	Stafford	Windsor
East Granby	Glastonbury	Newington	Suffield	Windsor Locks

How Do These Jobs Add Up?

These 41 occupations represent more than **8,750 job openings** annually in the Capital Region. They provide a wide array of wages, ranging from \$8.20 an hour for new cashiers to \$42.95 hourly for experienced financial managers. **Average wages** for most of these jobs range between **\$15 and \$25** an hour. See **Attachment H** for the matrix “*Occupations in Demand in the Capital Region.*”

Hartford’s Young Adults and the Local Workforce: Where is the Gap?

CRWDB’s analysis of the regional workforce and trends suggests that the metropolitan area faces a potential workforce shortfall over the next decade. Projected shortages reflect both a **reduction in the actual numbers** of available working-age adults and a **growing disconnect** between existing skills and workforce competencies and job requirements.

For example, today the Capital region’s total workforce – defined as persons aged 16 years or older in the civilian non-institutional population who are employed or unemployed and seeking employment – is estimated at 360,000. Approximately 20% are between the ages of 55-64, and demographic trends indicate that this segment will increase dramatically with the aging of “baby boomers”. In the decade ahead, if current trends continue, most of these boomers will gradually leave the workforce through retirement and/or relocation.

As a result, the region’s 18-24 year olds constitute a significant percentage of the area’s workforce. In fact, today an estimated 55,000 of this age group live in the greater-Hartford region, of whom approximately 15,000 reside within Hartford City limits.

Studying these numbers, we found that there simply aren’t enough young adults in the regional workforce today, nor will there be in the next decade, to match the number of current employees who will leave their jobs. In terms of raw numbers, the projected influx of young adults from the City and the region entering the local workforce in the next decade will not keep pace with the outflow of departing workers. Obviously, this gap heralds serious consequences for the economic viability of Greater Hartford.

While detailed demographic information for Hartford’s 15,000 young adults is not available, we chose to address this population by segmenting it into three broad categories and characteristics:

Job-ready – Someone who is able to acquire and retain employment and has the requisite skills to be upwardly mobile. Possesses the following skills/competencies:

- High school diploma or equivalency;
- Pursues post-secondary education and opportunities for continuous learning
- English proficiency;
- Previous experience in desired occupation or transferable skills;
- Skilled or competency in desired field;

- Resolution of work-related personal issues – such as childcare, transportation, court involvement, substance abuse, etc – with appropriate support systems in place.

Almost job-ready – Someone who requires further education and/or vocational training to become job-ready. Requires any or all of:

- A high school diploma or equivalency;
- Educational/vocational preparation;
- Basic work experience and/or work readiness training;
- Resolution of work-related personal issues, with appropriate support systems in place.

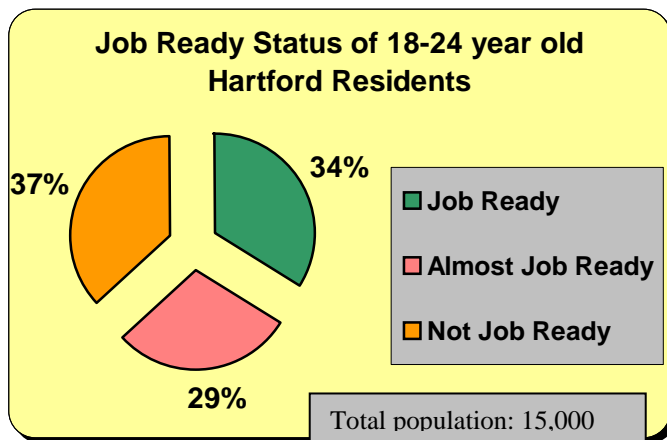
Not job-ready – Someone who needs to resolve personal issues and meet basic support challenges, and requires additional education and/or vocational training to become job-ready:

- No high school diploma or GED;
- Low competency levels in reading and math;
- Difficulty communicating effectively in English;
- Little or no prior work experience;
- Need for basic work experience and work readiness training;
- One or more of the following barriers: court involvement; substance abuse issues; social/emotional issues; learning disability.

While these are not precise definitions, they may serve as a lens through which to view feasible strategies to match young adults with future career opportunities.

How Many are Ready?

