

The 2020-2025 Tioga County Workforce Development Strategy



June 2020





Executive Summary

Communities across the United States are undertaking strategic initiatives to create a coordinated response for employers and jobs seekers; one that serves to mitigate the skills gaps and mismatches, drives innovative workforce development policies and programs, and aligns and adapts in response to the evolving workforce environment.

By taking a leadership role in shaping its continued evolution, Tioga County is joining these innovative communities in leveraging the opportunities for workforce development. As a human-resource based holistic approach to economic growth, a strategic workforce development plan gives consideration to labor supply and the influencing factors that sway their decisions on where they chose to work and live.

This 2020-2025 Tioga County Workforce Development Strategy is Tioga County's response to facilitate connections between and among local school districts, higher learning institutions, local and major employers. This strategy outlines a roadmap to realize a highly qualified and skilled talent pipeline that supports alignment with local employer needs. It is an integrated approach that accounts for the current level of planning support and provides direction in the form of short, medium, and longer-term actions to guide the County's workforce initiatives for the next five years.

Identified as a key goal in the 2018 & 2019 Tioga County Economic Development & Planning Annual Report, the project was completed over two phases. Phase I; completed in May 2019, included a community profile of Tioga County, as well as a workforce pipeline analysis, to assess the demand for workers in the next five years. The study focused on five key industries for the Tioga County economy, including advanced manufacturing; health care services; warehousing and distribution; hospitality; and professional services. The Phase 1 report, *Identifying the Labor & Talent Supply Report*, is presented as an Appendix to the Strategy. Among the key findings of this study, it is worth noting:

- The population in Tioga County has decreased by 4.8% in the last decade.
- A third of the people in the County are over 55 years of age.
- 8% of the County's total talent supply has not graduated high school. The participation rate of this group reached 56% in 2017, the lowest of all groups; this group also registered the largest unemployment rate with 12%.
- The top employment industry sectors in Tioga are manufacturing (13.6%), educational services (13.6%), retail trade (13.5%) and health care and social assistance (13.1%).
- The sector that added more jobs to Tioga County was accommodation and food services (514 employees), followed by mining, quarrying and oil/gas extraction (175 employees), and real estate, rental, and leasing (171 employees).
- The highest employing occupations in Tioga County are management, business, science, and arts occupations, accounting for 35% of total employment.
- 79% of all establishments in Tioga County employ 1 to 9 people.
- By 2015, 59% of Tioga's County labor force worked outside the region. Only 22% of Tioga's labor force live and work within the County.



- 30 out of 33 businesses surveyed said they had experienced challenges in recruiting, hiring, and retaining talent, according to the respondents, the most difficult occupations to hire or retain are engineers, nurses, and machine operators.

Phase II of the Strategy was formulated in 2020 by Tioga County Economic Development and Planning (TEAM Tioga) and the Tioga County Rural Economic Area Partnership LDC through a USDA Rural Business Development Grant. As identified in the 2019 Tioga County Economic Development & Planning Annual Report, the key goals of the Strategy include:

- A strategic action plan that will identify priorities and actions needed to help employers attract and develop talent and workforce supply for today and the future
- Strategies that will connect local school districts and higher learning institutions, with employers, to create a highly qualified and skilled workforce pipeline
- A labor strategy vision for Tioga County

Upon the completion of the validation session, the Strategy was refined, and performance metrics for achieving outcomes were developed. Evident throughout the research and consultation undertaken for this Strategy is a clear recognition for a more coordinated approach to workforce development. TEAM Tioga is envisioned at the center of this effort along with strengthened partnerships with Local School Districts, Post-Secondary Institutions, Career & Educational Services, other local economic development and workforce development organizations and community partners. In addition, to greater/improved collaboration and communication, stakeholder insights also called for a focus on aligning worker skills with local employer needs, providing support for the local workforce, and raising awareness of employment opportunities in the County.

Driven through research, four distinct themes emerged for the 2020-2025 Tioga County Workforce Development Strategy. They are collectively termed the '4-C's for Workforce Development' and are illustrated below.

