Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 4-Year Regional Planning Unit Plan Program Years 2021-2024

Local Workforce Development Area(s)

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Executive Summary

This 4-year Regional Plan comes at a pivotal time for the South Central Coast region and its local components. The full impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are still unknown, but deliberate and strategic recovery efforts will be essential in helping the region rebuild towards a more prosperous and equitable future. This Regional Plan aims to unite RPU members around ways to actualize the vision and policy objectives provided in the State Plan. Fulfilling this vision will require partners to regularly collaborate across agencies, programs, and funding streams to align strategic efforts, investments, and service delivery activities to meet shared outcomes within common in-demand industry sectors.

This Regional Plan seeks to address the state's formal guidance while also considering the temporary and permanent effects that the pandemic will have. RPU members are confident that the themes and objectives outlined in this plan will assist in the steady recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, while fostering relationships with partners, and working towards more equitable opportunities for workers in the region.

The South Central Coast RPU builds upon the following strategic goals provided by the state:
1. Fostering demand-driven skills attainment by:
    a. Leveraging labor market data to uncover strategic opportunities and gaps in training and education.
2. Enabling upward mobility for all Californians by:
    a. Investing in specific career pathways in key industries, working with regional partners and stakeholders, and ensuring access through AJCCs.
3. Aligning, coordinating, and integrating programs and services by:
    a. Close collaboration with Community Colleges and Adult Education providers, Community Based Organizations, non-profits, industry and chambers representatives, and other local organizations.

A central component of this Regional Plan involves identifying target and growth opportunity industries and occupational pathways within those industries. The South Central Coast RPU's Regional Plan relies upon the following to drive findings and strategies:
    a. The most-up-to-date labor market information available to identify the current state of the volatile labor market and local economy;
    b. Engagement with regional and industry leaders to get details beyond labor market data; and
    c. Consideration toward macroeconomic influences and equity ramifications.

The foundational data that comprises this Regional Plan is the first step towards more informed decision and policy-making among the South Central Coast RPU and its regional partners.

Analytical Overview of the South Central Coastal Region

This section of the Regional Plan discusses key metrics and characteristics of the regional labor force and resident population. Understanding these metrics—both before and during the pandemic—identifies key opportunities and challenges for the regional workforce, allowing the RPU to make informed and strategic decisions as the recovery continues.

COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts

The South Central Coast regional economy changed suddenly in late March of 2020. The spread of the novel Coronavirus across the U.S. led to unprecedented stay-at-home orders and economic turmoil. As of the writing of this report, the economic effects of COVID-19 and the associated public health orders are in flux. This section utilizes propriety models developed by the research team as well as proprietary data aggregated and prepared by Opportunity Insights, a team of researchers at Harvard University, to provide the most current data that capture the present workforce environment. The Opportunity Insights data is compiled from a range of private sources, which provide a near real-time picture of national and local economies.[1]

EMPLOYMENT IMPACTS

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment had been on a downward trend since 2016. By April of 2020, the unemployment rate had jumped to 13.9% compared to 4.1% at the start of 2020. The April unemployment rate in 2020 was 348% higher than in April 2019, representing 37,000 people out of work. Since the April peak, unemployment has dropped to a lower 6.2% in October 2020, which still presents an unemployment rate that is more than twice as high as the year before (Figure 1).

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[1] For more information about the Opportunity Insights data and methodology, please visit https://www.tracktherecovery.org/

Figure 1. Monthly Unemployment Rates in South Central Coast region (2016 – October 2020),[2] Not Seasonally-Adjusted
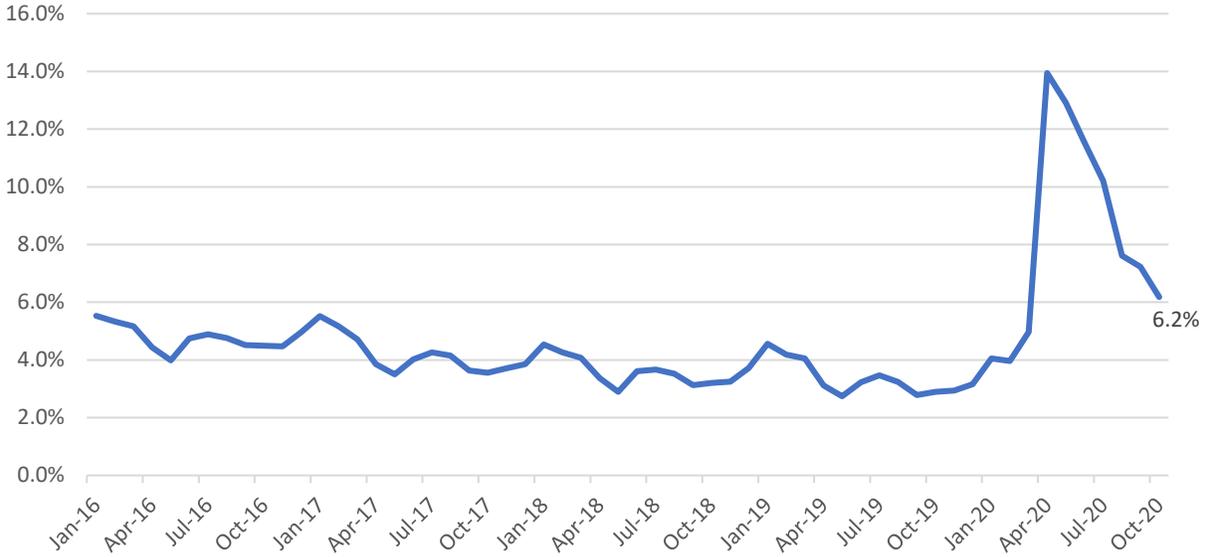
The losses of employment due to business restrictions and decreased consumer activity have had unequal impacts on workers across the economy, resulting in a 'K-shaped' recovery. As Figure 2 highlights, the lowest-earning quartile of workers (or those earning less than $27,000 per year) has borne the brunt of the economic impacts, with a 21% decline in employment relative to the January average. In contrast, workers in the highest-earning quartile (those earning more than $60,000 a year) saw a similar initial 17% decline in employment but quickly recovered. As of the end of September, these higher-earning jobs had seen a modest increase in employment from January 2020 levels. As the South Central Coast region looks to support the recovery of local workers and the economy, it will be important to target efforts to support the populations that have seen the greatest economic harm.
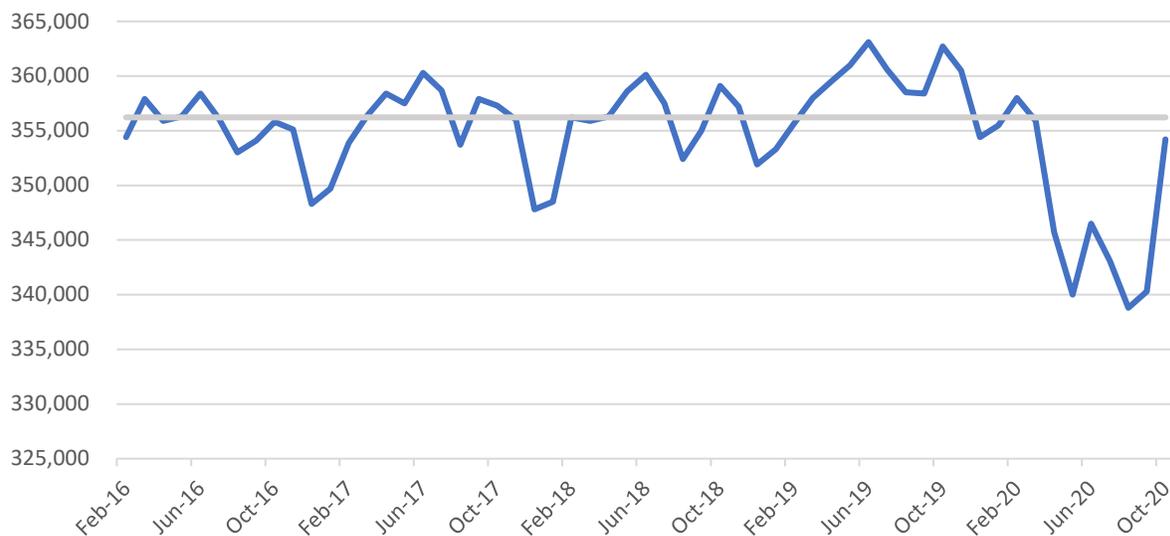
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[2] Unemployment Rate and Labor Force Data Table. State of California Employment Development Department. Extracted December 10, 2020.