Reflecting 2000 Census data, and based solely on the criterion of educational attainment, Hartford’s 15,000 young adults ages 18-24 fit into our employability categories as follows:



Job-Ready: 5,100 have studied at the post-secondary level and may possess an Associates degree or higher

Almost Job-Ready: 4,350 have completed only a high-school diploma or GED

Not Job-Ready: 5,550 have not attained a high-school diploma or GED

The Regional Workforce System

Who is Involved?

Within the Greater Hartford region we found an array of organizations that are involved, to varying degrees, in efforts to build the regional workforce, including:

- **Capital Region Workforce Development Board**, including its Youth Committee;
- **State and municipal agencies**;
- **Local public schools**, particularly comprehensive high-schools and adult and continuing education programs;
- **Post-secondary schools**, including local community colleges in the state's community college system;
- **Non-profit and community-based organizations** that operate an array of training programs and employment-related education programs;
- **Regional vocational-technical high schools**;
- **Proprietary training services**;
- **Public and private foundations, philanthropic organizations and corporations** who contribute significant levels of funding and resources to underwrite workforce development efforts in the region, above and beyond the local, state and federal government dollars that support many of these efforts.

Capital Region Workforce Development Board

By federal and state statute, the Capital Region Workforce Development Board (CRWDB) has emerged as the preeminent organization in Greater Hartford with a formal mandate and responsibility to lead local and regional workforce development efforts. It is therefore legally responsible for developing an overall strategic plan to build and sustain a skilled and productive regional workforce and the system needed to accomplish that goal. It directly administers nearly \$20 million of public and private funds annually to support a variety of specific programs and services across the region.

What Is CRWDB's Mission?

To develop and coordinate a regional workforce development system that meets the employment and training needs of both employers and adult and youth job seekers in support of the region's economic growth and vitality.

The One-Stop System

The *CT Works* One-Stop Career Center System is the cornerstone for delivering services in the regional workforce system overseen by CRWDB. There are three *CT Works* One-Stop Career Centers in the Capital Region (in Hartford, Manchester and Enfield), as well as numerous community-based "portals" at various agencies across Hartford, to serve the universe of customers. Each One-Stop Center serves **all job seekers** (youth and adult), providing a full array of employment services, including: job referral; job development; career workshops and individualized career guidance; and access to a variety of education and training options. Special programs are also available for **dislocated workers, older workers, and individuals with**

disabilities. Local employers are also important *CT Works* customers, where they can access services to help screen, hire and train job applicants and enhance employee retention.

Job seekers using the One-Stop system start with a self-directed job search process, supported by resources available at the centers. If unsuccessful in obtaining employment they may use intensive services with the help of case managers. Training services are available to eligible individuals who are likely to benefit from occupational skills training, provided via vouchers. In partnership with the Connecticut Department of Labor, CRWDB maintains an inventory of more than **230 authorized training programs** (see **Attachment I**) throughout the region, at various public, private and community-based organizations, from which individual customers may select training options. However, limited funding restricts training to selected low-income individuals, as well as under-employed or dislocated workers.

CRWDB administers the local *CT Works System* in collaboration with an array of partners, each of which provides complementary services to customers through the One-Stop setting. Partners include:

- Connecticut Department of Labor
- Connecticut Department of Social Services
- Connecticut Department of Social Services, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
- Hartford Housing Authority
- Board of Education and Services for the Blind
- Capitol Region Education Council
- City of Hartford
- Connecticut Business and Industry Association
- Capital Community College
- Manchester Community College
- Asnuntuck Community College
- Tunxis Community College
- Catholic Family Services
- Community Renewal Team
- Hartford Public Schools
- State Department of Education
- Title V Senior Aid Program (City of Hartford)
- Department of Economic and Community Development

CRWDB's Youth Committee

In addition to its formal, statutory oversight responsibility for the local One-Stop Career System, CRWDB plays a crucial leadership role in youth development and employment efforts. For example, in June 2002, CRWDB's Youth Committee prepared a comprehensive five-year strategic plan to address the employment-related and career-development needs of youth in 30 Greater Hartford municipalities. The Youth Committee's underlying vision, "*Developing Tomorrow's Workforce Today*", reflects the region's growing demographic shift to a younger, less-educated, urban-based future workforce upon which an aging suburban population will depend. Consistent with the trends cited above, the strategic plan draws connections between the

employability of the region's future workforce and the economic viability of the City and metropolitan region.

