

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA
WORKFORCE INFORMATION GRANT PLAN NARRATIVE
Program Year 2005(Fiscal Funding Cycle July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2007)

In response to Training and Employment Guidance Letter (TEGL) No. 33-04, Job Service North Dakota (JSND), with the approval of the North Dakota Workforce Development Council (WDC), submits the following proposal. The proposal is organized in three segments, as required by the TEGL. Section A describes the Statewide Workforce Information System. Section B describes the Products and Services to be provided with these funds. Section C presents the Consultation and Customer Satisfaction Assessment.

A. STATEWIDE WORKFORCE INFORMATION SYSTEM

The Labor Market Information (LMI) Center at Job Service North Dakota has been designated as the entity for employment statistics in North Dakota. In line with the North Dakota Two-Year Strategic Workforce Development Plan, the LMI Center has taken a “customer focused” approach toward providing a comprehensive employment statistics program.

The LMI staff has been seeking input from a wide variety of customer groups and workforce partners to obtain valuable information on their workforce information needs. Extensive one-on-one consultations, informal focus group discussions, user surveys, and other communications with customers have emphasized the importance of utilizing the feedback obtained from workforce information customers in planning for and developing products that are useful and timely. Members of the Workforce Development Council, local and state economic development professionals, state agency partners, One-Stop Office personnel, businesses, and individuals have all been involved in providing feedback on both the type of information that is needed and the format that is most understandable and useful.

The process used to ensure that the State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) can exercise its responsibility for ensuring that state workforce information policy is responsive to the needs of the state and local workforce investment system.

The WDC is one of the LMI Center’s key customers and, as such, we have always valued and incorporated, as appropriate, the input we have received from the WDC in planning for our workforce information products and services. Even before the change in the technical guidance from ETA, the LMI Center had been involved in the WDC discussions on workforce information issues and has partnered with the WDC and other stakeholders on several workforce information projects.

The LMI staff collaborates with North Dakota’s Workforce Development Council (WDC) in a number of ways. (Because we are a single Service Delivery Area state, North Dakota has only one statewide Workforce Investment Board—the Workforce Development Council. Designated LMI staff attend WDC meetings, make presentations

on LMI to the WDC, provide LMI to the WDC, and partner with the WDC to plan for and conduct special research studies to meet specific needs of WDC. As an example, the LMI Center has partnered with the WDC, the North Dakota Department of Commerce, and the Social Science Research Center at the University of North Dakota to conduct Labor Availability Studies in North Dakota communities. The LMI Center is currently partnering with these and other agencies on a WDC-sponsored occupational skills needs assessment survey. In the past, the LMI Center has conducted a statewide job vacancy study in conjunction with the WDC, North Dakota Department of Commerce, Board of Higher Education, and other state agencies.

Last fall the LMI Center was involved with the Workforce Summit being put on by the Governor, North Dakota Department of Commerce, and the WDC. LMI staff conducted workshops on pertinent workforce information topics and provided Labor Market Information products for display at the conference. Even more importantly, the LMI Center developed the *North Dakota State of the Workforce* publication for each of the Summit's attendees. This publication, which covered such topics as current economic conditions, occupational supply/demand information, information on North Dakota's Workforce System and Workforce Programs, etc. served as the informational centerpiece for the conference participants.

This year the LMI Center has been involved with the planning for and the actual writing of the Workforce Information related sections of the new North Dakota Two-Year Strategic Workforce Development Plan. In further support of the two-year state Strategic Workforce Development Plan, we continue to provide answers to labor market related questions to the WDC on an ongoing basis, and have also provided our expertise in survey design and statistical methodologies to support other special studies proposed by our various partner agencies.

This year the LMI Center has consulted with the WDC Director, the Board Chair, and Planning Subcommittee of the WDC in developing the plan for the Workforce Information Grant to ensure that the state and local needs are being met. These individuals have reviewed and provided input on drafts of this plan, which has been incorporated into the final version of the plan. The WDC approved the content of the plan and the workforce information products and services to be provided in accordance with this plan.

How the state workforce information system supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan for state and local workforce development.

Labor Market Information (Workforce Information) is listed consistently throughout North Dakota's Strategic Two-Year Plan. Labor Market Information and statistical data are used to identify key economic trends shaping the environment of the state and to support the strategic initiatives in response to those trends. The implications of the trends on overall availability of employment opportunities are quantified with a variety of

occupational and related employment information. Most of the workforce information used throughout the state's Strategic Two-Year Plan is produced by the LMI Center.

The Economic and Labor Market Analysis Section (Section IV) of the Strategic Two-Year Plan), provides the statistical foundation of the Workforce Development Council's planning efforts. The information provided by the LMI Center in this section gives an overview of the state's economic base, information on industries and occupations projected to grow or decline, and projected job openings. Jobs/occupations most critical to the state's economy as well as the skill needs for those jobs are identified. Current and projected demographic information, in-migration and out-migration data, projected skills gaps, and information on the impact of training programs are also included to provide a complete picture of North Dakota's workforce issues.

Section 9-B of the Strategic Two-Year Plan emphasizes the LMI Center's critical role in providing relevant workforce information to the Workforce Development Council for its decision-making and planning for the delivery of services. "The LMI Center at Job Service North Dakota is the State's lead in implementing the statewide LMI system and is committed to providing quality LMI that effectively supports workforce and economic development strategies at the local, regional, and state levels. To accomplish this requires sustained collaboration between the LMI Center and North Dakota's LMI customers to identify and meet end-user needs. We envision a seamless information system allowing all partners and customers to access the information they need, when they need it, to make informed business and career decisions. The LMI Center has taken the lead in providing high quality, easily accessible and understandable information on North Dakota's workforce and economy. The LMI Center has focused on local needs and responsive products and services..."

Current and relevant workforce information is essential to evaluating the current health of the state and local workforce and in monitoring the effectiveness of the workforce investment strategies. To that end, the LMI Center continues to evaluate its products and services to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the North Dakota workforce investment system.

How the grant activities are consistent with the strategic vision of the Governor and the SWIB.

We are constantly evaluating our workforce information products and services in light of national changes in direction and points of emphasis from ETA and by observing national trends and the best practices of other state LMI shops. This national direction has been incorporated with the strategic vision of the Governor of North Dakota, the Economic Development Foundation, and the WDC for job creation and retention in North Dakota. In line with these trends and points of emphasis, we have shifted our focus from a broad "one size fits all" strategy of providing products to a targeted and focused approach. We are now designing products and services that are tailored to meet the unique needs of specific customer groups involved in job creation and retention. For example, we have

developed local *Area Profiles* to aid state and local economic developers and local business groups in trying to recruit new businesses to their areas. In addition, we will be updating the local area and industry *Compensation Guides* that debuted last spring. These very popular guides were designed to assist businesses and One-Stop Offices in determining what salary and fringe benefits are necessary to attract and retain qualified workers in their area. We have recently developed *Demographic Profiles*, based on recent census information, that local economic developers have found to be very useful in conveying the characteristics of their local workforce to potential employers.

