



**Request for Proposals 2026-02: Strategic Planning Consultant Services
Responses to Questions/Requests for Clarification**

(Updated April 20th, 2026)

Q1. Has the 2022 RochesterWorks Strategic Plan been updated in the last (4) years or is this the first “update”?

Q1. RochesterWorks Response

This is the first update of the Strategic Plan since 2022.

Q2. Is a copy of the 2022 Strategic Plan available as part of the RPF Process?

Q2. RochesterWorks Response

Yes, the 2022 Strategic Plan can be viewed [here](#)

The 2025 RochesterWorks Annual Report can be viewed [here](#)

Q3. Does the organization consider this process an “update” or “fresh start?”

Q3. RochesterWorks Response

We would consider this an update to the 2022 Strategic Plan. However, over the past four years, there has been enough change to the environment in which our organization operates, as well as to the role in which our organization plays within the local ecosystem, to warrant a fresh look that uses the 2022 as a baseline but seeks to provide focused strategic direction moving forward.

Q4. How would you describe the success of the current plan from the perspective of management?

Q4. RochesterWorks Response.

The adoption of RochesterWorks' [2022 Strategic Plan](#) marked the first time RochesterWorks undertook an organization-focused strategic planning process.

Over the past four years, we have made significant progress in proactively engaging job seekers, particularly individuals from communities historically underrepresented in the workforce (Strategies 2-A & 2-B). As a result, measured community engagement has increased annually since 2022. This community-facing approach has directly contributed to growth in our Adult participant population (individuals age 24+ with limited workforce experience and greater barriers to employment). In the most recent program year, RochesterWorks served, by a wide margin, the highest number of Adult participants of any local workforce area in New York State outside of New York City.

We have also made substantial progress in diversifying our revenue portfolio (Strategy 3). This diversification has been essential in response to a sustained decline in federal WIOA funding, our base funding source. WIOA funding now represents approximately 42% of total revenue, compared to 66% in 2021. Despite this reduction in federal funding, RochesterWorks' overall annual budget has grown by nearly 80% since 2021.

We have implemented multiple tactics to address barriers to workforce participation (Strategies 4-A & 4-B). While these efforts remain central to our mission, system-level changes in labor force participation among populations facing significant barriers have been modest as of 2023, making broad impact more difficult to quantify.

Continued progress is needed in advancing worker retention outcomes (Strategy 1-B). Although we have expanded resources to support both job seekers and employers, we have not yet fully evolved our service delivery model to track and assess retention outcomes with the same level of rigor applied to participant placement and enrollment outcomes.

Q5. What are the largest growth areas since 2022?

Q5. RochesterWorks Response.

Our biggest growth areas since 2022 are as follows:

- **In-School Youth programming.** We are now providing 200% more paid work experience funding for local in-school youth (14-20), largely thanks to the creation of a new NYS program that has allowed us to extend the Summer Youth Experience Program (historically 6-8 weeks) into the school year. Furthermore, we have created additional navigator programming in two Rochester City high schools
- **Business Services grants.** We have seen substantial increase in the number of hiring grants we provide employers (specifically our On-the-Job Training Grants). Furthermore, the creation of a new Incumbent Worker Grant program has expanded our service model to help employers upskill existing employees. Since 2022, the number of employees receiving grant assistance has increased nearly five-fold.
- **Overall system management.** While RochesterWorks has always embraced its role as the convener of the local workforce system due to its role as the local workforce development board administrator, in recent years it has become more engaged, and in some cases, the lead on community-wide efforts. These include the ON-RAMP program which is a state-funded regional manufacturing initiative; the Federal Recompete Grant, in which RochesterWorks served as the grant applicant and convenor; and, initiatives serving the Finger Lakes Regional Economic Development Council.

Q6. Has a strategic planning committee been identified? If yes, who will serve on the committee?

Q6. RochesterWorks Response.

The strategic planning committee has not yet been identified but will include a combination of RochesterWorks' staff and Board members. We would be open to counsel from the selected consultant as to how best constitute that committee.

Q7. Is there a current organization chart? May we have a copy?

Q7. RochesterWorks Response.

Yes, there is an organizational chart. This will be provided to the consultant selected through this RFP process, once they are under contract.

Q8. Are process decision points acceptable to the organization and leadership? For instance, with 37 board members the initial recommendation will be a brief survey allowing for self-selection for follow up interviews. The organization might prefer all board members be interviewed. This would be a decision point inside the process rather than pre-determined.

Q8. RochesterWorks Response.

We intend to empower our strategic planning consultants to use their expertise in establishing a final process that allows them to deliver a comprehensive final work product that meets the expectations outlined through this RFP. RochesterWorks would reserve the right to review and, if necessary, insist on amending the process proposed by the consultant; however, we expect this to be a collaborative effort.