Figure 2. Change in Employment by Worker Income[3]
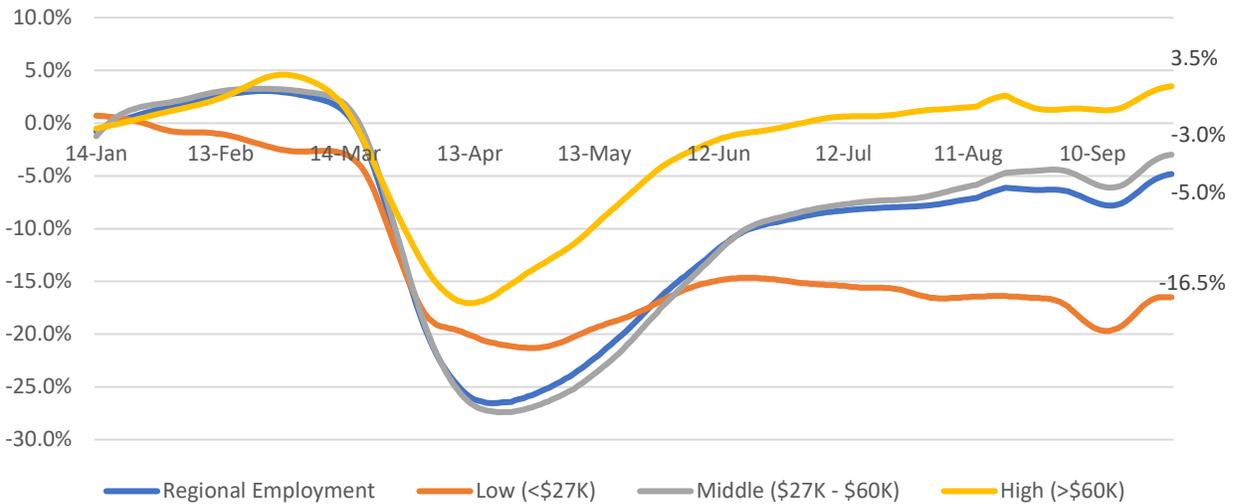
Until as recently as October 2020, the number of people in the South Central Coast region labor force in 2020 was significantly lower than the historical average. In fact, in September 2020, there were 4.5% fewer people in the labor force than in the average four years prior, and 5.1% fewer than September 2019. October 2020 saw a huge rebound in labor force participation, resulting in only 0.6% fewer people in the labor force than the prior four years (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Labor Force Participation (2016 – October 2020)[4]

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[3] "The Economic Impacts of COVID-19: Evidence from a New Public Database Built Using Private Sector Data", by Raj Chetty, John Friedman, Nathaniel Hendren, Michael Stepner, and the Opportunity Insights Team. November 2020. Available at: https://opportunityinsights.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/tracker_paper.pdf

[4] Unemployment Rate and Labor Force Data Table. State of California Employment Development Department. Extracted December 10, 2020.

INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC EMPLOYMENT CHANGES

The research team developed a model to provide region-specific estimates of the labor market to better understand the industry-specific changes. These estimates, produced using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and local unemployment claims, showcase the disparate effects the pandemic has had on regional labor markets. This information is useful in projecting which industries will see the strongest recoveries from the pandemic as cases begin to recede.

An examination of industry clusters reveals that industry-specific employment losses are likely a driving force behind the pandemic's unequal impacts on employment. For example, of the five industry clusters with the highest average earnings, employment losses between February and October are between 1% and 7% (Figure 4). Later figures will highlight how these losses among high-earning industries are relatively minor compared to lower-earning industry clusters.

Figure 4. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects on High-Earning Industry Clusters (February-October 2020)
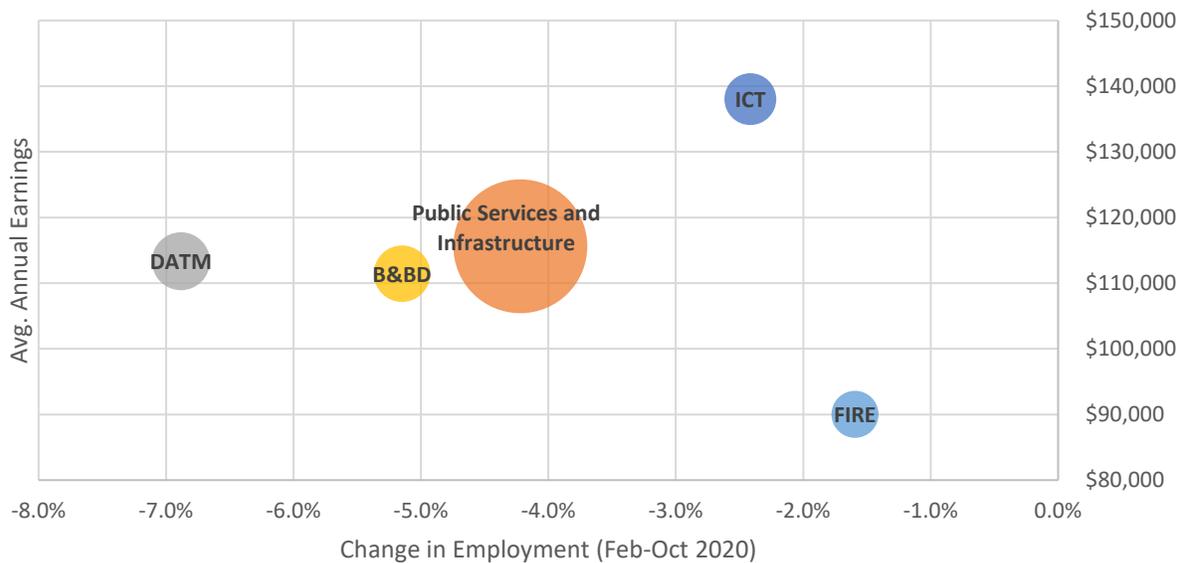
*Size of Bubble Reflects Absolute Change in Industry Employment

Employment losses among mid-earning industries (Figure 5) have been greater than higher-earning industries in Figure 4. Aside from Logistics, all industry clusters with mid-level earnings have seen 9% declines in employment or greater. Healthcare, which may seem counter-intuitive to have declined during this time, has seen employment declines as a result of delayed elective surgeries.

Figure 5. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects on Mid-Earning Industry Clusters (February-October 2020)

