

YEAR 25 / PROGRAM YEAR 2024-2025 ANNUAL PLAN

PUBLIC COMMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

On April 12, 2024, the draft Year 25 WDB Annual Plan for Program Year 2024-25 was released for a thirty-day public comment period ending May 12, 2024. During this period, the Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) scheduled in-person presentations of the Annual Plan during the April City Council Trade, Travel, and Tourism Committee, the Workforce Development Board (WDB) Executive Committee and Youth Council Committee meeting where the public was afforded the opportunity to provide public comment. The Department also held one virtual community forum to solicit public comments. The next section provides summary notes of the public comments received.

City Council Trade, Travel, and Tourism (TTT) Committee (April 16, 2024)

There were no comments from the public on this agenda item during the meeting.

The members of the TTT Committee had the following questions and comments:

Councilmember Traci Park: Expressed interest in the Older Worker Strategic Plan and asked about any initial findings regarding this target population. EWDD staff provided some general information about the demographics – noted there is an over-representation of older workers in homelessness and shared general statistics regarding the aging of our LA workforce. EWDD indicated that this plan seeks to educate employers of the value of older workers and dispel misconceptions; provide opportunities to meet needs of those working often up to age 70 and over. The Councilmember commended EWDD for prioritizing this population.

Councilmember Park also asked if all the various strategic efforts are being aligned. EWDD expressed that all efforts are being tied together to inform our new Workforce Development System and, to extent possible, will be infused into our final draft of the Year 25 Annual Plan.

Councilmember McOsker: Asked clarification questions about the funding revenue tables and the funding sources. He asked if “LA City” Programs are funded by the City General Fund and if the “LA County” Programs are funded directly by the County of Los Angeles. He also asked to clarify Rapid Response funds. EWDD provided clarification confirming the source of funds.

Councilmember Soto-Martinez: Given the delay with the WorkSource System Procurement and its Redesign, the Councilmember asked if the Apprenticeship Navigators will still be part of the operators this new program year. The Councilmember also asked whether the High Roads and Older Worker programs are to be part of the America’s Job Centers of California (AJCC) system or serve as independent contractors. He also inquired if EWDD will have the internal capacity to support all the new programming that was highlighted during the presentation including being able to pay vendors in a timely manner. EWDD informed that Apprenticeship Navigators will be part of the current system of operators and the Department is looking to enhance the Annual Plan strategies further with the findings from the various strategic planning efforts. The High Roads Training Partnership is being supported by eight WorkSource Centers (WSC) this year and EWDD is looking to expand in the future and strengthen this strategy. EWDD also reiterated that it wants to ensure that the recommendations from the various strategic planning efforts help design and enhance the new AJCC system and programming. EWDD acknowledged the City’s budget challenges and the potential impact on workforce development programming. EWDD shared that the Department still has staff capacity issues which are being compounded by threats by the Mayor to eliminate vacant positions which for EWDD are primarily grant funded. EWDD is also looking to a new Automated Grants Management System to help build internal capacity to improve the invoice processing.

WDB Youth Council Committee (April 25, 2024)

Given all the new programming expected for PY 24-25 to implement recommendations from the various strategic planning efforts including the Five Year Workforce Development Strategic Plan, members of the Committee expressed concern regarding the City's threats to eliminate EWDD's vacant positions. Members of the public and of the Committee expressed their desire to support the Department. Committee members asked if this could result in City staff layoffs. EWDD clarified that no layoffs would result at this time. The elimination would impact positions that are vacant and not currently filled.

WDB Executive Committee (April 26, 2024)

Community member Mary Keipp: Asked if all strategic efforts are being aligned and if they are being incorporated into the final draft Annual Plan.

EWDD stated majority of the strategic plans will be completed in June but seeks to ensure that the recommendations from the various strategic planning efforts help design and enhance the new programming in the Annual Plan. Some funding allocations will go to support the implementation of recommendations during the next program year.

Executive Committee reiterated concerns regarding EWDD's staff capacity and overall ability to support all the programming listed in the Annual Plan, in light of potential elimination of EWDD vacant positions as being currently proposed by the City.

Executive Committee raised a concern regarding the amount of funding being allocated toward the use of consultants for the implementation of the various strategic planning recommendations including the allocation toward program monitoring consultants. Members questioned if these funds reduce resources that should go instead toward direct service delivery and support of clients. Also, some raised concern that this would be in conflict with the retention of vacant positions.

EWDD staff replied that it currently does not have full capacity and the current staffing challenges would be compounded by the potential elimination of the EWDD vacant positions. It has to prioritize compliance with WIOA and other funder requirements or risk losing those funding resources.

Virtual Community Forum (May 1, 2024)

A total of 19 community members were in attendance.

1. Major sporting events coming to Los Angeles and employment opportunities

Question raised by community member David London. Does EWDD have any plans for a youth strategy for the major sporting events coming to Los Angeles? Is the City of LA researching and referencing data from other cities that have previously hosted the Olympics, etc.?

EWDD informed that the Mayor and City Departments are working closely with LA28, an established committee comprising of Mayor and City Department staff. A Workforce working group is part of those efforts. The City is also in discussions with Paris and London to learn from their experiences and best practices.

Public Comment: Alex Davis: Would like to see if EWDD staff can identify transitioning skill sets from current enrolled clients for those potential employment opportunities.

2. Alignment with Strategic Efforts and Annual Plan Strategy- Gender Equity

Judi Brown, CivicMakers: Introduced herself and the current work her organization is doing in support of the City's Five Year Strategic Plan and shared that she and CSUN and CauseImpacts, other consultants working on other City strategic plans, have been meeting to support alignment with the Annual Plan. With regard to Gender Equity and the action item to include childcare support, she noted that this support should be more inclusive of all genders including single parents/fathers, LGBTQ families, and not just women. She stated that the narrative details more inclusivity of other groups but the PowerPoint is not as clear.

3. Year 25 Annual Plan Presentation and Tracking of Initiatives

Lizzeth Rosales, Mayoral Aid with the Office of the Mayor: Commented that she was pleased to learn about EWDD's Annual Plan and strategic initiatives and inquired how EWDD tracks all the programming listed on in the Annual Plan and how status updates are shared. She suggested the use of tables instead of the graphics that were hard to read in the current draft of the presentation.

EWDD informed that the Department produces a quarterly scorecard of key programs that is shared with the Board and Mayor and is also currently looking to enhance its data analytics unit to produce more substantive impact reports.