The Youth Committee's five-year strategic plan emphasizes four goals, each with supporting objectives and proposed strategies:

- Develop a coordinated youth workforce development system;
- Promote youth development principles, employability and life skills;
- Promote academic achievement and continuing education; and
- Take steps to address the needs of out-of-school youth.

This five-year plan (**Attachment J**) serves as a strategic and philosophical base on which to build the region's youth development efforts. It also provided a foundation to help frame the recommendations developed by this Task Force.

Hartford Public Schools and YO! Hartford

In addition, particular note should be taken of the programs and services sponsored by the Hartford Public Schools (HPS) and YO! Hartford, the latter funded by a major federal Youth Opportunity Grant program.

Key HPS programs include:

- Career Academies located at each high-school, each with its own career center;
- Vocational education provided in three subject areas;
- Summer youth employment programs provided in conjunction with CRWDB;
- The Hartford Alternative Learning Opportunities (HALO) alternative education center to serve students at-risk of dropping out of school; and, most significantly,
- The Adult Education Department, which in the 2001-02 school year provided English-as-a-second language (ESL) instruction; basic skills instruction; preparation for the General Educational Development (GED); high-school diploma instruction and selected vocational training to more than 6,500 students from Hartford, many of whom fall in the 18-24 year old age bracket.

A synopsis of relevant HPS offerings is included as **Attachment K**.

Serving several Hartford neighborhoods through two youth centers, YO! Hartford provides case management services, educational instruction, community service leadership opportunities, academic support and post-secondary placement assistance for eligible 14-21 year olds in Hartford. Managed by CRWDB, YO! Hartford began in March 2000 with a \$28 million five-year grant award from the U.S. Department of Labor. YO funding – supplemented by resources from the Hartford Public Schools – also supports the YO! Academy alternative high school, combining basic skills instruction with occupational skills training. HPS manages Academy operations and curriculum design. To date, more than 1,500 youth have been served by YO! Hartford efforts.

Historically, the Capital Region has lacked a coordinated workforce development strategy and comprehensive workforce investment system. Over the past 18 months, CRWDB has undergone significant policy, leadership and operational changes, with the objective of becoming more capable of meeting this challenge and its mission. To achieve its mandate, it has positioned itself

to play the critical leadership role in elevating the importance of and carrying out an effective implementation strategy on workforce development in collaboration with its numerous existing and new partners.

Best Practices and Program Models

As noted earlier, from the beginning the Task Force endorsed a “best practices” approach to identify strategies and program models for consideration as possible recommendations. This tactic made good sense given the limited time we had to complete our work along with the complexity of the issues at hand. Jobs for the Future (JFF) was selected to analyze and prepare case studies of effective programs across the country connecting youth-at-risk efforts to economic development and employment opportunities.

In its scan of best practice examples and case studies, JFF highlighted five specific program models:

- The Boston Compact and the Summer of Work and Learning – Boston
- MY-TURN and the Champion Charter School – Brockton, Massachusetts
- Sinclair Community College – Dayton, Ohio
- The Philadelphia Youth Network and Comprehensive Youth Services
- Portland Community College – Portland, Oregon

JFF’s analysis of these five programs identified six core features – labeled the “six C’s” – that appear to foster successful transitions into adulthood, particularly for youth who are disengaged from traditional education systems:

- **Caring** relationships;
- **Culture** of peer support for effort;
- **Competency**-centered/concept-rich teaching and learning;
- **Challenging** projects and performances;
- **Connections** to expanding networks and opportunities; and
- **Community** membership, voice and contributions.

These concepts are addressed more fully in the attached JFF paper (**Attachment B**). It is important to note that each of the Task Force’s work groups integrated this information, along with case studies of model programs, into their respective recommendations, as directed by the Task Force co-chairs.

From its analysis, JFF proposed nine “high-leverage strategies”:

- **Take a “dual customer” approach** that treats both at-risk youth and employers as customers who both must be satisfied. These customers (or their representatives or advocates) must be part of a stakeholder group or collaborative.
- **Include the public education system** as a visible and vocal partner.
- **Develop and nurture a powerful community-collaborative effort** in which key stakeholders are accountable for young people’s well-being, and use data to drive decisions and to track the community’s progress toward goals.
- **Identify and/or endorse one or more intermediary organizations** capable of connecting young people to economic opportunity.
- **Select and focus on a small number of strong or emerging industries** that offer entry-level jobs accessible to young people with relatively little experience and skills. The targeted industries should also have or provide connections to higher-level “rungs” on career ladders that people can climb to move toward family-supporting jobs.