The strategy of the State Workforce Agency (SWA) and the SWIB for consulting with local workforce investment boards and stakeholders in the workforce investment system to determine customer needs for workforce information.

North Dakota is a single Service Delivery Area state. Our SWIB (the Workforce Development Council) functions both as the SWIB and as a Local Workforce Investment Board. As such, the State Strategic Plan also serves as the local WIA plan. Because of the local representation on the WDC and the Council's efforts to identify and address local concerns, the input we receive from the WDC indeed represents local concerns as well as statewide concerns.

The LMI Center has also made a point to get out into the communities to consult with local economic developers, Chamber of Commerce officials, businesses, One-Stop offices, and other local civic and business associations in order to obtain a local perspective on the workforce information needs. In addition to formal customer service/customer needs surveys, we have had informal focus group type sessions, extensive one-on-one conversations, and feedback from presentations and training sessions the LMI Center has been involved with throughout the state. The information we have received from these sessions has been invaluable to the LMI Center in determining if our current products are meeting needs in the local areas and in providing suggestions on what types of products and services are still needed to address unmet local workforce information needs. The LMI Center has developed a group of local contacts that provide ideas for new products, help to critique new products in the developmental stage, and make suggestions on improvements to existing products and services.

The broad strategic approach for workforce information delivery to principal customers.

The feedback we have received from our primary customer groups, such as the WDC, local economic developers, Chambers of Commerce, One-Stop staff, employers, counselors, job seekers, the North Dakota Career Resource Network (NDCRN), Department of Commerce, other state agencies, etc., has been extremely valuable in evaluating and planning our LMI products and delivery system. Based on customer input, the LMI Center has revamped our products to make them more customer-friendly and to introduce new informational products and services to meet the identified unmet needs. Several publications have been completely redesigned to make them more

visually appealing and easier for our customers to understand and use. Some publications that were somewhat general in scope were discontinued and replaced with new products targeted to meet the needs of a specific customer group.

To more efficiently utilize resources, we are creating and delivering more products and services via our web delivery system. Several of our newest and most popular products such as the *Compensation Guides*, the *Demographic Profiles* and the *Affirmative Action Guides* are web based. In addition, the LMI Center has created on-line LMI training tutorials that have been utilized by One-Stop staff and local economic developers.

We continue to make improvements to our web delivery system, the LMI Warehouse, to make our data easier to access and to present the data in a user-friendly format. The LMI Warehouse contains all our LMI products, including current and historical data series, PDFs of our LMI publications, links to other information sources, and the functionality to allow users to see the data displayed in charts, graphs, and maps.

In the current fiscal funding period, we are planning to replace our LMI Data Warehouse with a new comprehensive system, which will retain the wealth of historical information and diverse functionality needed by our advanced customers, but will be much easier for the beginning customers to use.

The LMI Center holds monthly economic briefing meetings and invites Department of Commerce, Office of Management and Budget, Governor's staff, and Tax Department. These meetings discuss the monthly employment and unemployment data releases, new workforce information, current economic conditions in the state, and a variety of other related topics. In addition, the LMI staff will continue to make presentations to the WDC, One-Stop staff, civic and business associations, conferences, and other customer groups.

We will continue to work in close coordination with the NDCRN to provide workforce information to job seekers, career guidance professionals, educational institutions, and students. The LMI Center collaborates with NDCRN by providing occupational information, assisting in the development of the Occupational Information System (OIS) and the NDCRN publications, putting on joint training sessions, and assisting with the FINDET program.

How workforce information and services are delivered as core services to customers through the state's One-Stop service delivery system.

We feel strongly that the staff members of the One-Stop Offices in North Dakota provide a critical role in the effective delivery of workforce information to job seekers and business customers. The One-Stop staff has daily contact with both user groups. Hence, they are in a great position not only to market our products and services, but also to explain how this workforce information can be effectively used in each customer's particular situation.

Accordingly, the LMI Center has been seeking ways of better integrating our workforce information delivery system with the One-Stop activities. In previous years, representatives from our One-Stop Offices and the LMI staff attended joint training sessions conducted by Melanie Arthur from Gregg Newton Associates on how to effectively provide workforce information to One-Stop clients. As a follow-up to those sessions, the LMI Center recently provided LMI @ Work training for our One-Stops. The LMI staff has also created an on-line training package for One-Stop staff on how to use LMI products in working with their customers.

Based on discussions we have had with One-Stop staff, the LMI Center is currently working on providing new specialized products for use in the resource rooms and to assist businesses and economic developers in making sound business decisions. We have utilized and will continue to utilize One-Stop staff members to evaluate prototypes of new products and to provide suggestions for improvements. Several of our new products were developed based on customer feedback we received from One-Stop Offices.

LMI staff has also partnered with One-Stop staff members in presenting LMI information at re-employment seminars in communities where significant layoffs have taken place. As a by-product of these successful seminars, our One-Stops have requested that the LMI Center develop a template on the types of information provided at the re-employment seminars for each office to use in smaller dislocated worker events. This fall the LMI Center will develop that template and will provide training to the dislocated worker staff in each One-Stop on how to use it.

As another example of the coordination between the LMI Center and One-Stop staff members, the LMI staff put together a PowerPoint presentation and instructor notes based on our *The Balancing Act: Challenges for Today's Working Women* publication. Individual staff members from our One-Stop Offices have used this product to put on special workshops on working women's issues for their areas. In addition, LMI staff has either made presentations in person or provided PowerPoints and speaker notes on a variety of topics for One-Stop staff members to use in presenting local LMI to local civic and business groups.

A description of the customer consultation and satisfaction assessment method(s) to be used to collect and interpret customer satisfaction information and the principal customers to be consulted.

North Dakota has used a combination of strategies to obtain information from our customers on their satisfaction with the workforce information and services provided by the LMI Center.

We have had extensive one-on-one conversations with many of our customers. In addition, we have found informal focus group-type discussions with various customers to be extremely valuable. These discussions with customers provide great feedback to the LMI staff on such things as which products are useful, which are not, how they can be improved, what workforce information customers need to do their jobs, suggestions for

new products or services to address unmet needs, how we can best train users, etc. In addition, the feedback from attendees of our LMI presentations, both through evaluation forms and informal discussions with the attendees, helps to provide insight into the usefulness of our products and services.