Size of Bubble Reflects Absolute Change in Industry Employment

Employment among the lowest-earning industry clusters has seen the greatest swings in employment. With the exception of agriculture, which has seen a boost of employment driven by seasonal demand, employment losses have been steep (Figure 6). Tourism, Hospitality, and Recreation have been hit the hardest, as typical tourism activities and other discretionary spending activities have been put on hold.
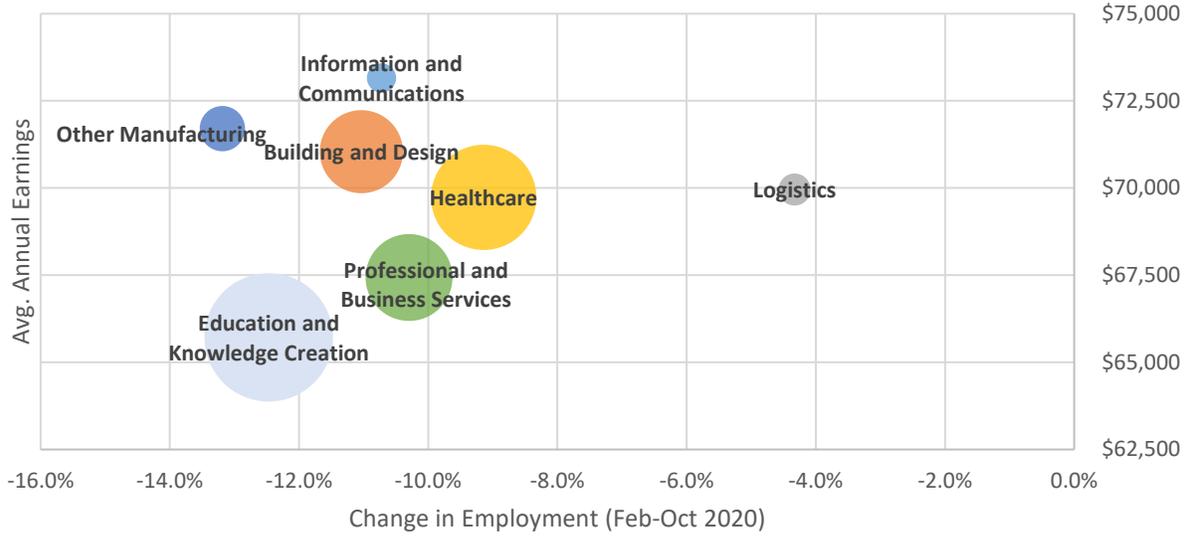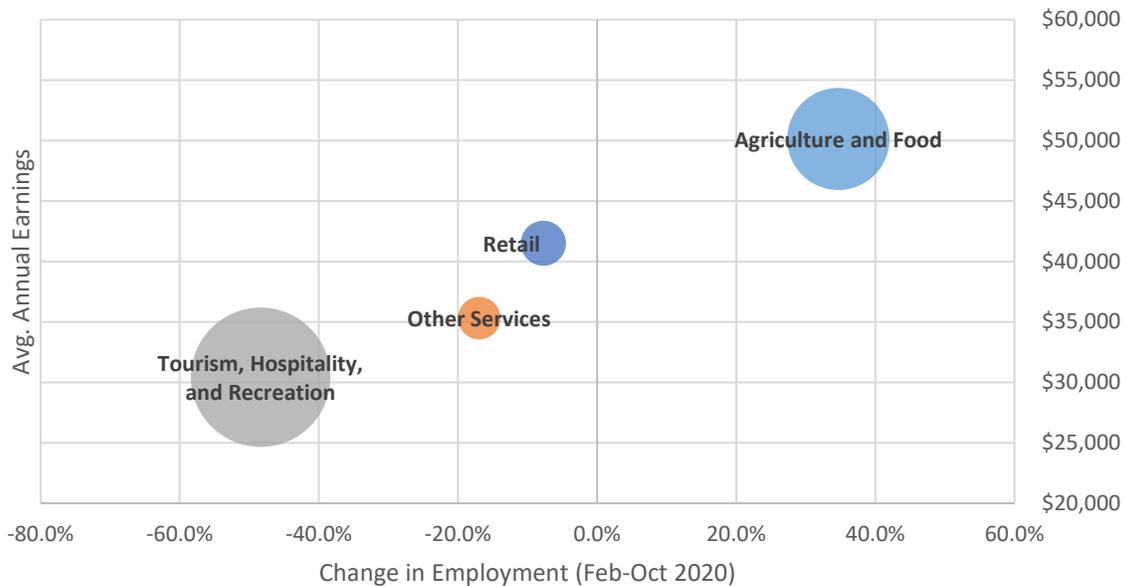
Figure 6. COVID-19 Pandemic Effects on Low-Earning Industry Clusters (February-October 2020)

Size of Bubble Reflects Absolute Change in Industry Employment

NEW JOBS AND ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

Online job postings across the state have seen modest rebounds towards pre-pandemic levels, though many industries continue to see depressed postings for new positions. For example, the number of job postings in Leisure and Hospitality and Professional Business Services are still 53% and 44% lower than the average number of postings at the start of the year. Suppressed hiring, particularly among the hardest-hit industries, suggests that displaced workers in these industries may remain displaced for longer, making the return to work more difficult.

Figure 7. Statewide Job Postings[5]
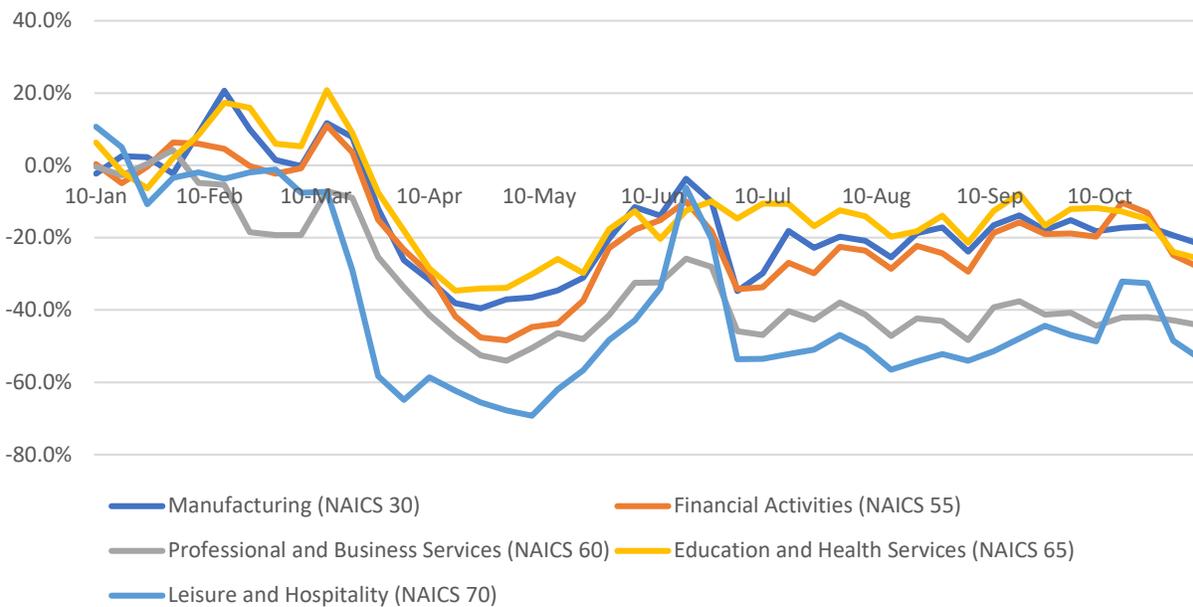
While the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unparalleled impact on the economy, considering the state of the economy before the pandemic is useful in considering what the recovery may look like and provide some guidance on how local policies can best leverage existing economic strengths.

The South Central Coast region had about 374,800 workers in 2019. Between 2014 and 2019, the region added nearly 25,000 jobs, amounting to a 7.1% increase in employment (Figure 8).

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[5] Opportunity Insights "Tracking the Recovery"

Figure 8. South Central Coast Region Employment (2014-2019)[6]
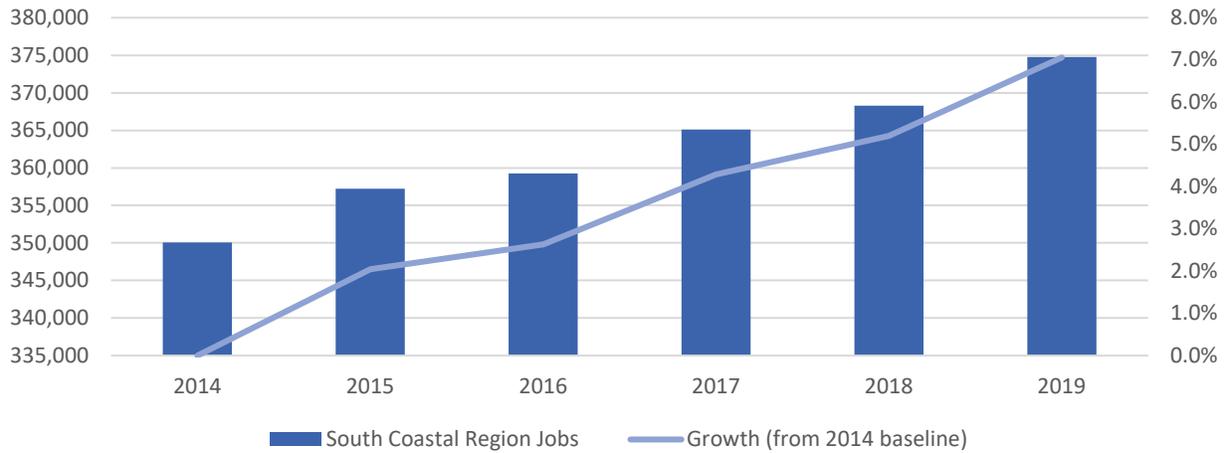
Race and Ethnicity

About four-fifths (81%) of the Southern Coastal Region population identifies as White, and just over a third (36%) of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino (Figure 9).[7] Over the past five years, the Southern Coastal Region has seen a modest increase in residents who identify as White, Asian, Hispanic or Latino, or two or more races (Figure 10).