- **Consider community colleges** as a linchpin for connecting education and the economy. In the region’s strong and emerging industries, community colleges can play a prominent role in the development of education and training pathways that move people from the academic basics to higher-level technical skills.
- **Nurture a community-based network** capable of reaching out to and supporting young people throughout the process of acquiring skills and good jobs.
- **Develop programming** with youth development principles and practices at the heart.
- **Recognize that the implications of policy can be profound**, whether at the local, state or national level. Promote existing policies and recommend new ones that support successful transitions for youth.

In addition, research conducted by the United Way of the Capital Area (UWCA) verified several best-practice strategies for possible consideration by the Task Force, including those which may be considered the youth development approach articulated and endorsed by the National Youth Employment Coalition’s *Promising and Effective Practices Network* (PEPNet.) Significantly, **these PEPNet standards are also included in JFF’s analysis and in the five-year strategic plan of CRWDB’s Youth Committee.** Other best-practice strategies identified through UWCA’s research (and discussed in **Attachment D**) include approaches that are:

- Neighborhood-focused;
- An integrated labor market systems reform;
- Dual-customer; and
- Holistic.

UWCA’s research suggested **four key components** for Task Force consideration:

- **A holistic, integrated approach is appropriate** – one that goes beyond the traditional “players” to incorporate the environment in which youth can succeed. Partnerships among various sectors should be encouraged to support effective practices at the system, program and policy levels.
- **Investment in technology is crucial**, manifested at the program or policy level through such efforts as building “real-time data systems”, and/or among employers conducting business in a competitive environment, and/or within training programs and curricula available in institutions of higher learning, etc.
- **Innovative practices should be supported**, bringing together parties often with different interests, needs and values. Creating a “market for innovations” in workforce development “establishes capacity for development, testing, and marketing” new practices.
- **Results should be measured and progress tracked** to encourage accountability for achieving desired outcomes among the stakeholders in this effort.

We considered all of the available best-practice research and lessons-learned about successful program models as we explored strategies and developed recommendations.

Recommendations

Why Do We Need an Overarching Vision?

Before crafting specific recommendations, we thought it was essential to articulate an overarching vision in order to:

- Challenge the Greater Hartford community to action;
- Underscore a seriousness of purpose; and
- Establish a public benchmark by which to measure the success of future efforts to address the employability of Hartford's young adults.

Why? The answer lies in the numbers. An estimated 76% of Hartford's 15,000 young adults in the target group are either employed and/or actively pursuing their education. We believe that this figure is **unacceptably low** when compared to percentages in suburbia and in other regions with which we are in economic competition. That's why it is both possible and imperative to substantially increase the engagement of this group in work and/or school by 20%, in order to achieve our overarching goal.

What Is Our Goal?

By the year 2005, 92% of Hartford's 18-24 year old population will be actively and effectively engaged in pursuing their educational and career objectives and/or be gainfully employed.

The recommendations noted below are essential to reach this goal.

What are the Mayor's Criteria?

As each of the four work groups conducted research and considered their options, they incorporated the following criteria established in early discussions with the Mayor:

- Does the recommendation make sense in/for Hartford?
- If implemented effectively, what will the impact be?
- Can that anticipated impact be achieved quickly?
- How can the recommendation be implemented within available resources?
- How does the recommendation reflect identified best practices?
- Is the recommendation consistent with identified occupational opportunities?

As a result, the work groups presented a total of 21 proposed recommendations to the full Task Force at meetings in November. As we considered these ideas, five broad themes emerged:

- **Strategic Focus:** Establish a broad strategic focus as a foundation for action.
- **Best Practice Strategies:** Identify specific programmatic tactics reflecting best practices whose implementation should be encouraged, in line with the strategic focus.
- **Service Coordination:** Strengthen the coordination of effective service delivery in the One-Stop system, which serves as the hub of the regional workforce system.

- **Program Capacity:** Assess the capacity of service providers to implement adopted recommended practices and provide technical assistance to upgrade their capabilities
- **Advocacy for Results:** Organize active support for policies and resources needed for implementation.

In December we agreed on a final set of 12 recommendations, organized into these broad thematic categories, as presented below. As a practical matter, we think it is useful to provide examples of organizations which might be called upon to support the implementation of recommendations. In the following section we list those entities for each recommendation, as examples only, without suggesting that the lists are exclusive or definitive. We expect that the detailed planning process discussed in the conclusion of this report will assign specific implementation responsibilities.

