



AUSTIN METRO AREA MASTER COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PLAN JUNE 2017



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| American YouthWorks | Greater Austin Black Chamber of Commerce |
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| Austin Area Urban League | Intertech Flooring |
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| Greater Austin Asian Chamber of Commerce | Travis County |

ABOUT US



WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS CAPITAL AREA WORKFORCE BOARD (WFS Capital Area) is the leadership and governing body for the regional workforce system. We are responsible for the planning, oversight, and evaluation of workforce development activities in the Austin/Travis County area. We are a private, publicly-funded non-profit organization.

Through the fostering of partnerships and collaborations, researching and sharing of labor market and economic information, identifying workforce needs of employers and residents, and consulting and advising on public policy, WFS Capital Area helps to connect and align the efforts of the regional workforce system. Together we are enabling people and businesses to be competitive in a global market.

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THE AUSTIN METRO AREA MASTER COMMUNITY WORKFORCE PLAN: ROADMAP

| | | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| 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. | | | |
| 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. | | | |
| GOAL | To make living in Austin more affordable by improving economically disadvantaged residents’ access to better economic opportunities. | | | |
| OBJECTIVE | 10,000 residents living at or below 200% of poverty will secure middle-skill jobs by 2021. | | | |
| STRATEGIES | AWARENESS & ENROLLMENT: Cultivate interest in high-demand, middle-skill careers | TRAINING: Equip workers with the skills they need to succeed | PLACEMENT: Connect employers with local talent to fill middle-skill jobs | ADVANCEMENT: Assist frontline workers in acquiring skills to advance into middle-skill jobs |
| OUTCOMES & TARGETS | Economically disadvantaged residents are more aware of middle-skill career opportunities and training options | More economically disadvantaged students earn credentials | More economically disadvantaged residents secure middle-skill jobs | More economically disadvantaged residents are upskilled and advanced in their workplaces |
| | TARGET: 30,000 economically disadvantaged residents enroll in middle-skill training programs | TARGET: 12,000 economically disadvantaged residents earn a middle-skill credential | TARGET: 8,000 economically disadvantaged residents placed in middle-skill jobs | TARGET: 2,000 economically disadvantaged residents advance (raises, promotions) in jobs after upskilling |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Statistical Area (Austin Metro Area) is undergoing a period of unprecedented economic growth and prosperity. However, not all residents share in this prosperity. Many families in the region are already struggling to make ends meet, even those that are working, and the Austin Metro Area is quickly becoming even more unaffordable as housing prices continue to climb.

Strong demand for workers is expected to continue over the next five years and the labor market is expected to continue to tighten. For the region’s economically disadvantaged residents—those who earn less than 200 percent of the Federal poverty line—this prospective job growth represents better economic opportunity. In particular, middle-skill jobs—those requiring more than a high school diploma but less than a four-year degree—offer a pathway out of poverty for many of these individuals.

This pool of local talent also represents an opportunity for employers. Employers benefit from hiring local candidates because candidates are more readily available for in-person interviews, vetting references is easier, relocation packages are not required, start-time lags are reduced, and turnover is often lower due to improved cultural fit. In addition, a pool of highly qualified economically disadvantaged residents offer employers a more diverse set of candidates.

Accessing local talent, however, is not always easy. Connecting local talent with employers will require a deliberate and collaborative effort on the part of the many institutions and organizations that are charged with developing the regional workforce.

The Austin Metro Area Master Community Workforce Plan (Master Plan) lays out a common agenda and establishes a framework for collaboration to coordinate the efforts of the region’s workforce development organizations and educational institutions. The work of the Master Plan will be carried out by the Austin Metro Area Talent and Opportunity Network (the Talent Network), which will be a network of partners committed to implementing the systems change and strategies associated with the Master Plan. The Talent Network will be supported by Workforce Solutions Capital Area, acting as the backbone organization. The efforts of the Talent Network will reach scale through the collective efforts of Talent Champions, who are employers and organizations that actively align their workforce efforts with the Master Plan.