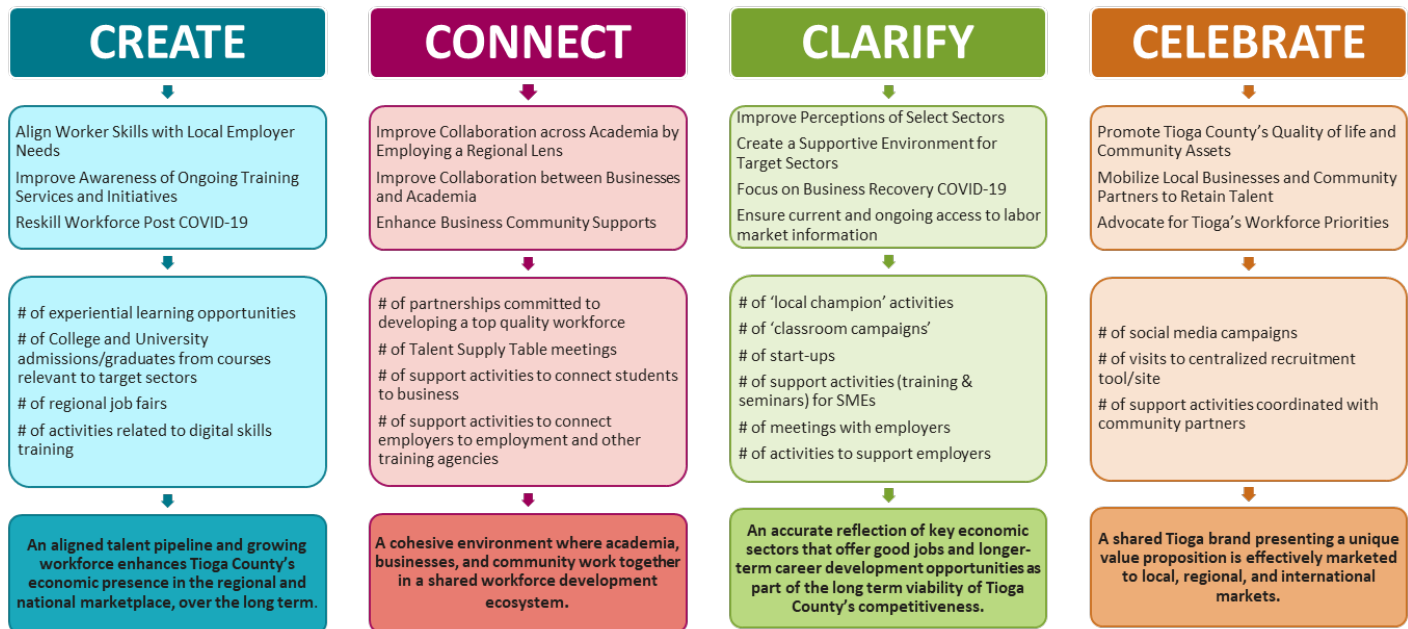
Strategic Themes - '4-C's for Workforce Development'



Actions identified under each of the strategic themes either support or build on existing initiatives that are underway across the County. Implementation will be a collective effort, particularly given the structure of TEAM Tioga. In addition, key performance indicators measure performance.



Key Performance Indicators for Workforce Actions



The Tioga County Workforce Development Strategy is intended as a living document for the community as it shapes the current and future local workforce to meet local economic needs now and into the future. In implementing these actions, Tioga County envisions to be a community that exemplifies creativity and innovation, driving success and competitive positioning for our labor force and the economy.

TIOGA COUNTY, NY

Snapshot on demographics
and Labor Force



Population (2017)



48,578
-4.5% from 2010

Age Groups (2017)

Under 18 **22%**
18 to 54 **45%**
55 + **33%**

Labor Force (Participation Rate 2017)

65.5%
-4% from 2010

Median Household Income (2017)



\$57,153

Unemployment (2017)

5.2%

Household median income is similar to the national median household income and higher than those of surrounding counties.

Unemployment is higher among people 16 to 19 years of age, and people with less than high school education.