Last year, the LMI Center conducted a customer satisfaction/customer needs mail survey as well. A sample of businesses, economic developers, job seekers, One-Stop staff, educational institutions, other partner agencies, and customers on our LMI mailing list received survey forms. This survey asked questions about the usage of the various products or services, types of formats that are most useful, timeliness of information, suggestions for improvements, evaluations on the helpfulness of LMI staff, etc. In addition, the survey asked respondents to identify the types of workforce information that they need but that is currently not available, the levels of detail and geography necessary, how they would use this new information, and suggestions on how this new information or services could best be delivered. The results of this survey were compiled and used in conjunction with the other modes of customer feedback for planning and evaluation purposes in the LMI Center.

An LMI planning team sorted through the results of the customer satisfaction/customer needs mail survey as well as summaries of the informal focus group discussions, one-on-one conversations, participant evaluations and feedback, and anecdotal comments various staff members had received from customers. This group then identified the products and services that were well received by our customers as well as the needs of certain customers that may not have been met. This team is now in the process of developing new products and services and improving existing products and services to fill those unmet needs.

A concise summary of customer satisfaction findings for the most recent survey of products and services and the effect those findings had on the planned products and services for PY2005, including how the plan addresses inadequacies or gaps identified by users.

We were very encouraged by the results of our most recent customer satisfaction/customer needs survey. Overall, our customers had a very high approval rating for our products and services. When respondents rated our various publications individually, the rate of those either satisfied or very satisfied ranged from 93 percent to 97 percent. Ninety-four (94) percent of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with our website—the Data Warehouse.

Survey respondents overwhelmingly considered the LMI Center to be “the source” of reliable workforce information, and felt that the staff was extremely knowledgeable and accommodating to their needs. The survey showed that the majority of our customers found most of our publications easy to understand and useful. However, there was some concern about the timeliness of some of the products. Results also showed that while paper copy is still the most popular format, many customers requested that all products be

available electronically. (To that end, we have put PDFs of all publications on our website.)

Based on these survey results and the feedback we have received from informal focus groups and conversations with our customers, we have begun to develop new products to meet the unmet needs for customers. In working with business, economic development, and One-Stop business representatives, it was apparent that they needed to know “what compensation package employers needed to offer in order to attract and retain qualified workers in their area and their industry.” We have since developed *Compensation Guides* for over 160 industry/area combinations in North Dakota. These guides provide wage information for the occupations employed by a particular industry in a specific city or area, along with fringe benefit information specific to that industry and area. Local businesses, economic developers, civic leaders and One-Stop business representatives had asked for employment and wage information at the local (city) levels. In response to that need, we debuted the *Local Area Profiles* for 14 cities, and will be revising/upgrading the *Profiles* in the coming year. We have also recently developed *Area Demographic Profiles* based on needs expressed by economic developers and Native American tribal leaders. The aforementioned Labor Availability Surveys and Skill Needs Study also address the needs expressed by customers for information on available labor supplies in particular areas and occupational skill requirements for particular industries. Several products are being developed to meet the needs of business and economic development customers.

In line with the strategic vision of the Governor and the WDC for job creation and retention, our surveys and conversations have also indicated a need for more job seeker type products. To meet that need, we developed Occupational Trading Cards. Since their release, we have been overwhelmed by the demand from schools, career counselors, job fairs, resource rooms, etc., for these baseball-type trading cards. We also plan to develop occupational guides in the coming year. Customer feedback has also indicated a need for better training on what workforce information products and services are available and how they could be used by various customers in their unique work settings. The LMI Center will be addressing that need in this plan year by developing and conducting LMI training tailored to specific customer groups.

Identify funds leveraged or matched from funding sources other than these grant funds and how these funds will enhance delivery of products and services as part of the state’s workforce information system.

The North Dakota Labor Availability Studies and North Dakota Skills Needs Surveys are excellent examples of the leveraging of our workforce information grant dollars with those from other sources. Under the leadership of the WDC, the LMI Center has collaborated with several partners to produce quality workforce information products that address significant data gaps as identified by the WDC.

The LMI Center is partnering with the WDC, Department of Commerce, Social Science Research Institute (SSRI) at the University of North Dakota, and local economic

development groups to conduct Labor Availability Studies in 24 North Dakota communities. The local communities, Department of Commerce, and the WDC contributed roughly \$140,000 to have SSRI do the data collection for this household telephone survey. The LMI Center will provide the survey and sample design, the compilation of the statistical tables, the analysis of the data, and the narrative of the reports for these 24 studies.

The Workforce Skills Needs Assessment is a partnership with the WDC, the University System, Department of Commerce, and the State Board for Career and Technical Education. These partner agencies contribute to the survey mailing costs, while the LMI Center provides the technical expertise and analyze and compile the results. However, for this Skill Needs Survey, the LMI staff will conduct the survey.

The LMI Center is currently partnering with the WDC and the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association to conduct an Employer Needs Survey, and with several other funding agencies to work on an Information Technology Study.

In addition, the LMI Center is currently partnering with the University of North Dakota's Center for Rural Health in conducting a fringe benefits survey. The LMI Center had previously done these benefits surveys on our own, but in exchange for LMI collecting data on some very specific medical benefits questions, the UND Center for Rural Health has agreed to contribute \$5,000 toward the mail costs of the survey.

Since the cost of doing these projects alone would be too great for any one entity to take on, the pooling of funds and expertise has been a win-win situation for all the workforce partners involved. The LMI Center will continue to look for opportunities to leverage our resources with other funding sources to enhance the scope of workforce information products and services available.

B. PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

1. Continue to populate the ALMIS Database with state data:

Description: The ALMIS database is the foundation of any labor market information delivery system. In order to promote a standard method for delivery and maintenance of occupational and labor market information, North Dakota will focus on continuing to update the core tables in the ALMIS database, upgrade software, populate any additional tables, and test data integrity. This will provide customers access to clean and accurate information no matter what program is used to extract the information. North Dakota will update and maintain the licensing data through the National Crosswalk Center. North Dakota is currently using ALMIS 2.2 and is planning to go to ALMIS 2.3 in the next program year.

North Dakota uses a customized method of delivering the ALMIS Employer Database information to the public by means of the Internet. By loading the employer database purchased from InfoUSA on our website, the employer information can be provided in a

number of ways. The public can access pertinent employer data by firm name, city, county, industry, firm size, etc. Updated employer databases will be purchased from InfoUSA and will be loaded on the website twice a year as they become available. The use of the InfoUSA database allows us to provide this information without release of confidential employer data from our UI Tax or QCEW files.

The focus of this activity is developing an expansive data storage system from which other delivery systems may retrieve pertinent workforce information.

Customer Support: Very few people outside of LMI know how the ALMIS database is used. As a result, we have received very little input, except from the data users who see the products created from this database.

