



I-16: Eastern Passage Logistics, Distribution & Warehousing Work Ready Region Strategy Overview

The Work Ready Region concept links education and workforce development and aligns them with a specific regional industry cluster. The I-16 Eastern Passage region includes: Bryan, Bulloch, Candler, Emanuel and Liberty Counties. It also includes Chatham and Effingham Counties as “business partners” where many logistics firms located near the Georgia Ports Authority and the Port of Savannah employ workers from the I-16 Eastern Passage Work Ready Region.

Work Ready Region Strategy for the I-16 Eastern Passage

Vision

The I-16 Eastern Passage counties will gain market share for logistics and logistics-reliant businesses located in and around the Port of Savannah by providing a globally competitive workforce.

Distinctions

The I-16 Eastern Passage Region is anchored by the rapidly growing Port of Savannah:

- The Port of Savannah is the fastest-growing port in the United States, and the fourth-largest container port in the United States
- The Port of Savannah and related activities are expected to add as many as 40,000 jobs within the next four years
- Recent growth combined with projected new activity is contributing to dramatic increases in warehousing and distribution firms locating in the I-16: Eastern Passage Region (including its business partner counties)

Building the strategy

Goals

- Validate, assess and eliminate the skills gap that the logistics and distribution companies suggest is a challenge for regional workers to gain employment in the industry
- Design a plan to manage the education and training needs to fill that gap and use the Georgia Work Ready system of assessments, skills gap training and job profiles to ensure a competitive workforce for the logistics industry to boost their bottom line
- Integrate education and workforce development activities into a seamless system that supports the logistics industry
- Demonstrate that the region’s workforce has available skills through a nationally recognized credential

Where will we compete?

Logistics-related businesses that:

- Serve markets in the Southeastern U.S.
- Desire easy access through an excellent Interstate and rail system
- Seek relatively easy access to the Port of Savannah
- Prefer more rural locations

What will we accomplish?

In the short term (18 months):

- Develop a sustainable, growing Logistics Industry Network
- Identify a nucleus of several key logistics or related companies located in the region that have already demonstrated an interest in certification to serve as a network of industry champions
- Produce 10-15 job profiles specifically for logistics industry positions within the next nine months
- Ensure all region counties are on path to become Certified Work Ready Communities
- Increase the proportion of gold-level Work Ready Certificates in the emerging workforce from 18 to 20 percent (i.e., close the skill gap by 2 percent)
- Develop a “seamless” educational pathway for individuals interested in a variety of logistics career opportunities

In the long term (beyond 18 months):

- Achieve certificates for 2,494 individuals with 25 percent reaching gold level
- Secure Certified Work Ready Community status for each county in the region
- Identify additional positions that may need profiling beyond those already completed
- Manage talent development for logistics industry and ensure a pipeline exists for critical occupations
- Refine existing education and training curriculum to reflect Industry Network input
- Develop and implement a communication plan for sharing success stories to companies and job seekers in the logistics industry
- Achieve an increase in the base pay for certified workers in logistics and related occupations