

Plans for workforce training center advance

By: Adina Genn August 1, 2019



The Long Island Regional Planning Council has approved a consulting service to help plan a workforce training center at the Long Island Innovation Park at Hauppauge, which was formerly called the Hauppauge Industrial Park.

Members of the council authorized an agreement with New York-based James Lima Planning + Development, whose clients include Silicon Valley firms. JLP+D is to provide economic and public policy advisory services for the would-be training center, whose purpose is to provide the skills that match the region's fastest growing businesses.

The plan was announced Thursday by the HIA-LI, which spearheaded a strategic regional business initiative. Back in April, JLP+D and the Regional Plan Association, sponsored by the Suffolk IDA, produced a 160-page "opportunity analysis" that aimed to enhance the industrial park's credentials as a "regional economic powerhouse."

JLP+D's research will provide a "skills gap" analysis to help shape both the future center's curriculum, its organizational structure and its physical layout.

The group will also evaluate the best ways to unite the expertise and resources of government agencies, business organizations, and academic institutions for the training center.

"The Council has been a strong advocate in fostering an educated and trained workforce sufficient to meet the needs of a growing and evolving regional economy," John Cameron, Jr., chairman of the Long Island Regional Planning Council and managing partner, Cameron Engineering & Associates, said in a statement.

“This facility can serve as a model for additional such centers throughout the region to facilitate economic growth island-wide,” he added. The council believes that this funding is a wise investment of taxpayer dollars to support the future growth of Long Island.”

Others gave the plan for a training center high marks.

“Supporting this center in cooperation with the HIA-LI is consistent with many of the council’s initiatives that involve collaborating with a variety of organizations,” Richard Guardino, executive director of the council, said in a statement.

“Attracting and retaining a skilled workforce is one of the primary challenges facing employers across the county,” Theresa Ward, chair of the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency, said in a statement.

“Creation of a workforce development center in the Long Island Innovation Park at Hauppauge will position Suffolk County at the cutting edge of addressing this challenge,” she added. “It will help incubate new manufacturing companies, allow existing companies to expand more efficiently, and help build the in-demand skills for our current and future workforce.”

And the center would boost the economy, stakeholders said.

“While Long Island reaps tremendous advantages from the high educational attainment level of our overall population, we’ll only maximize our economic potential by implementing training strategies that give our most-promising industries the skilled employees they need to succeed,” Terri Alessi-Miceli, president and CEO of HIA-LI said in a statement. “Well-devised training programs deliver complementary benefits to both individual companies and to individual employees.”

“When a region is preparing for long-term economic success, one of their prime imperatives is to attract and retain knowledge workers,” Joe Campolo, board chair of HIA-LI and managing partner at Campolo Middleton & McCormick, said in a statement, “Long Island is competing with regional economies nationwide to attract and fortify a number of key industry clusters. This workforce center will function as a strategic differentiator and will help make sure our most-vital sectors can tap the talent they need from within our regional labor pool.”

“This workforce training center will unite a network of successful businesses, partnerships with the public sector, community, and academia to expand and improve training, expertise, and efficiencies of the workforce on a real-time basis as the economy evolves,” Ed Wehrheim, supervisor of the Town of Smithtown, said in a statement.