THE VISION
A workforce system that effectively engages employers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions, empowers residents to more efficiently match employers’ skill needs and successfully prepares economically disadvantaged residents for family-sustaining careers.

THE CONTEXT
By 2021, the Austin Metro Area is projected to have more than 60,000 job openings that require more than a high school diploma but less than a bachelor’s degree. The first priority of the Austin Metro Area Master Community Workforce Plan is to improve economically disadvantaged residents’ access to these middle-skill jobs.

THE GOAL
To make living in Austin more affordable by improving economically disadvantaged residents’ access to better economic opportunities.

THE OBJECTIVE
10,000 residents living at or below 200% of poverty will secure middle-skill jobs by 2021.

STRATEGIES
I. Awareness & Enrollment  III. Placement
II. Training  IV. Upskilling

*Infrastructure Development is a "silent" fifth strategy to support the work of the four key strategies.

BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT
A sector-based approach beginning with three of the Austin Metro Area’s key industries: Healthcare, Information Technology, and Skilled Trades/Advanced Manufacturing.
We have been very busy since the June 1, 2017 official launch of the Austin Metro Area Master Community Workforce Plan.

*The following updates will only relate to activities for which Workforce Solutions Capital Area played a key role. We will work with community partners to develop more comprehensive, community-wide updates as the plan progresses.*

Adoptions/Endorsements by Community Organizations and Municipalities

- December 13  Workforce Solutions Capital Area Board of Directors (Adoption)
- January 23   Travis County Commissioners Court (Endorsement)
- February 5   Austin Community College District Board of Trustees (Endorsement)
- February 22  Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors (Support)
- June 14      Austin City Council (Adoption – as an attachment to the Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan)

Community Investments

- $1,262,484 in philanthropic and public contributions

  Investors include:
  - City of Austin
  - Travis County
  - Google.org
  - Texas Mutual
  - JPMorgan Chase
  - Bank of America
  - Social Finance
  - Michael & Susan Dell Foundation
  - Seton Healthcare Family
  - St. David’s Healthcare
  - Workforce Solutions Capital Area

- Investment Areas of Focus include:
  - Career Awareness and Enrollment, including support for an Opportunity Youth-focused Career Fair and Job Shadowing Coordination [I. Awareness & Enrollment]
  - Capacity Building for a Skills-Training Program [II. Training]
  - Employer Engagement, including specific support for pilot projects within the Healthcare and Skilled Trades/Manufacturing partnerships [III. Placement & IV. Upskilling]
  - Data Aggregation and Evaluation [V. Infrastructure Development]
  - Backbone Infrastructure, including additional staff support [V. Infrastructure Development]

Industry Sector Partnerships

- **Central Texas Healthcare Partnership:** Three workgroups have emerged based on the priorities of over 20 healthcare employers: Policy, Nursing and K-12 Connections. Workgroups are meeting over the summer and the full partnership will reconvene in September. [III. Placement & IV. Upskilling]

- **Upcoming Healthcare Education & Training Asset Mapping:** Workforce Solutions Capital Area has secured CAEL and Avalanche Consulting to lead a Healthcare Education and Training landscape analysis. Their final report will be presented to the Central Texas Healthcare Partnership in September. They are responsible for developing an asset map of education and training programs located in the Austin-Round Rock MSA that are helping students and workers acquire the skills and credentials needed by regional healthcare employers. [III. Placement & IV. Upskilling]
- **Upcoming Manufacturing Education & Training Asset Mapping**: Workforce Solutions Capital Area has secured Real WorkForce Solutions to lead a Manufacturing Education and Training landscape analysis. Their final report is due by the end of August. They are responsible for developing an asset map of education and training programs located in the Austin-Round Rock MSA that are helping students and workers acquire the skills and credentials needed by regional manufacturing employers. This analysis will complement the 2017 Austin Regional Manufacturing Association employer survey and will lay the groundwork for an official (re)launch of the Advanced Manufacturing partnership in early Fall 2018. [III. Placement & IV. Upskilling]

- **Upcoming Industry Partnership Staffing Capacity Expansion**: Workforce Solutions Capital Area has released an RFQ to procure consultative services to assist staff in establishing, nurturing and growing productive industry sector partnerships, particularly in the skilled trades/advanced manufacturing sector. Responses are due July 30th. [IV. Infrastructure Development]

**Community Events**

- **Upcoming Gentleman’s Clothing Closet** – September 11, 2018 – An event offering free interview clothes and accessories, and interview tips for Austin-area men actively seeking employment. The event served more than 100 participants and featured more than 5,000 items of clothing donated by Men’s Warehouse. Hosted by the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum and Workforce Solutions Capital Area. [III. Placement]

- **Upcoming Careers in Texas Industries Career Fair and Job Shadowing** – September 26, 2018 – An event focusing on Opportunity Youth (Ages 16-24, not sufficiently engaged in school or work). Youth and employers will have the chance to network and be matched with job shadowing opportunities. Job shadowing coordination throughout the month of October 2018. The goal is to help develop the talent pipeline and increase awareness of local high-demand job opportunities. [I. Awareness & Enrollment]

**Strategic Moves and Initiatives**

- **Labor Market Information/General Awareness**: Ongoing K-12 career awareness activities including presentations, resource development (When I Grow Up, student career profiles) and career fair participation to help teachers, counselors, college advisors, students and parents understand the high-demand, middle-skill opportunities in the Austin/Travis County area. [I. Awareness & Enrollment]