Q9. The timeframe is targeted at four (4) to six (6) months. What amount of time does management intend to spend on the process, overall or monthly? Have any dates and times been set aside for strategic work that might not be flexible? If so, please share the dates.

Q9. RochesterWorks Response.

Executing a strategic planning process is a priority for the organization. As such, its senior leadership and management will invest the appropriate amount of time needed to ensure an effective process and final product.

Q10. What is the budget for this project?

Q10. RochesterWorks Response.

RochesterWorks has not established a budget for this project. We are confident that the scope of work outlined in the RFP will enable prospective bidders to develop a cost-effective approach that delivers the work product we seek as an organization. If there is additional information we can provide to help proposers better scope their submissions, we welcome that feedback.

Q11. Do you prefer in person vs. virtual meetings

Q11. RochesterWorks Response.

RochesterWorks does not have any preference with regards to in-person versus virtual meetings. Based on past experience, a combination of both can be effective, and proposers should describe how their proposed engagement approach will support meaningful collaboration with staff and community stakeholders

Q12. Is there a required or target completion date for this engagement, or is the 4–6 month range a general estimate that may flex based on scope and findings? And if the award is made in May, is an immediate start expected, or is there room for a later kickoff — particularly given how challenging summer schedules can be for stakeholder participation?

Q12. RochesterWorks Response.

RochesterWorks would seek to execute a contract with the consultant selected no later than June 30th, 2026. It is our desire to present the final strategic plan to the Workforce Development Board at its December 15th, 2026 meeting. Therefore, we would require a final product no later than December 1st, 2026.

Q13. What level of internal staff capacity will be available to support coordination and stakeholder engagement throughout the 4-6 month process?

Q13. RochesterWorks Response.

RochesterWorks senior leadership is very committed to this project and wishes to be involved throughout its duration. We welcome the outside capacity and perspective of an independent lens to help develop a strong final work product. At minimum, we expect to be very much engaged with:

- using our expertise to help inform any environmental scan that may be a part of the process
- identification of stakeholders to engage and assistance with initial outreach to ensure a high rate of response
- Facilitating review by both senior leadership and key board representatives

Q14. Was the Strategic Planning: Stakeholder Engagement Facilitation RFP awarded? If not, has that scope of work been folded into the Strategic Planning Consulting Services RFP?

Q14. RochesterWorks Response.

This RFP replaces the RFP issued on February 17, 2026, for stakeholder engagement facilitation, and reflects an expanded scope to support the full strategic planning process

Q15. Please detail the RochesterWorks strategic planning structure (overall size, titles)

Q15. RochesterWorks Response.

The strategic planning process will be managed by senior leadership at RochesterWorks, including but not limited to: the Executive Director and Director of Workforce System Performance. RochesterWorks intends to create an ad hoc strategic planning committee which will include representation from leadership, management, frontline staff and Board members.

Q16. Please detail the decision-making methodology?

Q16. RochesterWorks Response.

The strategic planning process will be informed by broad input and collaboration, incorporating perspectives from the planning group and other key stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive approach. However, final decisions regarding the strategic plan will be made by executive leadership and the Board of Directors.

Q17. What are the current and pending regional workforce initiatives expected to impact Rochester Works strategic focus (e.g. [NY SMART I-Corridor Tech Hub](#))?

Q17. RochesterWorks Response.

The strategic planning process will identify the current local and regional initiatives that will have the greatest impact on RochesterWorks' strategic direction as an organization. To provide additional context, interested bidders are encouraged to review our most recent [Local Plan](#) for the Monroe County/Rochester Workforce Development Area. This plan outlines efforts to align regional workforce strategies, with a focus on in-demand industry sectors and key initiatives that are planned or currently underway within the workforce ecosystem.

Q18. Is this RFP tied to any grants? If so, what are the grant parameters?

Q18. RochesterWorks Response.

RochesterWorks did not receive any grant funding specifically for this project. We are the subrecipient of USDOL Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) funds provided to Monroe County, which can be used for administrative and program planning activities such as the development of a strategic plan. We expect to use at least a portion of our WIOA allocation for this effort, in accordance with all applicable federal and state regulations.

Q19. Who will the consultant report to?

Q19. RochesterWorks Response.

The consultant will report to the Executive Director, but also work closely with the Director of Workforce System Performance.

Q20. To what extent does RochesterWorks anticipate internal engagement vs external engagement? Are funders (philanthropy, government, etc) part of this group? Do external partners within Greater Rochester need to buy in to your strategic plan?

Q20. RochesterWorks Response.

Stakeholder engagement is generally outlined in Section 4(B) of the RFP

At present, we do not expect funders to be included in our stakeholder outreach.

There is no formal approval structure from external partners. We expect our Board to adopt this at its December meeting.

