

**ODOT Region I Alliance  
Current and Needed Services, Gaps Workgroup Recommendations  
December 19, 2005**

**Charge**

Review existing support services network and delivery related to the construction trades workforce. Given the OBDP projects' timelines and future needs of the construction industry, determine the package of basic services available, what additional assistance would be needed to complete apprenticeship probationary period, discuss the most effective and efficient utilization of additional resources, develop service delivery recommendations that effectively improve collaboration and coordination among agencies, fill gaps in services, and recommended method of resource allocation.

Part II, review Minimum Requirements document, discuss specific trade and non-trade related knowledge, skills and experience needed to become an apprentice or pre-apprentice candidate. Provide recommendations of core curricula for each subject matter needed to advance to pre-apprentice.

**Members:**

Connie Ashbrook	Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc.
Lori Bean	worksystems, inc.
James Bowles	PCC Skills Center
Tom Duncan	PCC, Cascade Campus
Ron Hansen	Carpenters
Betty Huskey	ODOT, Office of Civil Rights
Penny Painter	Cooper Zietz Engineering
Quint Rahberger	Operating Engineers
Kelli Walker	Mt. Hood Community College
Deborah Williams	HAP, Evening Trades Apprenticeship Program

**Background**

The workgroup began by compiling a list of workforce service providers and construction apprenticeship programs, developed matrices that identified information that was needed to understand network of services and potential gaps.

The potential workforce for apprenticeship programs were identified and placed into four general categories:

- Underemployed individuals in survival jobs, who are working, ready and need career track. Minimal services required.
- Unemployed individuals who need additional training, and may need skill upgrades to meet apprenticeship requirements.
- Individuals with limited or no work history who identify career interest in construction trades. Hardest to serve; may need extensive support services.
- Individuals currently in accepted apprenticeship programs.

Group discussions included looking at the number of jobs projected, particularly in the first few years of OTIA III Projects. The group carefully examined the soft and hard skills that applicants will likely need to become successful candidates. The group also considered all the capabilities that determine success such as personal financial management and the necessary support networks to retain employment.

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**Retention**

The group recognized that retention is what ultimately determines program success. A lack of strategic planning for retention is seen as one of the most critical gaps. A strategic implementation program to address this gap could both attract applicants and retain apprentices.

To get a handle on retention of apprentices, especially in bridge and highway construction and keep them working and wanting to work, considerations include:

- weather conditions
- screening process
- job locations, single parenting
- other worksite and environmental factors, job profiles clarified
- exposure to the full range of job tasks, skills, and experience on their path toward journey level status.

The workgroup recognized that service delivery entities have individualized eligibility requirements specific to funding. This is not an optimal system for those individuals in need of assistance. An approach that minimizes efforts for potential workers to navigate the support services system is desired.

The recommendations recognize the services that already exist and the populations served. The focus of the recommendations is on post-transition services – not services for individuals that need moderate to significant support services. The group believes that services dedicated at stabilizing individuals, increasing math and reading skills, achieving GED, understanding employment expectations, and providing career guidance are available and should be accessible particularly in the first year of this project.

As demand for new apprenticeship entrants increases, and those most easily transitioned individuals enter the system, the capacity of existing pre-apprenticeship programs will need to be developed to accept additional clients. It is possible that additional programs may need to be implemented depending on the capacity of existing programs.

**Recommendations:**

1. Create a permanent ad-hoc procurement committee that would identify resources and make suggestions for RFP responses to fill retention and transitional service gaps.
2. Identify regulatory and statutory impediments that inhibit individuals from accessing comprehensive support services that assist them in becoming successful applicants. Determine if these can be addressed in such a way that speed bumps can be eliminated or, through interagency agreements, make a continuous stream of services available for an individual. [*The group believes this is beyond scope and would need an additional 2-3 months to assist with this work.*]
3. Alliance should evaluate capacity building of pre-apprenticeship services within region.
4. Encourage or sponsor the development of a model employer mentor program available to contractors which can help support the changing face of our workforce.

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5. Require employer education on workplace impact of diverse workforce, connect to training curriculum, and include feedback loop.
6. Identify employment and recruit employers that can provide trade-related work experience, identify holding positions (transitional jobs that provide a related experience while waiting for determination of apprenticeship application) and assist applicants with job prospects. JATC's recommend that applicants in the process of transition obtain experience working in establishments supplying the industry such as a materials handler, or in the field, among others.
7. During the screening stage, assess viability of transportation. Incorporate transportation planning in orientation curriculum.
8. Include physical examination and abilities modeled after laborers, test physical ability, endurance, and perhaps include a prescreening questionnaire.
9. Incorporate a Financial Planning 101 curriculum – adapted to trades. Developing a personal budget would be part of the curriculum.
10. With the help of the apprenticeship programs, develop a bibliography of recommended reading material for aspiring apprentices that will assist them in becoming successful applicants. For example: *Surviving Your Apprenticeship*, by Debra Yates. Additional occupational specific resources and readings would be included.
11. Develop a service directory (for partners) specific to this project. Explore the efficacy of electronic service directory with information provided; perhaps a PSU capstone project.
12. Establish a revolving loan fund of last resort for apprentices not able to afford the expenses related to successful participation in apprenticeship program.
13. Establish mentorship and fiscal support programs for each of the apprenticeship programs pertaining to the transportation related trades.
14. Develop trades related pre-apprenticeship English as a Second Language program. Translate orientation videos for populations who have significant local representation; for example Spanish and Russian.

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**Acknowledgement of other groups:**

Although the workgroup was tasked to review the support and delivery networks, there were requests from the other workgroups outlined below with Gaps workgroup responses.

- **Screening and Assessment workgroup asked that a referral directory for agencies be created to assist partners in understanding appropriate agency referrals.**  
The Gaps workgroup created a comprehensive service provider matrix that identifies relevant agencies, primary services, service area and population, and any trades connection they might have. In addition, an apprenticeship program matrix was put together to provide user basic information on enrollment, eligibility requirements, application information, tuition (where applicable), dues, etc. These two tables would be the bulk of a service directory. Contact information and key agency personnel should be identified and provided as the Regional Pool comes to fruition.
- **Outreach, Marketing and Recruitment workgroup identified math as a significant barrier for young people and reinforced the need to supplement curriculum.**  
The Gaps workgroup believes that this item is beyond the scope of the group. This is fundamentally a K-12 educational issue although not having strong basic math skills is seen as a critical impediment to the smooth transition of students into the workforce.
- **Regional Pool Mechanics workgroup listed retention as a major issue for minorities and women.**  
The Gaps workgroup agrees.