However, the ALMIS Employer Database is more visible and is highly used. The feedback we have received from customers has been very positive. Most are pleased with the multiple ways of sorting and accessing the employer information from InfoUSA.

How the deliverable supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan: ALMIS is the foundation of all the workforce information applications in the agency's new NDWORKS/Virtual One-Stop delivery system. The state two-year plan does not address the ALMIS database directly, but speaks of LMI in general terms, to give the LMI Center some latitude to meet customer needs.

The ALMIS Employer Database is used extensively by One-Stop staff for job search, job development, and career exploration purposes. Job seekers operating from resource rooms or working on-line from home have found this product very useful.

Principal Customers: Although not directly used by external customers, the ALMIS database is an important storage mechanism for our web site and delivery system. When combined with our web site and North Dakota's new NDWorks/Virtual One-Stop system, a wide range of internal and external customers will access the ALMIS data.

There are a wide variety of users for the ALMIS Employer Database from InfoUSA: LMI staff, One-Stop Offices, workforce investment partners, government agencies, local economic developers, chambers of commerce, businesses, job seekers, guidance counselors, and students learning about jobs and careers all make use of this database.

Projected Outcomes and System Impacts:

The LMI Center will have 75 percent of the North Dakota data in the ALMIS core tables updated by December 31, 2005. The ALMIS Employer Database will be updated within 30 days of receipt of the new CDs from InfoUSA.

Planned Milestones:

ALMIS core tables updated as needed	Ongoing
ALMIS historical database updated as needed	Ongoing

The employer database will continue to be maintained and will be updated twice a year as new CDs are received from InfoUSA

Estimated Cost: \$50,861

2. Produce and disseminate industry and occupational employment projections:

Description: North Dakota will use the methodology, software tools, and guidelines developed by the Projection Consortium and Projections Management Partnership to complete the work on the long-term projections for the years 2004 to 2014. The NAICS historical industry employment time series will be updated with the most current year's data as they become available and additional preparations will be made for the development of long-term industry and occupational projections.

As a small state, North Dakota's CES program does not provide adequate industrial and geographic detail to be utilized as the basis of the industry time series. Instead, North Dakota opted to use the QCEW which provides much more detailed data. However, QCEW data for 4th quarter 2004 will not be available until June 2005. As a result, North Dakota will do as much preparatory work as possible, but will need to wait until 4th quarter data is available to begin running the 2004 to 2014 industry projections. While some preparatory work can also be done in advance on the occupational side, the actual running of the 2004 to 2014 occupational projections will begin immediately after completion of the long-term industry projections.

States are also required to produce substate, long-term projections every two years. However, because of North Dakota's small labor force, obtaining useable data at a substate level is questionable. North Dakota will test various levels of substate data to see if the data are of value.

Similarly, North Dakota will use the methodology, software tools and guidelines developed by the Projections Consortium and the Projections Managing Partnership to complete the short-term projections for the years 2004 to 2006. Short-term industry employment projections will be made on a statewide basis and published on the LMI Data Warehouse. As with the long-term projections, North Dakota will be using QCEW data as the basis for the industry time series for the short-term projections. As a result, work on the 2004 to 2006 short-term projections will begin June 2005 when the fourth quarter 2004 QCEW file becomes available.

North Dakota will also begin work on the 2005 to 2007 short-term projections. In preparation for the development of short-term projections, the NAICS-based historical industry time series will be updated as new quarters of data become available. However, actual projections cannot begin until June 2006, when 4th quarter 2005 QCEW data become available.

States are also required to produce substate, short-term occupational projections every two years. However, because of North Dakota's small labor force, obtaining useable data

at a substate level is questionable. North Dakota will test various levels of substate data to see if the data are of value.

Customer Support: Career guidance professionals, educational and training program planners, and One-Stop staff have found the occupational projections information invaluable. We have received fewer comments on the industry projections. Some customers have requested mid-range (i.e., 5-year) projections rather than long-term (10-year) projections. Occupational projections customers have requested that projections products be formatted so that they are easy to use. Several of the customer groups we have had discussions with feel that the short-term projections are of more value than long-term projections. For example, due to our legislative schedule, most state agencies in North Dakota operate on a two-year budget cycle and find short-term projections meet that need. Because of shifting occupational patterns, some educational planners feel that two-year occupational projections are more useful as well.

How the deliverable supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan: The state two-year plan was designed to be broad in terms of LMI, to give the LMI Center ample leeway to meet customer needs. The occupational projections are an integral part of the educational and career planning through the One-Stop Career Resource rooms and the educational and counseling structure. In addition, the short-term occupational forecasts can be used by WDC and staff, educational planners, and One-Stop staff to determine training needs, and to guide job seekers toward occupations for which there is a demand.

Principal Customers: The principal customers for the industry projections are the businesses, economic developers, and state and local government agencies that use these projections to analyze business trends and make decisions about expansion and plant locations. The occupational projections are used by school and vocational counselors, educational planners, the WDC, the NDCRN, students, One-Stop career resource rooms, and other individuals making career choices.

Projected Outcomes and System Impacts:

After the statewide long-term projections are completed, the information will be available to the public within 90 days. After the statewide short-term industry projections are completed, the information will be available to the public within 90 days.

Planned Milestones:

Update NAICS historical industry time series for the long-term projections as needed.

Update NAICS historical industry time series for the short-term projections as needed.

Long-term industry and occupational projections completed within six months after 4th quarter QCEW data become available.

Long-term industry and occupational projections publication completed within nine months after 4th quarter QCEW data becomes available.

Short-term industry projections completed within six months after 4th quarter QCEW data become available.

Short-term statewide industry projections will be published on the LMI Data Warehouse within six months after 4th quarter QCEW data becomes available.

Short-Term Occupational Projections will be completed within six months after 4th quarter QCEW data become available.

Short-Term Occupations will be published on the LMI Data Warehouse within nine months after 4th quarter QCEW data become available.

Test substate long-term industry/occupational projections by June 2006 to see if they are usable.

Test substate short-term occupational projections by June 2006 to see if they are usable.

Estimated Cost: \$60,000

3. Provide occupational and career information products for public use:

Description: The LMI Center will work with NDCRN by providing occupational projections and wage data and by assisting in the preparation of the *North Dakota Career Outlook*. The *Career Outlook* is an annual tabloid provided to high school students, their parents, career guidance counselors, One-Stop resource rooms, etc. It contains information in a student-friendly format on occupational descriptions, occupational demand, wages, training programs, etc., along with a variety of articles on how to find a job and how to make career choices.

North Dakota will also work with the North Dakota Career Resource Network (NDCRN) to create an Occupational Information System (OIS). This is a web-based program that would allow users to access projections data (supplied by LMI) by occupation, industry, or occupational clusters. The system would also allow searches of training resources by training programs or by training providers and a variety of other occupational information.