AUSTIN METRO AREA TALENT & OPPORTUNITY NETWORK



VISION:

A more **demand-driven** workforce system that:

- *effectively engages employers, community-based organizations, and educational institutions;*
- *empowers residents to more efficiently match employers’ skills needs; and*
- *successfully prepares economically disadvantaged residents for middle-skill jobs*

GOAL:

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

OBJECTIVE:

10,000

residents living at or below 200% of poverty will secure middle-skill jobs by 2021

| PRIMARY STRATEGIES | |
|--|---|
|  <p>1. AWARENESS & ENROLLMENT CULTIVATE INTEREST IN HIGH-DEMAND, MIDDLE-SKILL CAREERS</p> <p>1.1. LABOR MARKET INFORMATION. Package and publish labor market and career information to support outreach activities</p> <p>1.2. GENERAL AWARENESS. Design and execute campaigns targeted at key populations to raise awareness of high-demand, middle-skill careers</p> <p>1.3. CAREER EXPLORATION. Provide meaningful career exploration opportunities for residents entering the labor force or considering changing careers. Such opportunities could include career fairs, job shadowing, work-based learning, site/workplace tours, and integration with career and technical education programs</p> <p>1.4. CAREER NAVIGATION. Increase the use of career navigators in helping economically disadvantaged students and workers define career directions and set career goals</p> |  <p>2. TRAINING EQUIP WORKERS WITH THE SKILLS THEY NEED TO SUCCEED</p> <p>2.1. ALIGNMENT. Centralize demand-side input to ensure that training curricula are aligned with regional employers’ needs and a 21st century workplace</p> <p>2.2. CAPACITY. Grow capacity of regional training providers to meet the demand for middle-skill workers</p> <p>2.3. ACCESS. Increase economically disadvantaged residents’ access to middle-skill training</p> <p>2.4. PERSISTENCE. Enhance economically disadvantaged students’ persistence and completion rates</p> |
|  <p>3. PLACEMENT CONNECT EMPLOYERS WITH LOCAL TALENT TO FILL MIDDLE-SKILL JOBS</p> <p>3.1. COMPETITIVENESS. Increase the number of earn-and-learn opportunities in the region to expose employers to a broader range of candidates and improve candidates’ employability skills</p> <p>3.2. CONNECTIONS. Create opportunities for employers and students in middle-skill training programs to connect before program completion</p> <p>3.3. LOCAL HIRING. Promote local hiring for middle-skill positions by facilitating the discovery of high-quality candidates</p> <p>3.4. HIRING PRACTICES. Implement promising and evidence-based hiring practices to fill middle-skill positions</p> |  <p>4. UPSKILLING ASSIST FRONTLINE WORKERS IN ACQUIRING SKILLS TO ADVANCE INTO MIDDLE-SKILL JOBS</p> <p>4.1. AWARENESS. Encourage the upskilling of frontline workers into middle-skill jobs</p> <p>4.2. CAPACITY. Support employers in upskilling their frontline workers through programming and technical assistance</p> |

The implementation of strategies will take a sector-based approach, beginning with three of the Austin Metro Area’s key economic drivers: **Healthcare, Information Technology, and Skilled Trades**. As these three sectors represent some of the best middle-skill career opportunities for economically disadvantaged residents, outreach and engagement strategies will be targeted specifically to these sectors and integrated into overall plan implementation. At the same time, the systems change envisioned by the Master Plan will not be exclusive to these three industries. The plan’s implementation will enhance the supply-side alignment of the workforce system overall, to the benefit of all participating employers and residents.

The Austin Metro Area Master Plan lays out an ambitious agenda for collaboration and coordination to address one of the region’s most persistent challenges. Successful implementation of the plan will require the many organizations involved in the regional workforce system to come together around a common vision and goal. Over the next several months, the structure of the Austin Metro Area Talent and Opportunity Network will be put into place. As these pieces come together, the Master Plan will provide a strong direction and foundation for alignment and collective impact of the Austin Metro Area’s workforce system.