Figure 9. Race and Ethnicity of Southern Coastal Region Population (2018)[8]

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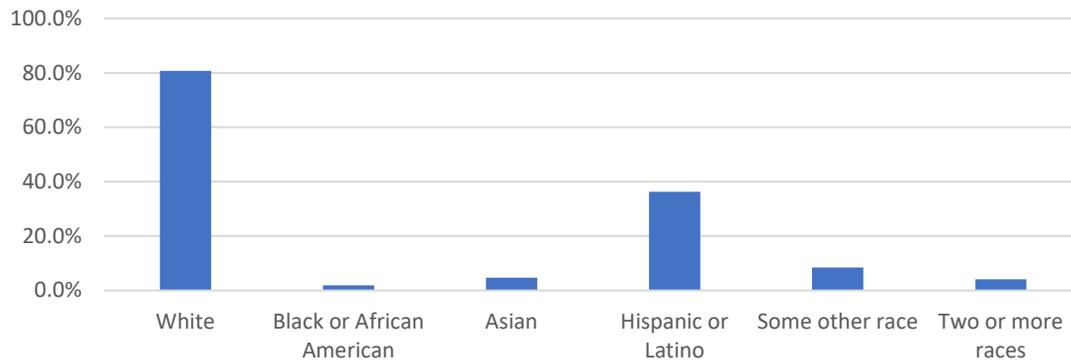
[6] Emsi 2020.3

[7] Note: The Census Bureau asks first about race (which excludes Hispanic or Latino) and then asks about ethnicity (Hispanic or Latino, or not). Thus, a respondent may identify as both White and Hispanic or Latino.

[8] American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.
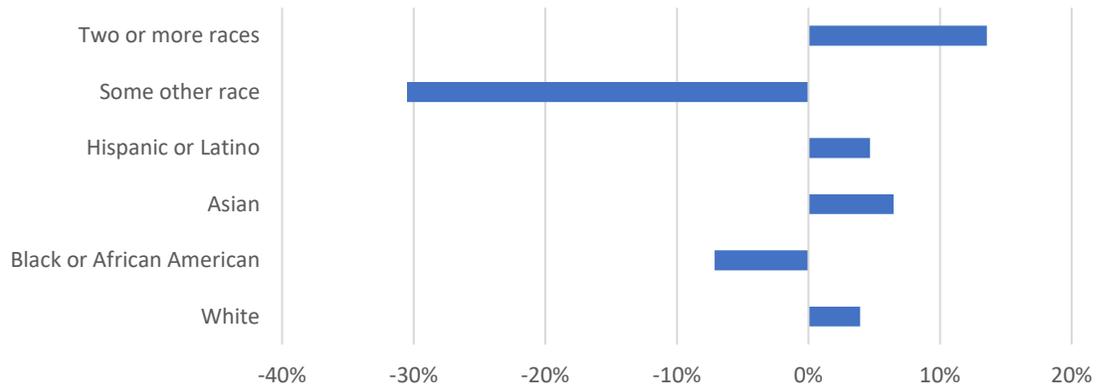
Educational Attainment

A plurality (34%) of the South Central Coast region population 25 years of age and older have a Bachelor's degree or higher. Another third (34%) of the population has a high school diploma (or equivalent) or less (Figure 11). Figure 12 highlights the unequal proportion of educational attainment by race and ethnicity; White residents are four times more likely to have a Bachelor's degree or higher than Hispanic or Latino residents and twice as likely as Black or African American residents. Given the crucial role that higher education can play in earnings and economic mobility, these figures highlight persistence in inequalities. The South Central Coast RPU aims to work with regional K-12 and adult education partners to remediate these disparities.

Figure 11. Educational Attainment (Population Ages 25+) (2018) [10]

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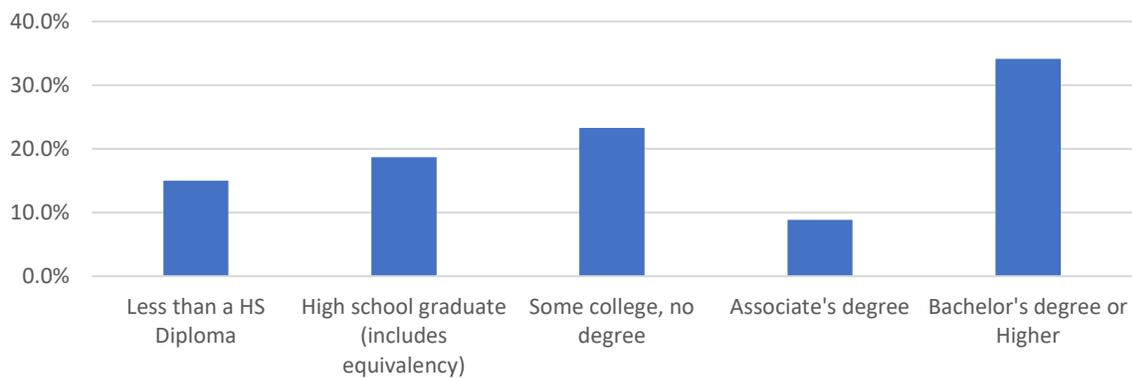
[9] American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.
[10] American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.

Figure 12. Educational Attainment by Race and Ethnicity (Population Ages 25+) (2018) [11]

Legend: Without HS Diploma (blue), Bachelor's degree or higher (orange)
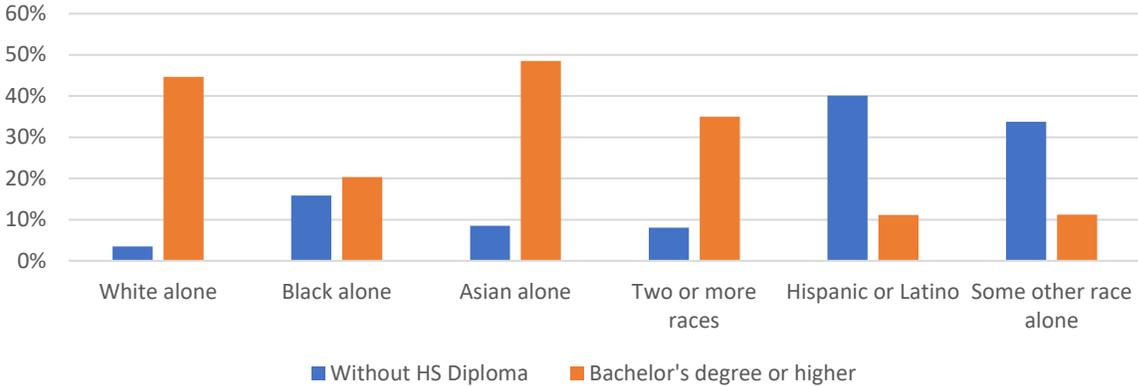
Fostering Demand-Driven Skills Attainment

The South Central Coast RPU serves as a link between regional employers and regional education and training providers. Direct communications between these two parties eliminates guesswork, expedites the process of developing or adapting curriculum, and ensures employers that students are prepared for their roles. The RPU also sponsors events like career fairs to help students network with regional employers and learn about industry dynamics.

Focusing on opportunities that provide workers with sustainable-wages and upward career mobility in established and growing sectors is a top priority of the RPU, and connecting job-seekers and High Road opportunities and employers will play a crucial role in the South Central Coast Region's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. This section of the Regional Plan identifies key industry clusters and sustainable-wage occupational pathways within those industry clusters and will serve as guidance for the RPU and partners in the region.

Regional Industry Clusters

Industry clusters are important because they provide a coherent picture of the local economy and opportunities for development or growth. Industry clusters can also have multiplier effects, as firms within clusters attract similar workforces, attracting more employers and creating a feedback loop that strengthens the local labor market. Focusing on specific industry clusters allows the RPU and other workforce development stakeholders to leverage the region's economic comparative advantages and develop robust education and training programs to support a qualified workforce. The South Central Coast RPU uses the data below to help inform, develop, and revise programs and initiatives.

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[11] American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2013-2018). United States Census Bureau.

The highest-earning industry clusters exhibited minimal to modest growth between 2014-2019. The five industry clusters with the highest average earnings per worker (including benefits) include Information and Communication Technology (ICT); Public Services and Infrastructure; Biotechnology and Biomedical Devices (B&BD); Finance, Insurance, Banking and Real Estate (FIRE); and Defense, Aerospace, and Transportation Manufacturing. Workers in these industry clusters earn an average between $90,000 and $138,000 annually (Figure 13).