North Dakota has conducted fringe benefit surveys for each city in which we have One-Stop Offices for several years. Fourteen cities are surveyed with one-half of the cities surveyed during the even-numbered years and one-half surveyed during the odd-numbered years. Data are collected on a variety of fringe benefits related to paid time off, insurances, retirement, salary policies, and other miscellaneous fringe benefits. The fringe benefits survey results for each city are published in PDF format on our website as that city's survey is completed. In addition, the *North Dakota Benefits Guide 2005*, a statewide summary publication comparing all the cities and industries will be produced in hard copy.

This year the LMI Center is partnering with the University of North Dakota's Center for Rural Health in conducting the fringe benefits survey. In exchange for LMI collecting data on some very specific medical benefits, the UND Center for Rural Health has agreed to contribute \$5,000 towards the mail costs of the survey. As a result, the LMI Center will develop a new benefits survey instrument, survey editing procedure, and publication layout to incorporate the additional medical benefits questions from the UND Center for Rural Health.

The 2006 edition of the occupational wage survey publication, *Wages for North Dakota Jobs*, will be published in early spring. This publication, which has been revised based on customer feedback in order to make it more useable, provides detailed occupational wage data for the state as a whole, the three MSAs, and four other substate regions.

Conversations with our local One-Stop offices and business customers have indicated a need for occupational wage and fringe benefits information at a local area and industry level. In response to this need, the LMI Center has recently developed *Compensation Guides* specifically targeted to individual cities and industries. These guides provide data from our fringe benefits surveys, occupational wage and employment data, occupational descriptions and related information in one easy-to-use publication. Each guide provides information for those occupations employed by a particular industry in a specific city or area. *Compensation Guides* for over 160 industry/area combinations were created and were put in PDF format on our website. In the short time that these guides have been available, they have become extremely popular. During this plan year, the LMI Center will update each of those guides with new occupational wage and employment information and with new fringe benefits data from our most recent surveys.

Based on feedback from our customers, there is a need for more comprehensive information for job seekers. Accordingly, the LMI Center is working on two new products designed for job seekers and individuals involved in career decision-making. First, the LMI Center has developed a series of career trading cards, designed to provide students with pertinent career information in a student-friendly format. Teachers, career counselors, career fairs, and One-Stop Offices quickly snapped up the initial printing of these extremely popular trading cards. The LMI Center is updating the occupational wage and projections information on these cards and is giving them a new brighter look for the next (much larger) printing. Second, we are planning to develop a series of occupational group brochures for use in One-Stop resource rooms, schools, and similar settings. Each of the occupational group brochures would include information from O'Net (skills, abilities, work activities) and information on wages, 2014 occupational projections, top employing industries, training providers, lists of related occupations, etc.

North Dakota will publish the detailed industry and occupational projections in the *North Dakota Industry and Occupational Projections to 2014* publication in late 2005. Detailed short-term industry and occupational projection for the years 2004 to 2006 will be published on the LMI website. We are currently evaluating the need for a special paper product for the short-term projections.

A couple of years ago, the LMI Center developed a series of career information posters depicting occupations that were fastest-growing, highest-paying, requiring various educational levels, etc. These career information posters were developed primarily at the request of our One-Stop offices, for use in their resource rooms. This program year the LMI Center will develop new posters using the most current career information and perhaps expanding the number of different posters in the series.

North Dakota does special LMI research studies relating to the various aspects of the labor market and then develops a publication describing the findings of each study. This year, the LMI Center is conducting a special study of Religious Employment in North Dakota. Religious organizations in North Dakota will be surveyed to determine their employment by occupation. A publication detailing the findings of this study will be published by August 2005.

The LMI Center will also produce other related publications. The annual *Employment and Wages* publication received a makeover and provides covered employment and wage data by various geographic and industry (NAICS) levels. Other related LMI publications are described in Section 4 of this plan. All publications produced by LMI are loaded on our LMI website as PDFs.

Customer Support: As mentioned in the description above, our customer feedback has indicated a need for some of the new products we have recently developed or are in the process of developing. The feedback we have received regarding our new *Compensation Guides* has been extremely positive. The new occupational trading cards have been overwhelming popular. The redesign and changes in format of our publications was the direct result of customer feedback. Customers wanted data in a much easier to understand format, and we have incorporated those changes into the revamping of our publications. Comments we have received from customers indicate that these redesign and format changes were very well received.

How the deliverable supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan: One-Stop Offices use these products extensively in labor exchange activities (i.e., career resource rooms, working with special populations such as WIA participants, students, or dislocated workers, working with businesses, etc.). Educational planners, WDC and staff, businesses, local economic developers, and state agencies also use some or all of these publications. North Dakota's two-year plan does not address specific products, but speaks of LMI in general terms, in order to give the LMI Center the latitude it needs to develop specific products to meet identified needs of their customers.

Principal Customers: This information is used by a wide range of customers. The users include career guidance counselors, teachers, One-Stop staff, WDC and staff, job seekers, businesses, educational and training planners, students, WIA participants, and other state and local government agencies.

Projected Outcomes and System Impacts:

Seventy-five (75) percent of the milestones will be completed by the end of the grant year. The remaining milestones will be completed by December 31, 2006. At least six fringe benefits surveys will be completed and the results published as PDFs on the website in the grant year.

Planned Milestones:

<i>Employment & Wages</i> publications revised & published annually	Aug 2005
<i>Religious Employment</i> publication	Aug 2005

<i>2005 North Dakota Benefits Guide</i>	Aug 2005
Provide data for and assist NDCRN with publishing <i>Career Outlook</i>	Fall 2005
<i>Compensation Guides</i> updated	Sept 2005
<i>Industry & Occupational Projections to 2014</i> publication	Dec 2005
Career Trading Cards Updated & Reprinted	Mar 2006
2006 Edition of <i>Wages for North Dakota Jobs</i> published	May 2006
Occupational Group Brochures	May 2006
Career Information Posters	Spring 2006

Fringe Benefits Surveys will be conducted on a two-year rotating basis in fourteen cities. The surveys will be published throughout the year as they are completed.

Estimated Cost: \$70,000

4. Ensure that workforce information and support required by state and local workforce investment boards are provided.

Description: North Dakota’s LMI staff continually seeks ways to provide pertinent workforce information for the Workforce Development Council (this is North Dakota’s only Workforce Investment Board). Our staff works regularly with the WDC to determine workforce information needs and to disseminate information. Designated LMI staff attend WDC meetings, make presentations to the WDC, and the LMI Center partners with the WDC to plan for and conduct special research studies to meet the special needs of the WDC not covered in our standard package of LMI products.