Strategic Focus

Recommendation 1

Promote a *dual-customer/sector-based* philosophy as the broad framework to guide the development of programs and services. Develop specific, practical standards to define this approach, reflecting national and local best practices and effective program models.

Commentary on Recommendation 1:

We believe that a workforce development strategy cannot succeed unless it addresses with equal emphasis the complementary needs and expectations of both local employers and job seekers. Too often in the past well-intentioned efforts have tended to focus on the circumstances of job seekers and prospective employees, to the exclusion of employer concerns. Our research of best practices documents the importance of taking a dual-customer approach. This means reaching out to and engaging employers, understanding their needs, as well as involving them in the design and implementation of strategies to prepare young adults who aspire to become their employees.

From a broad strategic perspective, we endorse this dual-customer philosophy and attendant strategies as a foundation on which to build implementation of all of the recommendations that follow. There is a growing body of experience-based data about the tactics, standards and practices that define the dual-customer approach in practical terms. This information should be fine-tuned to insure that it fits well into a Hartford context.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 1 include: Capital Region Workforce Development Board (CRWDB); Hartford Public Schools (HPS), particularly Hartford Adult Education (HAE); Capital Community College (CCC); United Way of the Capital Area (UWCA); Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG); MetroHartford Regional Economic Alliance (the Alliance); Capitol Region Education Council (CREC); Making Connections Initiative; Jobs for the Future (JFF); other public and private funders.

Recommendation 2

Focus career development strategies and resources on opportunities that are outlined in the Task Force’s *Occupations in Demand* and *Possible Career Paths* analyses. Update this information frequently to insure accuracy and timeliness.

Adopt the Task Force’s employer-defined *Workplace Competencies* as the standard of entry-level employability in this region for young adults to satisfy in order to be able to pursue rewarding career opportunities.

Commentary on Recommendation 2:

The Task Force believes that all efforts to promote the employability of the target group must insure that job applicants are able to meet basic standards of workplace competency as defined by local employers. Such efforts should focus on identified industry sectors, job and career opportunities, where actual and prospective demand exists, and which present viable career growth opportunities. The Task Force has generated several practical products that provide a starting point to clarify employer expectations concerning employability requirements and career paths. Workforce development strategy must be driven by accurate and timely economic forecasting and labor market analysis, so it is important to have in place the capacity update and maintain the *Workplace Competencies*, *Occupations in Demand*, and *Possible Career Paths* products on a continuing basis to inform strategic decisions.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 2 include: CRWDB, HPS, local employers.

Recommendation 3

Endorse the five-year strategic plan of the Capital Region Workforce Development Board’s Youth Committee as a foundation on which to build specific action plans. Align implementation efforts and encourage collaboration with the Youth Committee’s efforts.

Commentary on Recommendation 3:

Adopting the CRWDB Youth Committee’s five-year strategic plan to “develop tomorrow’s workforce today” – with specific goals, objectives and strategies and actions – could significantly improve opportunities for the target group. This five-year plan is consistent with, and complementary to, the proposed overarching dual-customer philosophy supported by the Task Force. It is part of CRWDB’s overall strategic plan, which is included as **Attachment L**.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 3 include: Mayor, Common Council, CRWDB Youth Committee, entities referenced in the Youth Committee five-year plan.

Best Practice Strategies

Recommendation 4

Expand and/or replicate local programs that are proven effective in addressing those 18-24 year olds who are not yet job-ready, such as:

- The youth development approach used by the UPS School-To-Career Partnership, managed by Our Piece of the Pie, South End Community Services. Key components include career awareness, planning and readiness, employer engagement, strong work-learning connection, competency development, follow-up services, and building on strengths of the participant.
- Innovative methods of engagement and retention incentives specific to the unique needs of this population utilized by Co-Opportunity.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 4 include: CRWDB, Southend Community Services/Our Piece of the Pie (SCS/OPP), Casey Family Services, United Parcel Service (UPS), Hartford Housing Authority, Connecticut Department of Children and Youth Services, Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL), Catholic Family Services (CFS), YO! Hartford, Youth Development Practitioner Academy, local employers, Co-Opportunity, service providers.