Figure 13.Highest-Earning Industry Clusters in the South Central Coast Region[12]
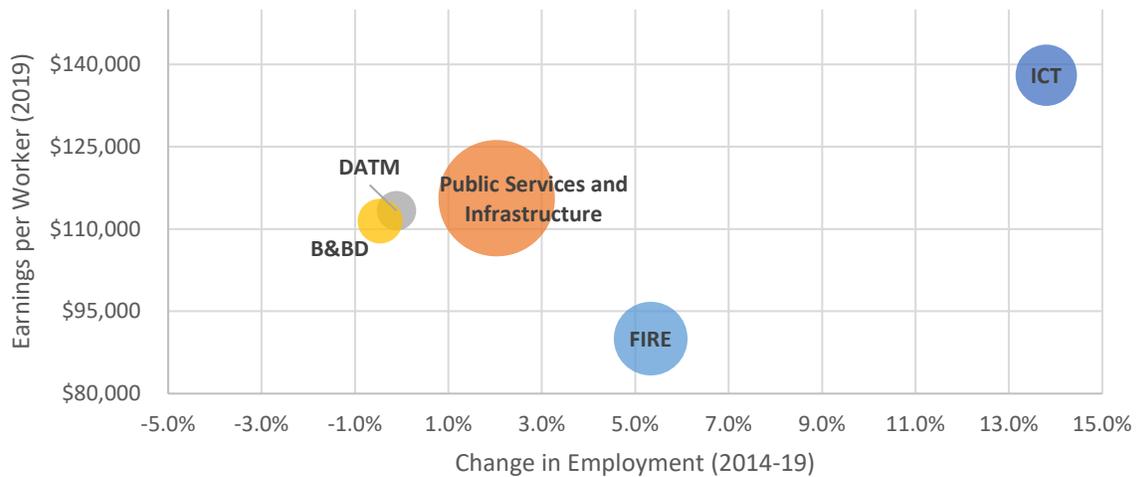
Size of Bubble Reflects Relative Number Employed in Industry

The seven industries with mid-level average earnings (including benefits) earn between $65,000 and $73,000 per year. With the exception of Professional and Business Services and Information and Communications, the remaining four industry clusters saw employment increase by 9% or more between 2014 and 2019 (Figure 14).

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[12] Emsi 2020.3

Figure 14. Mid-Earning Industry Clusters in the South Central Coast Region[13]
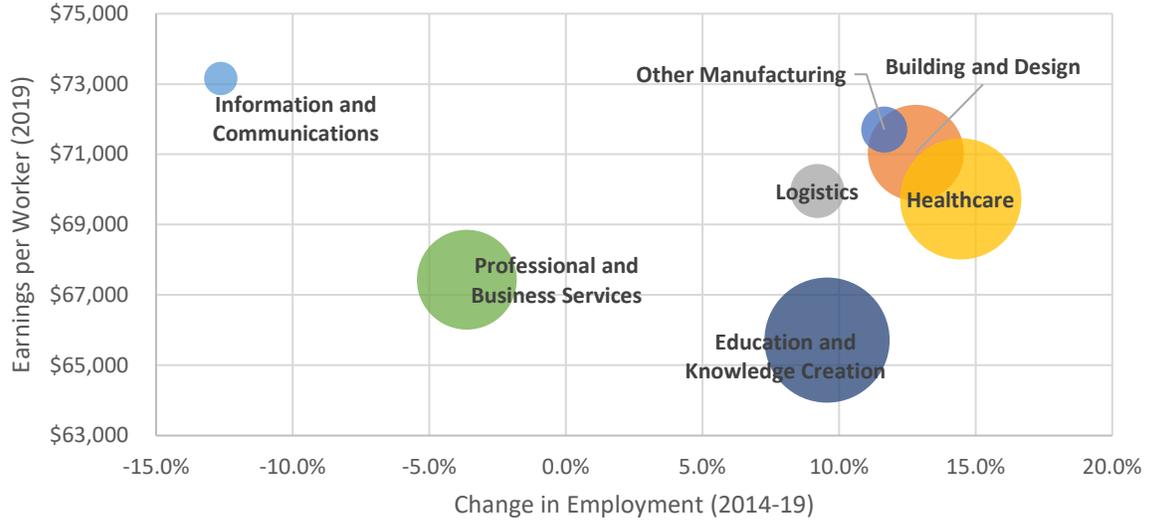
*Size of Bubble Reflects Relative Number Employed in Industry

The four industry clusters with the lowest average earnings have average earnings ranging from $30,000 to $50,000 per year. With the exception of Retail and Other Services, these industry clusters saw employment growth near or exceed 14% between 2014 and 2019 (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Lowest-Earning Industry Clusters in the South Central Coast Region[14]

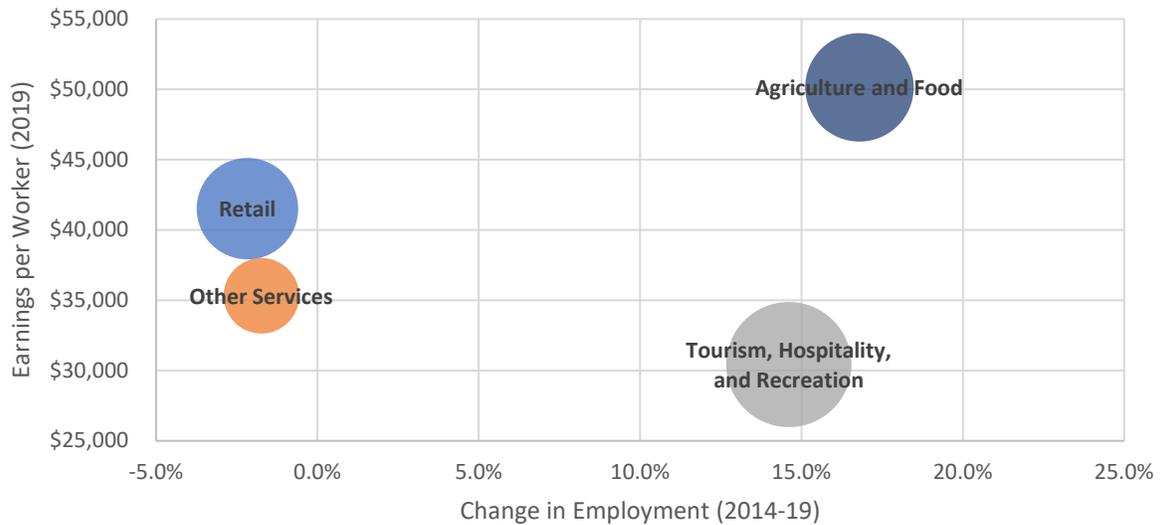**Size of Bubble Reflects Relative Number Employed in Industry*

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[13] Emsi 2020.3
[14] Emsi 2020.3

Career Pathways and Opportunities

While the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped national and regional economies, there remain several pathways and opportunities in resilient industries and occupations for workers entering, re-entering, or advancing in the workforce. The following analysis highlights some of the key occupations and career pathways within key industries selected for their pre-pandemic growth, wages, resilience, and upward mobility.

These pathways highlight two of the RPU's target industry clusters (Healthcare and Building and Design) along with two other key industry clusters (Finance, Insurance, Banking, and Real Estate and Professional and Business Services). This section also includes two growth industry clusters with relatively small footprints in the region but have exhibited strong recent growth and present opportunity for development in the future. These industries were selected for their relatively high average earnings, with entry-level roles typically providing living wages and strong potential for upward mobility.

BUILDING & DESIGN

The Building & Design industry cluster consists of firms and industries that design, construct, and repair buildings and infrastructure. Table 1 illustrates three prominent career pathways within Building and Design in the South Central Coast region. Importantly, these pathways have entry-points that are accessible with a high school or community college diploma and have strong earning potential as individuals advance their careers. Table 7 on page 22 provides the annual completions and openings for the most common Building and Design occupations in the South Central Coast region.

Number of Jobs in South Central Coast Region: 20,900

Table 1. Building and Design Career Pathways [15]

	Entry-Level	**Mid-Level**	**Senior Level**
Design and Pre-Construction *This segment includes the drafting, designing, and planning stages of the construction process*	**Architectural and Civil Drafters** Median Hourly Earnings: $26.20 Typical Education: Associate's degree	**Project Management Specialists** Median Hourly Earnings: $30.90	**Civil Engineer** Median Hourly Earnings: $50.44 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

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[15] EMSI 2020.3

Construction	Construction Laborers	Electrician	Construction Managers
This segment includes the foundation work, wiring, and building process	Median Hourly Earnings: $21.21 Typical Education: No formal education credential	Median Hourly Earnings: $28.49	Median Hourly Earnings: $45.23 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Maintenance & Operations *This segment includes maintenance, repair, and operational activities required to maintain facilities and infrastructure*	**General Maintenance and Repair Workers** Median Hourly Earnings: $19.33 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers** Median Hourly Earnings: $36.30	**General and Operations Managers** Median Hourly Earnings: $43.83 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

HEALTHCARE

The Healthcare industry cluster includes industries and firms that provide medical diagnoses and treatment and includes allied health roles. Table 2 showcases several pathways within the healthcare industry. All of these pathways offer accessible entry-points and strong opportunities to increase earnings. Table 8 on page 23 highlights regional education completions and annual openings among the most common healthcare occupations, highlighting the relative supply and demand of healthcare roles.