The LMI Center will again partner with the WDC, the North Dakota Department of Commerce, and local economic development groups to conduct Labor Availability Studies in North Dakota communities/areas. The data collection will be conducted by the Social Science Research Center at the University of North Dakota. However, the survey and sample design, the compilation of the statistical tables, and the analysis and narrative of the reports for these studies will be performed by LMI staff with input from the WDC.

The LMI Center has also partnered with the WDC, University System, Department of Commerce, and State Board for Career and Technical Education to conduct a Workforce Skills Needs Assessment for key industries in North Dakota. This new survey, which identifies the current and future occupational skills needed by targeted industries, was completed this past spring. The LMI staff provided the survey and sample design, did the mailing and data entry of the survey, compiled and analyzed the results, and provided an executive summary. This plan year the LMI Center will provide secondary research on the survey data as requested by the WDC and other partners.

The LMI Center will complete work on the Employer Needs and Labor Availabilities Studies for the cities of Bismarck and Mandan this fall. The LMI Center partnered with the WDC and the Bismarck-Mandan Development Association (BMDA) to conduct an Employer Needs Study. North Dakota’s LMI staff developed the survey instrument and methodology, selected the sample, compiled the results, and is currently completing the

written analysis of the survey finding. In conjunction with the Employer Needs Study, a Labor Availability Study was also conducted by the BMDA, WDC, and the LMI Center. This unique combination of concurrent studies will allow civic leaders in Bismarck-Mandan to compare the workforce needs of businesses in their area with the available labor supply in their vicinity.

At the request of the WDC, local economic developers, and other state and local government agencies, the LMI Center has performed several impact analysis studies for various areas in North Dakota. Using the “IMPLAN” econometric input-output model, the LMI staff has studied the potential impact of new businesses moving into a community or of major employers closing in the community.

We will conduct other special studies for WDC as time and budget allow. In addition, we will continue to provide our expertise in survey design and statistical methodologies to support other special studies proposed by WDC and other partners.

North Dakota received letters of endorsement from the WDC and the Economic Development Foundation in support of our efforts to become a member of the LED partnership with the Census Bureau. The MOU between the Census Bureau and Job Service North Dakota has since been signed. We have submitted a history file of wage records and QCEW data to the Census Bureau and are now providing the Census Bureau with new quarter data as they become available. In return, the Census Bureau will provide a variety of quarterly workforce indicators each quarter. North Dakota is currently reviewing the first set of quarterly workforce indicators and is investigating the best ways to make this information available to our customers. This information has been highly sought after by the WDC and many other users.

The LMI Center will hold monthly economic briefing meetings and invite representatives from the Department of Commerce, OMB, Governor’s staff, Job Service, and Tax Department. These meetings discuss the monthly employment and unemployment data releases and other new workforce information, current economic conditions in the state, and a variety of other related topics.

In support of local economic development efforts and our local One-Stop offices, the LMI Center has recently developed new *Local Area Profiles* for those cities in which we have One-Stop Offices. Utilizing data from the QCEW program and other data sources, this brochure will provide data on industry employment and wages, number of firms, firm size, census information, and other related information for the current year, and enable comparisons to the previous year. The annual publication has been very beneficial to those cities as they promote their communities. However, the *Local Area Profiles* have been especially useful to those cities that are not MSAs and do not have any other source of employment-related information available for their city. This plan year, the LMI Center will produce a series of new-look *Local Area Profiles* with updated employment and wage information. In addition, we will update the statewide version of the *Local Area Profiles*.

The LMI Center will assist local One-Stop Offices and local economic developers in developing county workforce summaries similar to those in the LMI @ Work training sponsored by NSAWA. The LMI Center will also provide training on how to update these county summaries and in how these county summaries can be utilized in their communities.

The LMI Center will update the Largest Employer Listing on our website. This listing provides a ranking of the top 100 employers in North Dakota by total employment. In addition, we provide separate listings on our LMI Data Warehouse of the top employers for each of the 14 largest cities in North Dakota.

The LMI Center continues to be a state repository for census information. One of our LMI staff members is the Governor's census liaison and is heavily involved with the local dissemination and interpretation of census information in North Dakota.

In response to requests from local economic developers and Native American tribal leaders, we have developed *Demographic Profiles* publications based on the most recent census information. These publications will contain general demographic information, selected social characteristics, selected economic data, and housing characteristics and will be available in PDF format on our website. *Demographic Profiles* have been produced for all North Dakota counties, reservations, and MSAs and for selected cities and the state as a whole. In this plan year, we will do some minor updates and improvements to these profiles.

The LMI Center also receives a number of requests for Affirmative Action information. As a result, we will compile the most recent census information and create *Affirmative Action* packages for each of North Dakota counties and the state as a whole. The *Affirmative Action* package will be published as PDFs on our website.

In visiting with our customers, we have found that very few of them are aware of all the workforce information that is available to them, where it can be found, and even more importantly, how to use it correctly. In order to better explain all of the workforce information products and services available, the LMI Center will begin work on a *Guide to LMI* later this program year. This guide will be used to help educate our customers on what products and services are available and how to use them, provide explanations of some LMI terms and concepts, and will serve as a marketing tool for the LMI Center.

In addition to these special products and services provided in collaboration with the WDC, the LMI center provides many other ongoing products and services designed to meet the needs of the WDC and its local partners. In some cases, core products from the BLS programs have been modified or repackaged to meet the specific needs identified by the WDC, such as the local *Economy at a Glance* publications. Several of the publications described in Section 3 of this plan are also widely used by the WDC and its partner agencies.

Other special research projects will be done on an ad hoc basis, to meet the needs of customers. For example, it is very likely that the LMI Center will be heavily involved with the BRAC issues on the Grand Forks Air Force Base.

Customer Support: The customer input we have received from the WDC and related customer groups has been very positive. LMI is recognized as being responsive to their workforce informational needs and as a solid producer of accurate and timely data. Our partnership with the WDC and Department of Commerce on various special surveys has been a win-win situation.

How the deliverable supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan: The workforce information provided has helped to identify and quantify trends in North Dakota's workforce and provides information for the decision-making and strategic planning efforts of the WDC. In addition, many of the special surveys and studies we have done in partnership with the WDC have been extremely valuable to our One-Stop Offices as well. In particular, the special localized surveys on labor availability, job vacancies, skills needs assessments, fringe benefits, local employment, and IMPLAN studies have been used extensively by local One-Stops.

Principal Customers: The primary customers are the state WDC members and staff and those individuals who work closely with the Council, such as other state agencies, program administrators and planners, One-Stop Offices, Governor's office, and legislators.

Projected Outcomes and System Impacts:

The LMI Center will complete work on the labor availability studies by August 2006. Seventy-five (75) percent of the milestones will be completed by the end the grant year.