- **Career Navigation**: Landscape analysis of career navigator role within training providers and community-based organizations is underway. The goal of this analysis is to identify challenges and best practices of career navigation in the community and create a professional development opportunity for staff, in order to standardize career navigation services for economically disadvantaged individuals. [I. Awareness & Enrollment]

- **Fall 2018 Capacity Analysis**: Conducted an education and training capacity analysis of current Fall 2018 enrollment of local training partners engaged with the Master Community Workforce Plan. The analysis indicated that skilled trades/manufacturing and IT have the greatest anticipated number of unfilled seats particularly at Austin Community College, thus creating an opportunity to better align the enrollment pipelines. The analysis team identified training provider and workforce organization pain points/struggles to fill training programs and existing marketing campaigns to outreach clients. [I. Awareness & Enrollment & II. Training]
Fall 2018 Capacity Awareness Campaign: Staff have recommended the development of two-prong awareness campaign to Plan Leadership Council. [I. Awareness & Enrollment & II. Training]

- External: Use existing organization marketing campaigns, as well as develop new targeted campaigns particularly for skilled trades-related training programs, in conjunction with the Communications and Policy Working Group. Includes social media “geofencing” and texting campaigns (Chamber)
- Internal: Recommended workforce development partners use an internal communication system (testing Microsoft Teams) to create a referral network so that partners can communicate to fill empty spots and refer clients that they may not have capacity to serve due to funding or other qualifications restrictions

Data Integrity: The Ray Marshall Center executed Data Sharing Agreements with six initial anchor/essential education & training providers: Austin Community College, Workforces Solutions Capital Area, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Skillpoint Alliance, Capital IDEA, and American YouthWorks. [IV. Infrastructure Development]

Multi-Craft Core Curriculum Pre-Apprenticeship Boot Camp: Austin’s first cohort of Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) students graduated on May 31st. This three-week pre-apprenticeship boot camp teaches the skills necessary to enter any apprenticeship in the skilled trades. Topics include math, tools and materials, and blueprint reading. 18 students graduated with OSHA10, CPR and first aid certifications – and each had a job offer in hand. Workforce Solutions Capital Area is partnering with the Texas Workforce Commission, Plumbers & Pipefitters Local Union 286 and several other trade unions to continue offering this training at no cost to the participants. [I. Awareness & Enrollment & II. Training]

Promoting Apprenticeships: Ongoing engagement and collaboration with pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship training programs and K-12 to strengthen the pipeline for the skilled trades industry and to encourage/assist the training programs in being added to Workforce Solutions Capital Area’s Eligible Training Provider List (to expand potential referral and funding opportunities to increase capacity). [I. Awareness & Enrollment & II. Training]

Evaluation & Data + Education & Training (EDET) Committee: Comprised of senior leadership and content experts from community based organizations, training providers, and funders, the EDET Committee launched in May 2018 to provide qualitative perspective and context to the Ray Marshall Center study as well as to provide a community-based space where peer-to-peer collaboration and discussion can occur. [I. Awareness & Enrollment & II. Training]

Upcoming Baseline Report: The first draft of the Ray Marshall Center draft baseline report is anticipated to be released mid-July for review while we also begin to discuss the scope and content of the Year One report. [I. Awareness & Enrollment & II. Training]

Incumbent Worker Training Policy: In June 2018, the Workforces Solutions Capital Area Board of Directors approved a training policy that enhances the services offered to employers seeking to invest in and train their incumbent workers. Workforce Solutions Capital Area and an employer can co-fund an upskilling training program that will allow the trainee/employee to advance in their career with the employer. [IV. Upskilling]

Income Eligibility Policy: In June 2018, the Workforces Solutions Capital Area Board of Directors approved a policy that increases the threshold for income eligibility for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) program. This change affords individuals who are working in lower wage employment the opportunity to enroll in WIOA and receive case management, training, and job search assistance. [II. Training & III. Placement]
• **Outcomes Rate Card Grant and Analysis:** Workforce Solutions Capital Area has been selected as an awardee for the Outcomes Rate Card Development competition led by Social Finance. Workforce Solutions Capital Area will receive technical assistance from Social Finance for 12 months to plan, design, and execute an outcomes rate card that targets educational and employment outcomes in Austin and Travis County. (Outcomes rate cards are a menu of desired outcomes and their associated value, and are used as a procurement and contracting tool that can standardize performance-based financing.) Services will target residents of low-to-moderate income to improve limited education and language skills, credential completion, job placement, retention, and earnings. Work under the grant will explore opportunities for the development of an outcomes rate card within the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC) contract. [IV. Infrastructure Development]

• **Communications & Policy Working Group:** Comprised of senior leadership and content experts from community based organizations, training providers, and funders, the Communications & Policy Committee soft launched in March 2018 to strategize and develop communications tools and community-wide campaigns to promote the Master Community Workforce Plan. The Working Group will assist with and inform the broad communications efforts of each strategy of the Plan. [IV. Infrastructure Development]
  - Convened in June 2018 to discuss individual marketing efforts and collective marketing opportunities around the Fall 2018 Capacity Awareness Campaign and the Careers in Texas Industries Career Fair and Job Shadowing initiative.