Education and Field of Study (2017)

	% of the population
Less than 9th grade	2%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	7%
High school graduate	35%
Post-secondary education	56%
— Some college, no degree	20%
— Associate's degree	11%
— Bachelor's degree	15%
— Graduate or professional degree	10%



38%

of people have a bachelor's degree in science and engineering

TIOGA COUNTY, NY

Snapshot on
target sectors



Advanced Manufacturing

(2017)

21

Businesses with
employees in the
sector



3,245

total employment in
the sector



-21

employees over the last
five years have left the
industry's labor pool (0.6%
decline)



1,065

anticipated demand for employees in the
next five years (500 exits, 339 employees
lost, 900 transfers into different industries
or jobs outside of Tioga County)

Health Care Services

(2017)

76

Businesses with
employees in health
care



1,367

total employment in
the sector



108

employees over the last five
years have entered the
industry's labor pool (8%
growth)



758

anticipated demand for employees in the
next five years (369 exits, 17 new
employees, 371 transfers into different
industries or jobs outside of Tioga County)

Warehousing and Distribution

(2017)

15

Businesses with
employees in the
sector



681

total employment in
the sector



37

employees over the last
five years have entered the
industry's labor pool (5%
growth)



362

anticipated demand for employees in the
next five years (157 exits, 6 employees lost,
211 transfers into different industries or
jobs outside of Tioga County)

Hospitality

(2017)

92

Businesses with
employees in the
sector



1,464

total employment in
the sector



602

employees over the last
five years have entered the
industry's labor pool
(41.1% growth)



1,031

anticipated demand for employees in the
next five years (489 exits, 70 employees
lost, 611 transfers into different industries
or jobs outside of Tioga County)

Professional Services

(2017)

57

Businesses with
employees in the
sector



427

total employment in
the sector



-15

employees over the last
five years have left the
industry's labor pool (0.7%
decline)



193

anticipated demand for employees in the
next five years (69 exits, 9 new employees,
115 transfers into different industries or
jobs outside of Tioga County)

Data sources:

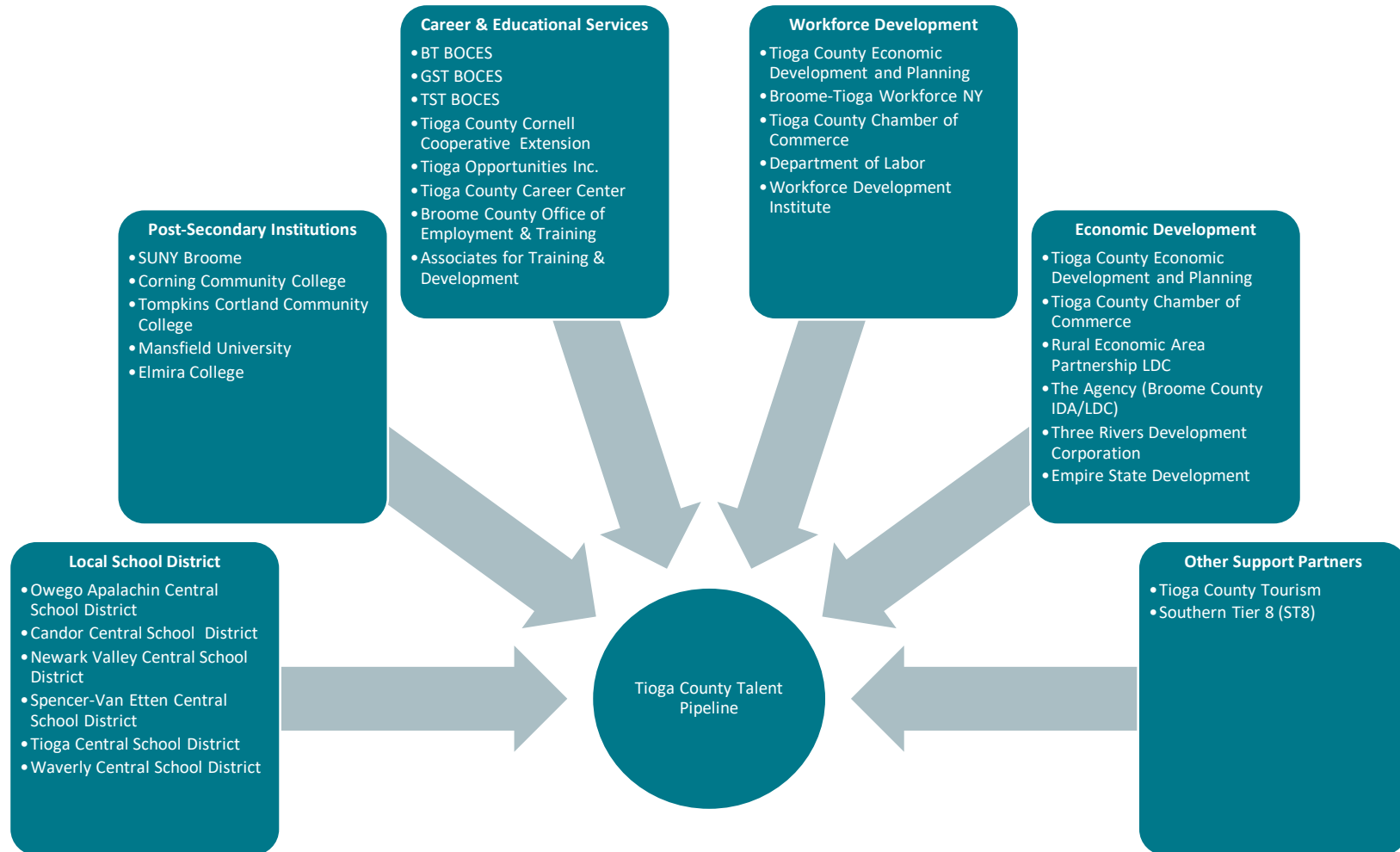
U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey
U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 County Business Patterns