Number of Jobs in South Central Coast Region: 40,500

Table 2. Healthcare Career Pathways [16]

Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level

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[16] EMSI 2020.3

Patient Services	Certified Nurse Assistant CNA	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	Registered Nurse
This segment includes workers who attend and provide medical care to patients	Median Hourly Earnings: $17.05	Median Hourly Earnings: $28.64	Median Hourly Earnings: $50.48
	Typical Education: Postsecondary nondegree award		Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Medical Administration	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistant	Health Technologists and Technicians	Administrative Services and Facilities Managers
This segment includes activities centered around the administration of healthcare activities	Median Hourly Earnings: $19.68	Median Hourly Earnings: $21.33	Median Hourly Earnings: $45.19
	Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent		Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Diagnostic Services	Medical Assistants	Radiological Technologists and Technicians	Physician's Assistant
This segment works to find and diagnose the root causes of medical ailments	Median Hourly Earnings: $18.13	Median Hourly Earnings: $39.82	Median Hourly Earnings: $58.24
	Typical Education: Postsecondary nondegree award		Typical Education: Master's degree

PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS SERVICES

Firms in Professional and Business Services industries provide a range of services, including legal, accounting, landscaping, consulting, and other specialty services. Each of the career pathways listed below in Table 3 has entry-points that are accessible with a high school diploma or community college certificate. Each pathway also has an opportunity for specialization and advancement, so workers entering the pathway can advance their careers as they develop their education and skillset.

Number of Jobs in South Central Coast Region: 24,500

Table 3. Professional and Business Services Career Pathways [17]

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[17] EMSI 2020.3

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Legal *This segment includes careers that provide legal services to individuals and organizations*	**Legal Secretaries and Administrative Assistants** Median Hourly Earnings: $22.67 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Paralegals and Legal Assistants** Median Hourly Earnings: $24.65	**Lawyers** Median Hourly Earnings: $54.43 Typical Education: Doctoral or professional degree
Administrative *This segment includes the support and administrative services provided to a wide range of companies*	**Billing and Posting Clerk** Median Hourly Earnings: $20.53 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Project Management Specialist** Median Hourly Earnings: $30.90	**General and Operations Managers** Median Hourly Earnings: $43.83 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Accounting *This segment includes accounting, bookkeeping, and auditing services*	**Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks** Median Hourly Earnings: $23.48 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Project Management Specialists** Median Hourly Earnings: $30.90	**Accountants and Auditors** Median Hourly Earnings: $35.01 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

FINANCE, BANKING, INSURANCE, AND REAL ESTATE

The Finance, Insurance, Banking, and Real Estate industry cluster includes industries and firms that specialize in financial management and transactions, insurance and actuarial activities, and real estate transactions. The pathways presented in Table 4 offer a range of entry-points to interested job seekers and offer strong advancement opportunities.

Number of Jobs in South Central Coast Region: 10,500

Table 4. Finance, Banking, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE) Career Pathways [18]

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Banking *This segment includes the staff that work at banks, credit unions, and other financial institutions available to the public*	**Tellers** Median Hourly Earnings: $16.86 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Loan Officer** Median Hourly Earnings: $33.06	**General and Operations Manager** Median Hourly Earnings: $43.83 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree
Real Estate *This segment includes activities centered around real estate transactions*	**Property, Real Estate, and Community Association Managers** Median Hourly Earnings: $28.13 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Real Estate Sales Agent** Median Hourly Earnings: $30.40	**Real Estate Brokers** Median Hourly Earnings: $60.49 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent
Insurance *This segment includes roles within the insurance industry*	**Insurance Claims and Policy Processing Clerks** Median Hourly Earnings: $17.39 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Insurance Sales Agents** Median Hourly Earnings: $24.63	**Claims Adjusters, Examiners, and Investigators** Median Hourly Earnings: $33.74 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

Growth Industries and Pathways

The following industry clusters and career pathways are highlighted because they currently employ a relatively small share of the workforce, but their recent growth, wages, and innovative fields make these industry clusters potential growth opportunities for the region. The South Central Coast RPU and partners will continue to monitor these industry clusters and

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their employers, working with regional partners and employers to offer support or develop training services as needed.

DEFENSE, AEROSPACE, AND TRANSPORTATION MANUFACTURING

Defense, Aerospace, and Transportation Manufacturing (DATM) has a growing footprint within the South Central Coast region. Much of the employment in this industry cluster is centered around the manufacturing of navigation and guidance systems, aircraft parts, and missile and space vehicle systems.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Number of Jobs in South Central Coast Region: 3,700</p>

Table 5. Defense, Aerospace, and Transportation Manufacturing Career Pathways[19]

	Entry-Level	**Mid-Level**	**Senior Level**
Engineering *This sector includes the design, prototyping, and production of aerospace and defense goods.*	**Machinists** Median Hourly Earnings: $20.84 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers** Median Hourly Earnings: $24.87	**Aerospace Engineers** Median Hourly Earnings: $56.09 Typical Education: Bachelor's Degree
Sales *This segment includes the sales and support services provided to the manufacturers*	**Parts Salespersons** Median Hourly Earnings: $15.91 Typical Education: No formal education required	**Sales Representatives** Median Hourly Earnings: $29.37	**Sales Managers** Median Hourly Earnings: $52.56 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

OTHER MANUFACTURING

Other Manufacturing is an industry cluster that includes a range of manufacturing activities, from plastics and metals production to textile and fabric finishing. Within the South Central Coast Region, Food Product Machinery Manufacturing and Farm Machinery and Equipment have notable growth in the years leading up to 2020.

<p align="center" style="color:red">Number of Jobs in South Central Coast Region: 5,200</p>

Table 6. Other Manufacturing Career Pathways [20]

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[19] EMSI 2020.3
[20] EMSI 2020.3

	Entry-Level	Mid-Level	Senior Level
Production *This sector includes the design, prototyping, and production of industrial goods, such as farm equipment*	**Machinists** Median Hourly Earnings: $20.84 Typical Education: High school diploma or equivalent	**Plating Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders** Median Hourly Earnings: $25.36	**First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers** Median Hourly Earnings: $32.95 Typical Education: High School Diploma
Sales *This segment includes the sales and support services provided to the manufacturers*	**Shipping, Receiving, and Inventory Clerks** Median Hourly Earnings: $17.40 Typical Education: No formal education required	**Sales Representatives** Median Hourly Earnings: $29.37	**Sales Managers** Median Hourly Earnings: $52.56 Typical Education: Bachelor's degree

Target Industry Occupational Gap Analysis

Comparing regional completions of education and training programs relative to the annual openings of corresponding occupations quickly illuminates potential training gaps in the South Central Coastal region. The South Central Coast RPU will compare this secondary data with input from regional employers within the respective clusters to address any talent shortages that may exist.

As Table 7 highlights, several occupations within the Building and Design industry cluster have high rates of annual openings (i.e., openings available to job-seekers) relative to regional completions. There are approximately four and a half openings for every regional completion for Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers. It is also important to note that some trainings—particularly if not recognized through the state's Eligible Training Provider List or other accreditations--may not be included in these lists. Other occupations, such as Laborers, often do not have formal training programs.