Planned Milestones:

Attend WDC meetings	As scheduled
Make presentations to WDC	As requested
Provide assistance and expertise on survey design and methodology	As requested
Monthly economic briefing meetings	Monthly
Provide Wage Record and QCEW files to Census Bureau for LED	Quarterly
Update Largest Employer Listings on website	Aug 2005
Complete BMDA Employer Needs and Labor Availability Studies	Sept 2005
Update <i>Local Area Profiles</i> for 13 Largest Cities (Annual)	Sept 2005
Update statewide <i>Local Area Profile</i> (Annual)	Sept 2005
Secondary Research on Occupational Skills Needs Assessment	As requested
Update <i>Demographic Profiles</i> on website	Feb 2006
LMI @ Work type workforce summaries	June 2006
Develop <i>Guide to LMI</i>	Aug 2006
Complete new round of Labor Availability Surveys	Aug 2006
Economic Impact Studies (IMPLAN)	As requested

Estimated Cost: \$70,000

5. Maintain and enhance electronic state workforce information delivery systems.

Description: One of the primary methods of disseminating workforce information in North Dakota is through our LMI website, the LMI Data Warehouse. The LMI Data Warehouse contains all the information on the ALMIS database as well as additional workforce information items produced only by North Dakota. We are constantly making improvements to our website by trying to make the data easier to access, to allow our customers to obtain information in a format most useful to them, and by allowing our users to see graphs, charts, and maps related to our data.

All data items produced in the LMI Center will be published on the LMI website. All hard-copy publications are loaded on the website as PDFs, and all current and historical data series are available in detail. We are continually seeking additional pertinent labor market information that we can add to our website.

The LMI website is integrated with the overall Job Service North Dakota website jobsnd.com. In coordination with this website, Job Service North Dakota implemented NDWorks/Virtual One-Stop, an enhanced on-line services system for job seekers and employers. NDWorks/Virtual One-Stop will contain basic information on occupational and industry projections, wages, employment, unemployment, employers, schools, demographics, occupational licenses and other workforce information taken from the ALMIS database. However, Virtual One-Stop will provide only a limited number of data items for the most current time period. NDWorks/Virtual One-Stop users will be able to link to the LMI Data Warehouse for more detailed, complete, and historical information. In addition to going directly to the LMI Data Warehouse or going to the LMI Data Warehouse through jobsnd.com, users will now have a third way of accessing LMI—through NDWorks/Virtual One-Stop.

Job Service North Dakota's new redesigned agency website, jobsnd.com, was unveiled last fall. This website has a cleaner look and integrates and displays the LMI links in a more user-friendly way. Users can now access the LMI Data Warehouse, LMI publications, LMI contact information, etc., in a more intuitive manner through this website. The LMI Center will continue to make suggestions to improve the access to LMI-related data on jobsnd.com.

North Dakota will continue to make enhancements to its electronic workforce information delivery system to make the system more user-friendly. New and updated data will be added to the LMI Data Warehouse as they become available.

During this grant year, North Dakota will continue the process of replacing or upgrading the LMI Data Warehouse. A Data Warehouse replacement work team has been studying how to best replace or upgrade the LMI Data Warehouse and still maintain consistency with our agency's website and Virtual One-Stop. This team is investigating the possibility of purchasing special LMI delivery systems from private vendors such as the Workforce Informer and Virtual LMI from GeoSolutions, contracting with an

independent website designer, or perhaps doing the redesign internally. The work team put on a Joint Applications Development (JAD) Session with representatives from IT, the LMI Center and several of our customers to obtain their feedback on what types of functionality and data sets needed to be incorporated into this new LMI Electronic Delivery System (LMI-EDS).

This major project is now a part of the agencywide Information Technology Plan and is being managed by our agency's IT department. As with many IT projects of this size, North Dakota has also experienced some delays due to limited IT resources, other priority projects on the agency's IT Plan, and other unforeseen issues. The development of a RFP is also taking longer than anticipated. As a result, the timetable laid out in the FY'04 Workforce Information Grant Plan has been revised. This project is now tentatively scheduled for completion in November 2006. (This date is subject to revision, depending on which strategy is chosen for the replacement project.)

Because we are a small state with limited resources, we have been strategically planning for this major project for some time and have consulted with ETA's LMI Federal Project Officer (FPO) on numerous occasions. As past grant savings opportunities have arisen, we have pooled the dollars associated with those savings with the long-term goal of upgrading the infrastructure of the major delivery mechanism for our workforce information. The delays experienced in this project have caused a pushback in the actual delivery date into the next program year. As a result, the pooled funds for the major expenditure will need to be carried over into the next program year as well.

Customer Support: Based on extensive consultations with internal and external customers, and an independent web consultant group hired by the agency, the LMI Data Warehouse is generally felt to be an excellent delivery system. However, some users felt it might be a bit too technical or contain too much data for some users. Customer input will be used to enhance the look and usability of the LMI Warehouse and jobsnd.com site. The same customer feedback will be utilized by the LMI Data Warehouse replacement team in planning for the new LMI electronic delivery system.

How the deliverable supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan: The electronic workforce information delivery system is integrated into Job Service North Dakota's web delivery system and, as such, is the core system for all the Wagner-Peyser and WIA activities in North Dakota. Although not specifically addressed in the two-year plan, an efficient LMI delivery system is implied as necessary for the LMI Center to meet customer needs.

Principal Customers: The electronic workforce information delivery system is used by a wide variety of customers. Job Service North Dakota administrative and One-Stop staff, LMI staff, WDC, businesses, job seekers, partner agencies, local and state economic developers, planners, students, teachers, counselors, private researchers and consultants—in short, anyone with access to a computer and in need of workforce information will utilize this system.

Projected Outcomes and System Impacts:

The LMI Center will have PDFs of all LMI publications loaded on the website within 30 days of publication.

Planned Milestones:

Continue to make improvements to current LMI website as needed	Ongoing
Update data items and add new items to current LMI website	Ongoing
Load all LMI publications on current LMI website in PDF	Ongoing
LMI will study options for upgrading LMI Warehouse	Aug 2005
Installation of new LMI electronic delivery system (tentative)	Jul 2006
Testing of new LMI electronic delivery system (tentative)	Aug-Oct 2006
New electronic LMI delivery system operational/online (tentative)	Nov 2006

Estimated Cost: \$40,849 from current grant year.

The estimated cost of the LMI Data Warehouse Replacement project including purchase, installation, and testing of new electronic delivery system is \$175,000. The balance of the cost of the LMI Data Replacement project will come from planned funds from our previous multi-year Workforce Information grants.

6. Support state workforce information training activities:

Description: There are two primary components to this activity: The continued training of the LMI Center staff and the expansion of training activities designed for our internal and external workforce information customers.