Q21. What internal measuring and tracking systems does the organization use? We're thinking about how we can build on existing resources to support KPIs coming out of the plan. If you do not have an internal system, that is also good information to have.

Q21. RochesterWorks Response.

Over the past six months, RochesterWorks has developed an internal software platform to support a range of operational needs, including improved tracking of key performance indicators (KPIs) and critical workflows.

As the Local Workforce Development Board, RochesterWorks' performance is measured by the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) through the federally mandated WIOA [Primary Indicators of Performance](#). While these indicators assess system-level outcomes across the local workforce area, they do not capture outputs or outcomes specific to RochesterWorks as an organization.

Recognizing this gap, a key objective of the 2022 strategic planning process was to establish internal KPIs that reflect organizational performance, with the understanding that strong internal operations directly contribute to achieving NYSDOL performance outcomes. The internally developed software platform now serves as a tool to track and manage these RochesterWorks-specific KPIs, providing greater insight into organizational effectiveness and impact.

Q22. Is there any preference for local vendors?

Q22. RochesterWorks Response.

We always welcome the opportunity to work with businesses in the local workforce development area we serve. However, the evaluation criteria outlined in the RFP does not give preference to local vendors.

Q23. Do you have an estimated number of stakeholders that you want to engage in the following categories? (Community Partners, Job Seekers, Employers)

Q23. RochesterWorks Response.

We do not. This will be discussed with the selected consultant. We do expect engagement with job seekers, and, to a lesser extent, employers, to be executed more through the use of surveys. However, we welcome the opportunity to engage with both stakeholder groups in small group sessions. We expect our engagement with our community partners to be the most substantive. The workforce development board has 37 members; we have a staff of 67 and we work with several dozen community partners (some partners will be identified as priority by RochesterWorks for engagement; others on a more secondary level). Overall, it is not our expectation to engage with every stakeholder, but we would like to make an effort to allow each stakeholder to provide some level of feedback to help inform this process.

Q24. What has worked well for Rochester Works about past strategic planning processes, and what has not worked well?

Q24. RochesterWorks Response.

We would be willing to discuss this in greater detail with the selected consultant. For the purposes of this RFP, we are more interested in understanding how your firm and approach towards strategic planning might represent a good match to our organization's needs.

Q25. What kinds of existing data does Rochester Works already gather that can inform the strategic plan (such as customer feedback, employee engagement survey results, program outcomes data, etc.)?

Q25. RochesterWorks Response.

A Workforce Development Board is responsible for leveraging labor market data to inform strategic planning, align workforce programs with employer demand, and support job seekers in accessing high-quality employment opportunities. This includes analyzing data from federal, state, and regional sources—such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and state labor departments—to identify in-demand industries, occupations, wage trends, and workforce gaps. We do not engage in the systematic collection of customer feedback from our job seeker customers, though do solicit feedback more regularly from employers on their experience in working with them. We place a high value on customer experience, though we also value feedback relative to whether our programming meets the needs of job seekers and employers.

With regards to program outcomes, please refer to Question 21.

Q26. What kinds of relationships does Rochester Works have with the community partners that will be part of the process (e.g. collaborators on multi-agency programs, agencies that serve similar populations, funders, regulators, etc.)

Q26. RochesterWorks Response.

RochesterWorks plays a central leadership and coordination role in managing the One-Stop Career System, ensuring that services across multiple partners are integrated, accessible, and aligned with workforce development goals.

As the system operator and convener, RochesterWorks is responsible for:

- **Coordinating multi-agency service delivery** within the One-Stop centers, bringing together required and optional partners under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) framework. This includes aligning programs such as workforce training, education, and supportive services to create a seamless experience for job seekers and employers.
- **Managing partner relationships**, including agencies that serve similar or overlapping populations. RochesterWorks facilitates collaboration, establishes shared processes, and ensures that referrals between partners are efficient and effective.
- **Overseeing system performance and accountability**, working closely with funders and regulatory entities (e.g., NYS Department of Labor and federal agencies) to ensure compliance with all requirements, meet performance benchmarks, and support continuous improvement. .

Through this role, RochesterWorks ensures that the One-Stop Career System operates as a unified network rather than a collection of separate programs, improving access, efficiency, and outcomes for both job seekers and employers.

Q27. For the “targeted set of engagement activities,” do you have an expected number of participants / stakeholder groups? How many sessions are you envisioning?

Q27. RochesterWorks Response.

We do not have a targeted number. Consistent with our response in Q.23, we anticipate more substantive engagement to take place with our staff, community partners and board members. We welcome the use of group sessions and will lean on the experience of the consultant to determine how we can best capture feedback that is representative of that stakeholder group.

Q28. Does RochesterWorks have any seasonal workflow trends that Consultants should plan for to avoid timeline disruptions

Q28. RochesterWorks Response.

No.