Table 7. Regional Supply and Demand for 20 Most Common Building and Design Occupations

SOC Code	Description	2019 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	Regional Completions[21]	Annual Openings per Completion
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	6,725	1,124	-	-
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	5,527	764	46	16.6
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	4,845	477	1,329	0.4
53-7062	Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand	4,099	736	-	-
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks	3,977	501	55	9.1
41-4012	Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products	2,366	312	78	4.0
47-2061	Construction Laborers	2,331	315	-	-
47-2031	Carpenters	2,012	274	-	-
41-3091	Sales Representatives of Services, Except Advertising, Insurance, Financial Services, and Travel	1,993	325	5	65.1
47-2111	Electricians	1,286	182	13	14.0
47-2141	Painters, Construction and Maintenance	1,144	158	-	-
47-2152	Plumbers, Pipefitters, and Steamfitters	1,108	176	-	-
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	1,037	131	27	4.9
11-9021	Construction Managers	679	70	1,364	0.1
47-2051	Cement Masons and Concrete Finishers	493	66	-	-
13-1051	Cost Estimators	436	53	1,711	0.0
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	432	63	14	4.5
47-2081	Drywall and Ceiling Tile Installers	426	63	-	-
47-2181	Roofers	421	60	-	-
47-2161	Plasterers and Stucco Masons	213	35	-	-

A substantial number of Healthcare occupations have more annual openings than annual regional completions in relevant education and training programs. Some of these occupations include Nursing Assistants, Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Dental Assistants, Dental Hygienists, and Physical Therapists (Table 8).

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[21] Regional completions and openings are matched by a Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) and Standard Occupation Code (SOC) crosswalk developed by the Department of Education. Regional completions are aggregated and tabulated by EMSI.

Table 8. Regional Supply and Demand for 20 Most Common Healthcare Occupations

SOC Code	Description	2019 Jobs	Avg. Annual Openings	Regional Completions	Annual Openings per Completion
31-1128	Home Health and Personal Care Aides	7,513	1,347	111	12.1
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	6,725	1,124	-	-
43-6014	Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive	5,527	764	46	16.6
29-1141	Registered Nurses	5,015	390	236	1.7
37-2012	Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners	4,000	579	-	-
43-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Office and Administrative Support Workers	2,702	302	4	75.5
43-4171	Receptionists and Information Clerks	2,250	324	-	-
31-9092	Medical Assistants	2,095	298	344	0.9
31-1131	Nursing Assistants	1,966	243	149	1.6
43-6013	Medical Secretaries and Administrative Assistants	1,741	244	83	2.9
29-2061	Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,179	129	140	0.9
31-9091	Dental Assistants	1,082	147	44	3.3
21-1093	Social and Human Service Assistants	945	146	22	6.7
43-3021	Billing and Posting Clerks	840	111	55	2.0
11-9111	Medical and Health Services Managers	750	94	-	-
29-1228	Physicians, All Other; and Ophthalmologists, Except Pediatric	599	37	98	0.4
11-9151	Social and Community Service Managers	547	80	1,274	0.1
21-1018	Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	478	65	119	0.5
29-1292	Dental Hygienists	388	33	1	32.7
29-1123	Physical Therapists	320	17	1	17.3

Sectoral Strategic Planning and Development

The newly defined South Central Coast RPU's first priority in advancing sector-specific initiatives is to identify in-demand industry sectors, a step that is advanced during this regional planning process. Next, the RPU aims to develop a working partnership with the Regional Economic Action Coalition (REACH), a central coast private-sector-led regional economic development entity serving the local partners. The RPU also aims to align workforce services with K-12 education through the County Offices of Education in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties. The offices of education are the recipients of a regional K-12 Strong Workforce grant, which includes developing career pathways in K-12 education that align with the region's in-demand industries. Working with these K-12 partners will help strengthen the pipeline of regional workers in these target industries.

The RPU also plans to continue work with community colleges, including the colleges' efforts in Strong Workforce initiatives to align career pathways with priority industries and occupations. The South Central Coast RPU also acts as a regional connector, bringing community colleges and industry groups together and facilitating career fairs, advisory committees, and building relationships between industry and supply-side trainers and educators. One recent shift has been an effort to better equip businesses and employees with knowledge and skills to do their jobs better—in the case of small retailers, workers are expected to do more than merely show up and turn the lights on. The modern world of work requires greater flexibility and new skillsets, and the RPU is working with partners to help ensure workers are prepared for this new world.

Enabling Upward Mobility for All Californians

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare and exacerbated existing inequalities. Job quality and upward mobility have even greater importance in a region like the South Central Coast region with high costs of living and a high proportion of lower-skill and lower-wage workers. Improving job quality and the ability for upward career progression for those in entry-level roles will be essential determinants of the South Central Coast region's recovery. This section of the Regional Plan focuses on how the South Central Coast region can improve the economic security for its residents through support and collaboration with High Road employers and improving accessibility to High Road jobs for historically underserved populations.

Throughout this report, several industry clusters and career pathways were highlighted. The South Central Coast RPU prioritizes training programs within these select industry clusters and career pathways so that the end result of the programs is often a High Road job, regardless of the employer. In cases where a High Road job may not be a typical outcome for that occupation, the RPU aims to work specifically with employers who support the tenets of High Road employment; living wages, benefits, good working conditions, and adequate hours with predictable scheduling.

High Road Workforce System and Job Quality

Job quality is an important measure of a region's economy. A region may have a lot of jobs, but if most of those jobs are low quality, paying low wages and requiring low skill and education, the regional economy is likely to suffer. To determine job quality, the research team examined wage data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Occupational Employment Statistics. Occupations within 3-digit NAICS industries were assigned tiers based on median annual earnings. Looking at occupations within specific industries allows for differentiation between a medical equipment sales representative and a sales representative of raw materials. Since

wages are strongly correlated with a job's skill, education, and experience requirements, wages provide an easy metric to assess job quality.

Tier 1 Occupations	Tier 2 Occupations	Tier 3 Occupations
Tier 1 occupations are typically the highest-paying, highest-skilled occupations in the economy. This occupational category includes positions such as managers (e.g., Chief Executives and Sales Managers), professional positions (e.g., Lawyers and Physicians), and highly skilled technology occupations, such as scientists, engineers, computer programmers, and software developers.	**Tier 2 occupations are typically the middle-skill, middle-wage occupations.** This occupational category includes positions such as technicians, teachers, office and administrative positions (e.g., Accounting Clerks and Secretaries), and manufacturing, operations, and production positions (e.g., Assemblers, Electricians, and Machinists).	**Tier 3 occupations are typically the lowest-paying, lowest-skilled occupations that have historically provided the largest portion of employment in the region**. These occupations include positions such as security guards, foodservice and retail positions, building and grounds cleaning positions (e.g., Janitors), and personal care positions (e.g., Home Health Aides and Child Care Workers).

Half of all jobs (51%) in the South Central Coast region are lower-paying, lower-skilled Tier 3 jobs. Just over one-in-five (21%) are higher-paying, higher-skilled Tier 1 jobs. There are slightly more Tier 3 jobs and fewer higher-paying Tier 1 and Tier 2 jobs in the South Central Coast region relative to the statewide average (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Job Quality (2019)[22]

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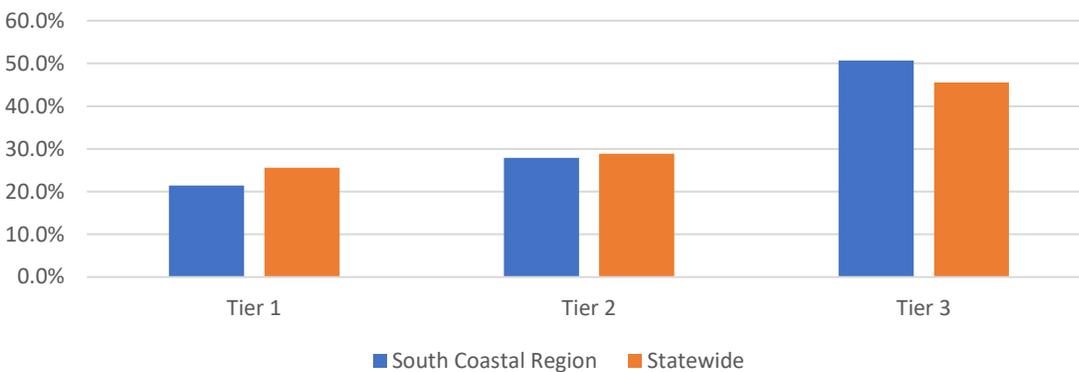
[22] Emsi 2020.3

Between 2014 and 2019, job quality in the South Central Coast region declined and became more concentrated among lower-skill, lower-paying Tier 3 jobs (Figure 17). Both Tier 1 and Tier 2 jobs declined as a proportion of the overall labor market, suggesting that upwardly mobile pathways may be shrinking in availability. It is also worth noting that job quality statewide improved during this same time.