LMI staff will continue to attend training to improve their skills and knowledge, to learn about best practices from other states, to interact with other LMI staff members from around the nation, and to find out about program changes relating to workforce information development. Staff members will attend LMI Institute sponsored training, the LMI Forum, specialized workshops on using new software systems such as GIS, design and layout software packages, statistical analysis packages, projections, wage record analysis, use of occupational descriptors, etc.

We feel it is extremely important to provide training opportunities to LMI staff members in the latest research techniques, software, and national program changes as well as offering personal development opportunities, so that we can continue to be on the cutting edge as an LMI department. Because of our emphasis on becoming more customer focused in LMI, we have previously utilized Melanie Arthur from Greg Newton Associates on two occasions to train LMI staff and business services representative from our One-Stop Offices.

The second facet of this activity is providing training to our internal and external customers. The LMI staff provides a variety of training sessions and presentations to various groups including business associations, WDC groups, One-Stop staff, economic

developers, career counselors, civic associations, Commerce Department staff members, etc. on an ongoing basis.

Since the staff in our One-Stop offices has direct contact with both our business customers and job-seeker customers, they are in a unique position to provide our LMI products to these customers. Accordingly, the LMI Center will have training of those staff as a priority this plan year. Tentative plans are to provide separate training tailored specifically for business services representatives and for resource room staff, dislocated worker unit staff, counselors, etc. In addition to in-person training sessions, the LMI Center is designing an on-line training package for One-Stop Office staff. This training package, which will be available initially via the agency's Intranet, uses a case study approach for using the workforce information on the LMI Data Warehouse in working with business customers and job seekers.

Last winter the LMI Center developed specialized training package designed for local economic development professionals. This training package uses actual case studies to show local economic developers how workforce information can be utilized in putting together proposals to attract potential businesses, how to interpret the data, which types of data should be utilized for specific purposes, etc. This training was well received when presented last winter. This plan year, the LMI Center will use the evaluations we received from these sessions to tweak the training and then to present it to other economic development groups.

The LMI Center will partner with our One-Stop Offices in making LMI presentations to special groups. For example, an LMI staff member will team with One-Stop staff members in providing the LMI portion of re-employment workshops in the cities where significant layoffs have occurred. Other collaborative presentation/training sessions have been made to local economic development groups, civic and business groups, Job Corps staff, and educators. In cases where the LMI staff is not doing the actual presentations, they will provide local One-Stop Office staff with PowerPoints, speakers notes, and supporting information for their presentation.

As a result of the collaboration with our One-Stop Offices in presenting at re-employment workshops, it was suggested that the LMI Center develop a template of the types of LMI usually needed in working with dislocated workers. The LMI Center will develop this template and then provide training to the One-Stop staff on how to populate this template with the appropriate LMI and how to use it in those re-employment settings.

In partnership with North Dakota's Career Resource Network (NDCRN), and the State Vocational Education Department, the LMI Center will investigate the possibility of conducting an ICDM-type LMI training designed primarily for career counselors and related professionals. This lab-type training would show career counselors how to use various LMI products and services in assisting their clients in making informed career decisions.

The LMI Center will continue to be available for ad hoc types of presentations and training sessions for a variety of customers groups as time and budget allow.

Customer Support: The LMI staff provides input on what types of training they feel is necessary for them to best do their jobs. We also rely heavily on the evaluations and discussions we have had with our customers in planning appropriate LMI training. Based on feedback we have received from our customers, we have revised the ways we are doing some of our LMI training. Many of the current LMI training activities resulted from suggestions from customers.

How the deliverable supports the goals of the state's WIA/Wagner-Peyser Two-Year Strategic Plan: Since the One-Stop Offices provide LMI products directly to businesses and job seekers, they are one of the primary targets of our training efforts. It is important for One-Stop staff to be well trained in the LMI products and services we provide, so that they can integrate those products and services into their service delivery. The two-year plan was designed to be broad in terms of LMI training in order to give the LMI Center the flexibility it needs to meet the training needs of its staff and its customers.

Principal Customers: The primary users of this activity are LMI staff, One-Stop Office personnel, the Workforce Development Council and staff, business groups, guidance counselors, personnel for other state agency partners, and generally anyone using workforce information.

Projected Outcomes and System Impacts:

LMI staff will conduct a minimum of ten training sessions or LMI presentations to various customer groups. At least two LMI staff members will attend the LMI Forum.

Planned Milestones:

LMI Staff to ALMIS Institute Training	Ongoing
LMI Staff to Other Training as needed	Ongoing
LMI staff to LMI Forum	October 2005
Training and presentations to customer groups	Ongoing
Develop On-line LMI Training Modules	Fall 2005
Investigate possibility of ICDM type LMI training	Winter 2006
Update Specialized Training Package for Economic Developers	Winter 2006
Develop Specialized Training for Specific One-Stop Groups	Spring 2006
Develop Dislocated Worker Template & Training for One-Stops	Spring 2006

Estimated Cost: \$40,000

C. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION ASSESSMENT

As previously mentioned, we feel strongly that customer feedback is extremely important in planning for and developing an efficient and comprehensive workforce information delivery system. Accordingly, North Dakota will use a combination of strategies to

determine customer satisfaction with the workforce information and services provided by the LMI Center.

We will have participants of training sessions and attendees of our LMI presentations provide feedback via evaluation forms. These forms will be reviewed to ensure customer needs and expectations are met and that the goals of the training/presentations are met. Also during these sessions, informal discussions with the participants or audience will help to provide insight into the usefulness of our products and services.

North Dakota will visit with several of our key customers about our products and services in an informal focus group/discussion type setting. LMI staff will have one-on-one or group discussions with personnel from several One-Stop Offices, North Dakota Department of Commerce, state and local economic developers, WDC staff, NDCRN, businesses, and representatives from other state agency partners. To begin the dialog, we will ask for their specific comments, evaluations, or suggestions on such things as: what products are useful, which are not, how to improve products, suggestions for new products or services to meet unmet needs, how we can best train users, etc. We will discuss possible solutions or actions we can take based on this feedback.

North Dakota will conduct a customer satisfaction/customer needs mail survey as well. A sample of businesses, job seekers, and partner agencies will receive a customer satisfaction/customer needs survey. This survey will ask questions about usage of the various products or services, types of formats that are most useful, timeliness of information, suggestions for improvements, evaluations on the helpfulness of LMI staff, etc. In addition, this year's survey will also ask respondents to identify the types of workforce information that they need but that is currently not available, the levels of detail and geography necessary, how they would use this new information, and suggestions on how this new information or services could best be delivered. The results of this survey will be compiled and used in conjunction with the other modes of customer feedback for planning and evaluation purposes in the LMI Center.