Source: JobsEQ®





Tioga County Workforce Stakeholders





Recommendation #1: Create → Augment the Training & Skills Development Ecosystem

Create		Potential Lead	Potential Partners	Timing
Action 1: Align Worker Skills with Local Employer Needs				
1	Examine opportunities to encourage continuous experiential learning (job shadowing, placements, dual credit, and pre-apprenticeship) whereby students receive on-the-job experience and earn micro-credentials to demonstrate skills, knowledge, and abilities.	TEAM Tioga	School districts	Short
2	Pilot an annual youth employment fair to increase access of youth to employment, training, and career resources and services. This may be a virtual event that would suggest a County-wide initiative.	School Districts	Tioga County Business Services TEAM	Short to Medium
3	In collaboration with school districts and post-secondary, develop a targeted digital skills training/reskilling to increase skills alignment with employer needs.	TEAM Tioga, School Districts, Post-secondary	TC Chamber, TCCC, A4TD, Local employers	Medium
4	To promote employee retention, support the establishment of career laddering within local businesses to enable upskilling and workplace advancement for employees.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, TCCC, Local employers	Medium
5	To improve job retention and career growth, increase local access to soft skills training programs to promote broader access and participation. (Skillsoft may be one option to explore).	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, TCCC, Local employers	Medium
Action 2: Improve Awareness of Ongoing Training Services and Initiatives				
1	Investigate the feasibility of a part-time or full-time workforce coordinator to support strategy implementation and ongoing collaboration to address workforce priorities.	School districts	TEAM Tioga	Short
2	Promote programs such as the Accelerated Apprenticeship Program (AAP) to ensure skills training in the manufacturing sector.	TEAM Tioga	NYS-A	Short
3	Create a regional database that highlights the range of workforce training programs and services provided by Tioga	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber	Short to Medium



	County and partners. Provide the database as a digital version with links to training providers. This increases access to information resources.			
Action 3: Reskill Workforce Post COVID-19				
1	Carry out a business survey to inform on and respond to the specific impacts of COVID-19 on businesses and their workforce.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, TCCC	Short
2	Develop and promote workplace supports to best position employers and employees to successfully interact with customers and clients for quality customer service experience.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, TCCC, Public Health	Short to Medium
3	Launch digital skills and awareness programs focussed on data visualization and machine learning to enable workers to operate in a digital environment.	TEAM Tioga, School Districts, Post-secondary	TC Chamber, TCCC, A4TD, Local employers	Medium to Long