Figure 17. Change in Job Quality (2014-2019) [23]

Job Volatility

BW Research developed a job volatility index that ranks occupations based on the share of their skills and abilities that can be replaced by modern technology. To do this, the research team examined O*NET data that contains occupation-level survey data on 26 different skills. These skills were examined on their relative importance to the job and their complexity. The scores for each of these skills were then aggregated within each occupation, resulting in a metric that demonstrates the relative risk an occupation has of change due to technological advancement.

Tier 1 Automation Volatility	Tier 2 Automation Volatility	Tier 3 Automation Volatility	Tier 4 Automation Volatility

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[23] Emsi 2020.3

Tier 1 occupations have a very low share of activities that can be replaced or heavily augmented by technology within five years. These occupations include Coaches and Scouts, Surgeons, and Chief Executives.

Tier 2 occupations have some tasks that can be automated, though automation will likely expand these roles rather than replace them. These occupations include Pest Control Workers, Graphic Designers, and Energy Auditors.

Tier 3 occupations have a moderate share of work that can be replaced by technology. These occupations include Landscaping and Groundskeeping Workers, Dishwashers, and Travel Agents.

Tier 4 occupations are the most at risk of automation. A large share of work activities can be replaced or heavily augmented by technology within five years. These occupations include Slaughterers and Meat Packers, and Sewing Machine Operators.

About half (51%) of occupations in the South Central Coast region fall under 'Moderately Automatable.' This category includes Farmworkers and Laborers, Cashiers, and Waiters and Waitresses. Automation already exists in many of these roles; self-checkout kiosks and advanced farm machinery have already replaced some of these roles. However, it is unlikely that these technologies will completely replace these roles altogether. It is more likely that these roles will continue, though the threat of automation and cheaper technologies may suppress wages and inhibit hiring in some cases. While the South Central Coast region has a greater share of 'moderately automatable' jobs than the state, the region has fewer 'very automatable' jobs (Figure 18).

Figure 18. Occupational Volatility Due to Progressing Technology
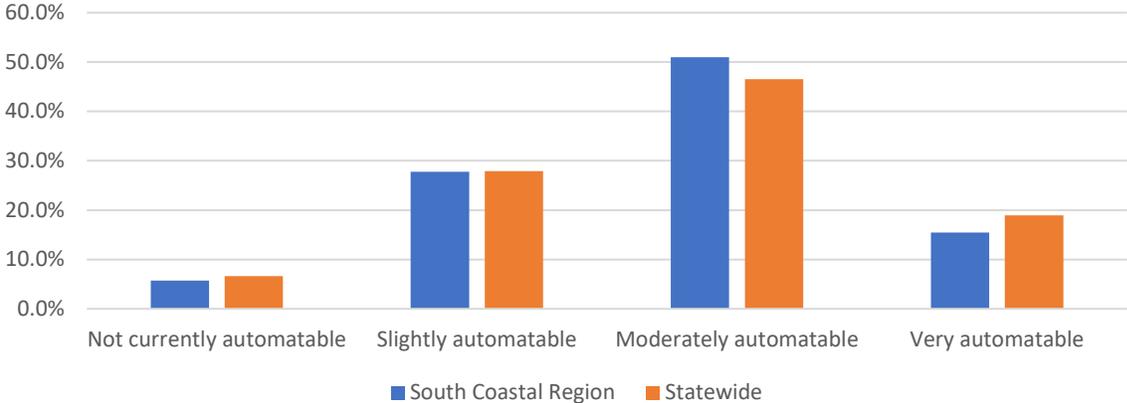
Improving job quality in the region--and helping job seekers find and prioritize trainings that will allow them to access High Road jobs--is a primary goal of the South Central Coast RPU. This support starts by identifying regional industries and occupations that provide quality jobs through this regional planning process. The RPU has conducted many research projects that examine key industry clusters and accompanying career pathways that offer entry points to High Road jobs. This research has also included targeted outreach to and strengthened relationships with targeted employers.

The RPU also looks to develop a formal policy that will guide workforce efforts throughout the region. The region will review the former regional job quality policy currently in draft and identify ways to adapt the existing document into a job quality policy specific to the region. This policy may include a formal definition of quality jobs and prioritizing training that leads to identified industries and occupations. The RPU is also currently participating in an SB-1 grant, along with Ventura County, to develop and implement pre-apprenticeship training programs that lead into registered apprenticeship programs of the Building and Design trades. This grant—along with a recently applied for High-Road Training Partnership Grant—demonstrate the region's commitment to working within and beyond the region's geographic boundaries, alignment with the Building and Construction Trades Council for the region, and support for a pathway into registered apprenticeship programs that are proven to lead to quality jobs. The South Central Coast region has also partnered with relevant stakeholders to apply for an additional High Road Training Partnership grant within the energy industry for the potential development of a wind-energy project. This project would collaborate with private industry, community colleges, K-12 education, and regional economic development.

Equity and Economic Justice

The newly formed RPU's first step is to identify shared regional target populations through this regional planning process. Proper identification will allow detailed and thoughtful policy to be developed. Though the region does not yet have a formal policy geared towards equity in access and opportunity, the RPU has several programs underway and some under development that work to expand opportunities to historically underserved populations.

The region's first regional grant project, applied for through Regional Plan Implementation (RPI) 4.0 funds, includes addressing digital equity and aiming to address areas with unreliable or no internet access, which has shown to be a significant barrier during this time of transition to remote work and learning. Data also shows that this barrier disproportionately impacts communities living in poverty or rural areas. The region has also put in an RPI to conduct a feasibility study on upwardly mobile pathways, particularly for Black and minority youth, in county and city governments and non-profits. This research aims to identify pathways that offer

living wages, pathways into management, and get people involved in their communities. The region is also currently participating in a Prison to Employment (P2E) grant, which provides targeted services to the justice-involved population in an effort to remove barriers and increase access to training, education, and employment opportunities.

A report Community Engagement Initiative published in December 2020 for the Community Corrections Partnership provided a set of recommendations for improving the connections between existing resources and removing barriers for justice-involved individuals. The study included outreach and engagement with CBOs, education and training providers, corrections, and current probationers. One of the recommendations provided in the report was establishment of a Community Reentry Council (CRC), a group that meets regularly to share updates, challenges, and find common interests and opportunities for collaboration. As the report notes, the CRC could build upon the efforts of Santa Barbara's Reentry Steering Committee (RSC). A key addition to the CRC would be the inclusion of line staff where the meetings are typically attended by only senior management. As the ones on the ground, line staff are in the best position to raise awareness of challenges and suggest improvements. Partner presentations, which raise awareness of the work of other partners and may spur collaboration, is another component that is being considered. The South Central Coast RPU is reviewing this report and discussing implementation of some of the recommendations outlined above.

Additionally, the region is currently participating in the SB1 grant, which targets priority populations including women, disadvantaged youth, veterans, justice-involved individuals, and individuals of color or minority populations and helps them enter into pathways in building and construction trades through registered apprenticeship programs. Outreach to these populations will be achieved through targeted digital marketing and data analysis of these outreach efforts will support future opportunities for data-driven outreach strategies to targeted populations.

Additionally, WIOA requires a priority requirement for the use of WIOA Title I Adult funds. This states that America's Job Center system must give priority of service to recipients of public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. The AJCC service providers in the region strive to provide equitable access to training and career opportunities to these underserved populations through implementing this requirement.
The RPU will consider developing a formal policy related to equity as we begin to work together on these matters for the first time as the South Central Coast region.

Aligning, Coordinating, and Integrating Programs and Services

This section of the Regional Plan discusses the existing and aspired cooperation and collaboration with regional partners to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of resources and to better serve the community. Formerly part of a larger RPU, the newly formed South Central Coast RPU has the advantage of deep familiarity and experience with local partners, allowing for strong collaboration and communication even though formal administrative and service delivery agreements have yet to be formalized. This section highlights the current state of alignment within the RPU and provides a framework for coordination and alignment in the future.

System Alignment

As a newly formed region going through the regional strategic planning process for the first time as the South Central Coast region, the RPU does not currently have an MOU or formal service delivery agreement in place. The RPU will continue to engage in discussions with our WDBs and WDB Executive Committees regarding these matters. Early regional planning has included a joint meeting of the WDB Executive Committees from San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties, as well as a joint meeting of the WIOA fiscal & administrative entity department heads (Department of Social Services in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties) to discuss system alignment of the newly formed region. The region will discuss formalizing some of these agreements between WDBs or Administrative Entities as we move forward with our implementing our newly developed Regional Plan.

Appendix A: Stakeholder and Community Engagement Summary

Appendix B: Public Comments Received that Disagree with Regional Plan

Appendix C: Signature Page