Recommendation 5

Expand and/or replicate local programs such as the Hartford Construction Jobs Initiative, that have successfully implemented the sector-based model to move almost job-ready young adults into productive jobs.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 5 include: CRWDB, HPS (particularly HAE), local employers, City of Hartford, the Alliance, CCC, CREC.

Recommendation 6

Create a seven-step program for 18-24 year old Hartford residents who are job-ready to help them plan career paths and support their work-related decision-making. Incorporate an assessment process reflecting the Task Force’s *Workplace Competencies* to verify job-readiness for participation in the seven-step program. Use the Task Force’s *Occupations in Demand* and *Possible Career Paths* to engage employers in assisting job-ready 18-24 year olds into jobs with career paths.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 6 include: CRWDB, HPS, local employers.

Recommendation 7

Establish programs that replicate relevant models proven effective elsewhere in addressing individuals who are not yet job-ready, including:

- A work-based learning environment, integrating assessment, education, personal and leadership development, work experience and placement services specific to out-of-school youth/young adults such as that designed by Community Youth Corps, Southeast Los Angeles County Workforce Investment Board, Cerritos, California.
- A “ladder of opportunity” for out-of-school youth that provides specific pathways for alternative high-school completion and certificate programs linked with the region’s career clusters, such as that designed by Portland Community College, Portland, Oregon.
- Educational alternatives for out-of-school youth, using school-to-career methodologies such as those developed by the Champion Charter School, Brockton, Massachusetts, an initiative

of MY TURN (Massachusetts Youth Teenage Unemployment Reduction Network). Ensure that these methodologies, and an evaluation mechanism, are incorporated into Hartford's YO! Academy, opened in September 2002.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 7 include: CRWDB; HPS/HAE; Connecticut Department of Education; CCC; local employers; service providers including: Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance (SINA); South Arsenal Neighborhood Development Corporation (SAND), particularly the Support and Training Results in Valuable Employment (STRIVE) program; A.I. Prince Technical High School; Goodwin College; Hartford College for Women; SCS/OPP; CREC; St. Martin's Medical Training Program.

Commentary on Recommendations 4-7:

Our research into best practices identified a number of local and national strategies and program models that are effective in preparing young people to pursue rewarding jobs and career opportunities. These various program models correspond with different segments of the Hartford's young adult population. Some are most appropriate for those deemed not job-ready, some for the almost job-ready, and others for those who are job-ready. Based on the analysis conducted by our various work groups, we have selected several specific best practice strategies reflecting effective programs to include in our recommendations targeting different segments of Hartford's 18-24 year old population.

One feature common to most of the best practices we identified is the important role played by adult mentors. Whether it is a journeyman mentoring an apprentice, a caring adult co-worker on the job-site, or a counselor working for a community-based organization, a critical factor in youth success is the active engagement of an adult role model. These approaches are described in **Attachments B** and **C**.

A worthy idea building on the experience of Portland's "ladder of opportunity" concept is to develop a work group involving Hartford Public Schools, Capital Community College, and the Hartford Consortium for Higher Education to build a model case management support system for all Hartford students matriculating in college, for up to two years following high school graduation.

Recommendation 8

Actively engage local employers in the implementation of Task Force recommendations. Develop and maintain a comprehensive inventory of local company-sponsored partnerships with educational institutions and community-based organizations to address the employers' workforce needs. Promote the expansion and replication of effective partnership models.

Commentary on Recommendation 8:

Local employers operate a variety of programs that engage with local schools and community agencies to help expose young people to future career opportunities and prepare them for the world of work. A preliminary inventory of these programs is included as **Attachment M**. Employers should make an effort to insure that these programs meet the quality standards

necessary to operate effectively in a dual-customer model, and integrate into the overall effort proposed in this report. Employer commitment to support this initiative is crucial.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 8 include: CRWDB, HPS, Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA).

Service Coordination

Recommendation 9

Strengthen the capacity of Hartford's *CT Works* One-Stop Career Center System to deliver critical services effectively to Hartford's 18-24 year olds.

- Identify and incorporate into the local One-Stop system: effective outreach, engagement and incentive strategies to increase services to this population.
- Expand One-Stop services by implementing the decentralized neighborhood-focused employment model.
- Incorporate into One-Stop services individualized career planning; job readiness and retention support; financial literacy programs; and access to quality training programs and related resources.
- Implement an effective universal recruitment and assessment process, using as a base the One-Stop Career System with its Community Portals, Youth Access program and YO! Hartford.
- Create a continuum of effective services between the Hartford Public Schools Career Centers and the local One-Stop system, and assure access to those career services for all 18-24 year olds seeking assistance.
- Incorporate the Hartford Connects web-based case management and reporting system into One-Stop operations.