Recommendation #2: Connect → Enhance Partnerships and Collaboration between and among Stakeholders

Connect		Potential Lead	Potential Partners	Timing
Action 1: Improve Collaboration across Academia by Employing a Regional Lens				
1	Maintain regular interaction and discussions with school districts to understand their challenges fully, and promote opportunities for collaboration for program development, design, and delivery.	TEAM Tioga	School districts	Short
2	Continue to promote the OACSD STEAM Academy to maximize interest and strengthen a regional competitive advantage.	TEAM Tioga	CCE, BOCES	Short
3	Building on the existing collaboration among school districts (Owego & Waverly), facilitate opportunities to create a centralized collaborative model that engages other school districts and BOCES to share best practices, programs, and services. The model may be piloted in select districts for evaluation and fit for the County.	TEAM Tioga	School districts, BOCES	Short
Action 2: Improve Collaboration between Businesses and Academia				
1	Continue to advocate for greater awareness of the importance of employability skills and the development of an employer-driven, competency-based career pathways system.	TEAM Tioga		Short
2	Building on the AAP, explore opportunities to promote the four-year NYS Apprenticeship program programs in the County.	TEAM Tioga	NYS-A	Short
3	Undertake an annual labor force survey to understand current skill sets and career aspirations of job seekers, students, recent graduates, underemployed, and unemployed.	TCCC	TEAM Tioga	Short
4	Establish a Talent Supply Table that brings together business, industry, educators, and employment support organizations to ensure open dialogue, knowledge exchange, and information sharing. The table may meet 2-3 times a year.	TEAM Tioga		Short
5	Establish a “speakers bureau” that links local employers with students in a school setting to share success stories, describe workplace experiences, and promote career exploration.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, Local employers	Medium



Action 3: Enhance Business Community Supports				
1	Create a framework to ensure that key insights related to employer needs for skills and training gathered through local economic development and business member associations, is aggregated, and examined for appropriate action. A red flag system will support the identification of pressing issues.	TEAM Tioga		Medium
2	Explore the feasibility of a public-private recruitment coalition (i.e., Colorado Technology Recruiting Coalition) to formalize and share talent recruitment and retention strategies, align messaging, and strengthen local talent alignment.	TEAM Tioga		Medium
3	To mobilize the underutilized workforce, create a business case that demonstrates the Return on Investment of retaining or rehiring workers who have retired or are semi-retired.	TEAM Tioga	A4TD	Medium



Recommendation #3: Clarify → Reflect Tioga County’s Sectors & Employers

Clarify		Potential Lead	Potential Partners	Timing
Action 1: Improve Perceptions of Select Sectors				
1	Engage sector representatives to act as ‘local champions’ and promote current day workplaces and occupations, reflecting manufacturing advancements, showcasing skilled trades, promoting agricultural careers, and demonstrating career advancement opportunities in such sectors as tourism, manufacturing, and areas of skilled trades.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, Local employers	Short
2	Sponsor a classroom competition in middle school to empower students to create a campaign to promote sectors and occupations that have negative perceptions. This can be used to engage students and parents in career discussions.	School districts, BOCES	TEAM Tioga	Short
3	Continue to promote initiatives that showcase STEAM in Tioga and regional school districts, for example, Lockheed Martin’s Engineers Day.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, Local employers	Short
4	Work with schools to create practical shop classes that include job camps, job shadowing, guest speakers and pre-apprenticeship programs, and programs such as the OACSD Building and Construction Trade Program.	TEAM Tioga	School districts, BOCES	Short to Medium
5	Increase student exposure to select occupations through shop classes in the school curriculum, with a focus on promoting the complete supply chain opportunities spanning all skill levels, for example, managerial positions and industrial welders in the manufacturing sector.	TEAM Tioga	School districts, BOCES	Short to Medium
Action 2: Create a Supportive Environment for Target Sectors				
1	Develop a business resource guide that assists businesses with human resources management, recruitment and retention, talent attraction, and access to information on grants, support programs.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber, Broome-Tioga Workforce NY	Short
2	Develop a business workshop series in satellite locations across Tioga County to increase awareness of services and programming available to small and medium businesses.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber	Medium