Commentary on Recommendation 9:

The *CT Works* One-Stop Career System will continue to play a central role in coordinating delivery of basic workforce development services in Hartford and the region, for young adult job seekers as well as for local employers. We believe the One-Stop must implement specific practices to enhance its effectiveness in the community and its ability to meet the needs of its customers. The system must find ways to minimize bureaucracy and become more accessible by adopting practices that have been documented for effectiveness, as identified in the preceding recommendation.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 9 include: CRWDB, City of Hartford, HPS, CFS, Community Renewal Team (CRT), CBIA, CREC, CTDOL, community colleges, *CT Works* partners, community-based organizations and service providers, local employers.

Program Capacity

Recommendation 10

Conduct a qualitative assessment of local service providers to:

- Evaluate their ability to implement dual-customer/sector-based strategies;

- Identify effective programs that can be expanded, replicated or improved to maximize limited public/private resources; and
- Identify gaps, and propose strategies to fill those gaps.

Provide technical assistance to build community-wide capacity to implement effective dual-customer/sector-based efforts.

Commentary on Recommendation 10:

There is a wide disparity in program quality and overall effectiveness among the many workforce development and employment-related service providers. A serious effort to implement the best practice strategies called for in these recommendations requires that service providers are capable of doing so effectively. We recommend that the Implementation Committee called for by the Task Force propose a strategy to:

- Define program standards that reflect best practices;
- Conduct a community-wide assessment of program quality against those standards;
- Identify organizations capable of playing a significant implementation role;
- Identify gaps and opportunities for improvement; and
- Implement an ongoing process of capacity building to insure program quality and effective service delivery.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 10 include: CRWDB, City of Hartford, HFPG, UWCA, Connecticut Office for Workforce Competitiveness (OWC), the Alliance, Making Connections Initiative, Youth Development Practitioner Academy, SCS, Center for Urban Research, Institute for Community Research.

Advocacy for Results

Recommendation 11

Organize a “community-wide summit” to inform and engage key constituencies, build understanding and support, and align public and private resources behind this broad strategy, including: elected officials; public and private funders; employers; public, non-profit and community-based agencies and service providers; and community leaders.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 11 include: City of Hartford, CRWDB, the Alliance, the Capitol Region Partnership (and its members), HPS, HFPG, UWCA, OWC, Making Connections Initiative, local employers, and service providers.

Recommendation 12

Advocate with state and local public leaders to maximize the effective use of limited resources to achieve career goals for these young adults and meet employer needs.

Entities identified as possible sponsors to support implementation of Recommendation 12 include: CRWDB, City of Hartford, State of Connecticut, HFPG, UWCA, other local and national foundations, local employers.

Commentary on Recommendations 11 and 12:

If implemented, the preceding recommendations would significantly impact the way workforce development services for young adults and local employers are delivered in the Capital Region, as well as affecting the work of many agencies and programs. In an era of scarce and shrinking resources available to support workforce development efforts, such recommendations would require difficult decisions about priorities and targeting limited funds. It will therefore be essential to build understanding and support for these recommendations among key constituencies. As support is developed for these recommendations, it will be important to align implementation with other related initiatives in Hartford that are working towards similar goals.

Mention has already been made of the need to coordinate with the Hartford Construction Jobs Initiative and YO! Hartford. Likewise, there should be efforts to coordinate resources and services the Mayor's Home Ownership Initiative, the Department of Human Services' Middle-Class Express, Making Connections, an initiative of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, significant efforts on the part of CRWDB (i.e., YO! Hartford, Youth Access, Job Corps, Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program, etc.), and those programs cited earlier operated by Hartford Public Schools.

Further Study

In the course of its work the Task Force identified two issues that received considerable attention and stimulated lively conversation.

Members are concerned about the impact of involvement with the criminal justice system. What should be done to mitigate the release from incarceration of increasing numbers of individuals, many of whom are in the 18-24 years age bracket, and many of whom reside in Hartford? What can be done to promote the employability of young adults who may have a police record, although not convicted felons? These individuals – mostly young men – need to be integrated effectively into the workforce and mainstream economy of the region as productive and contributing members of the community.