3	Explore the opportunity to establish an incubator and/or co-working space to support business growth and expansion. Growing these businesses will support job creation.	TEAM Tioga	Post-secondary, STEAM academy	Medium to Long
Action 3: Focus on Business Recovery Post COVID-19				
1	In conjunction with workforce partners, develop a diagnostic tool that will help businesses to identify skills gaps in their business continuity plan and emergency preparedness.	TEAM Tioga	Broome-Tioga Workforce NY, TC Chamber	Short
2	Promote existing initiatives such as the COVID-19 Emergency Relief Loan Program and those available through the Workforce Investment Board to support workforce transition back to work.	TEAM Tioga		Short
Action 4: Ensure current and ongoing access to labor market information				
1	Conduct an annual Employer Survey to inform a current and reflective profile of employer job demand, occupation vacancies, and labor market challenges.	TCCC	TEAM Tioga	Short
2	Seek and procure funding to implement this workforce development strategy, including projects that connect secondary and college students and graduates with local businesses.	TEAM Tioga		Short
3	Leverage available labor market tools to craft target messaging that supports the decision-making process for employers, job seekers, students, and educational institutions.	TEAM Tioga		Medium
4	Maintain an aggregated assessment of enrollment and graduation data across all educational institutions to inform on talent pipeline development and alignment between talent development and economic growth sectors.	TEAM Tioga	CCE Tioga	Medium



Recommendation #4: Celebrate → Facilitate a common marketing effort for Tioga County

Celebrate		Potential Lead	Potential Partners	Timing
Action 1: Promote Tioga County's Quality of life and Community Assets				
1	Develop a workforce marketing profile that highlights Tioga County's lifestyle, affordability, cultural experiences, and recreational opportunities. Provide the profile to local employers and community partners to market the County and aid in recruitment efforts.	TEAM Tioga		Short
2	Raise the profile of local businesses and Tioga County through pop-up locations in post-secondary institutions.	TEAM Tioga	TC Chamber	Short to Medium
3	As part of an attraction effort, coordinate with academia to promote Tioga County's employment opportunities to alumni who have left the County.	TEAM Tioga	Post-secondary	Medium
4	Coordinate with community partners to provide authentic and transformative tourism experiences that attract tourists and potential residents ¹⁹ .	TCT		Medium
5	Develop a centralized recruitment tool/site where employers post jobs, and where job seekers can find local opportunities. Promote this site within and outside of the County to expand talent attraction efforts.	TEAM Tioga	Broome-Tioga Workforce NY, TC Chamber	Medium to Long
Action 2: Mobilize Local Businesses and Community Partners to Retain Talent				
1	Using common messaging across all Partners, develop a social media campaign using platforms that are popular among students, youth, and young professionals.	Tioga County	TEAM Tioga	Short to Medium
2	Engage local industry associations/business associations as key stakeholders to advance employer outreach initiatives such as business surveys, resources, and information dissemination.	TEAM Tioga		Short to Medium

¹⁹ Regional tourism is an attractive talent attraction tool, especially given current pandemic environment which has limited international and national travel.



Action 3: Advocate for Tioga’s Workforce Priorities				
1	Advocate for the REAP Zone initiatives to stimulate economic and community development in the County	REAP LDC	TEAM Tioga	Short
2	Support the development of a diversity of affordable housing options to encourage talent attraction and retention.	TOI	TEAM Tioga; TCPDC	Medium
3	Continue to seek out opportunities to engage with community partners, including childcare, transportation, and housing organizations, to influence local decisions pertaining to the needs of the workforce.	TEAM Tioga	TOI; TCPDC; School Districts	Medium
4	Investigate and advance broadband capacity across the County.	Tioga County	TEAM Tioga	Long



Figure 9: Key Performance Indicators for Workforce Actions