In addition, members are interested in exploring steps that might be taken to reduce financial disincentives for young fathers to go to work, particularly in those instances where their wages are subject to garnishment for child support.

Given the complexity of these two issues, the Task Force recommends that further study is warranted.

With respect to the challenge of re-integrating young adults with criminal records, Hartford's Director of Human Services (DHS) Dr. Ramon Rojano has convened a working group to conduct further study and propose recommendations for consideration by the Mayor and Common Council. Work group members include representatives of the Connecticut Judicial Branch, the Connecticut Department of Correction and Ombudsman Program, University of Connecticut School of Law, and community-based organizations.

Concerning the wage garnishment/child support issue, Task Force member Silvana Flattery, Regional Administrator for the State Department of Social Services (DSS), has indicated that DSS will continue to pursue legislative initiatives intended to:

- Help young parents establish themselves in the community as responsible adults;
- Encourage appropriate parental involvement with their children;
- Ensure establishment of realistic child support orders; and
- Avoid uncollectable support payments.

The Task Force encourages DSS to continue its efforts to address this matter and to build community understanding of the issues involved.

In general, the Task Force encourages DHS and DSS, respectively, to continue their study of these two issues and to report to the Mayor and Common Council on their final conclusions and recommendations for action.

Conclusion and Next Steps

We believe that the recommendations presented in this report constitute the basis of a bold and broad approach to meeting our goals. However, the challenge of translating recommendations into action remains, so we offer **one final suggestion**: We believe that it is essential for the Mayor to have a practical, detailed action plan that presents a strategy to implement recommendations accepted by His Honor and Common Council. Such a plan must:

- Describe specific actions to be taken;
- Assign responsibility for each;
- Suggest the timing by when key actions are to be taken and completed;
- Define anticipated outcomes and results of successful activity; and, importantly,
- Identify the level and proposed sources of the funding and resources needed to implement each action.

To that end, we also believe that it would be appropriate for the Mayor to convene an Implementation Committee to:

1. Recommend to the Mayor the organization(s) which should be designated to draw up a work plan and implement each of the accepted recommendations.
2. Review and approve the proposed implementation plans.
3. Report to the Mayor on implementation progress and achievements on a quarterly basis.

Since this level of planning is essentially a management function, we conclude that the Committee should represent the executive management of key organizations involved in the preparation of young adults for career opportunities. The Committee should include organizations with significant formal responsibilities related to this matter, as well as those providing significant resources to support related efforts.

We also suggest that Capital Region Workforce Development Board lead the Implementation Committee, consistent with its broad mandate and mission. Other participants in this implementation planning process should include (but not be limited to):

- City of Hartford Administration
- Hartford Public Schools;
- Hartford Department of Human Services;
- Capital Community College;
- United Way of the Capital Area;
- Hartford Foundation for Public Giving;
- Connecticut Department of Labor; and
- Representation from local employers.

We are mindful of the need to balance good intentions with an extremely challenging funding and resource landscape, for large and increasing budget deficits at the local, state and federal levels already threaten existing programs and services, to say nothing about proposed new or alternative initiatives. That is why the proposed team must prudently address resources.

Finally, we believe that it is both feasible and necessary for this implementation planning stage to be completed **within 60 days** from the time it is launched.

Task Force members would like to thank the Mayor and Court of Common Council for the opportunity to work on this important initiative, and to express their appreciation for the dedication, cooperation and energy that was required from each participant and the organizations they represent. We look forward to following the successful implementation of our recommendations.

Attachments

Attachment A	Task Force membership; description of sponsors and their contributions
Attachment B	Connecting Hartford's Youth to Employment Opportunities: A Scan of Best Practice Examples (Jobs for the Future)
Attachment C	Connecting Hartford's Youth to Employment Opportunities: Case Studies (Jobs for the Future)
Attachment D	Planning Framework: A Comprehensive Approach to Workforce Development Policies & Programs For Out-of-School Youth (United Way of the Capital Area)
Attachment E	Work Groups membership
Attachment F	Workplace Competencies
Attachment G	Possible Career Paths for Occupations in Demand
Attachment H	Occupations in Demand in the Capital Region
Attachment I	Authorized Training Programs
Attachment J	Capital Region Youth Committee Five-Year Strategic Plan
Attachment K	Overview of the Hartford Public Schools
Attachment L	CRWDB Strategic Plan
Attachment M	Employer Sponsored Programs Inventory