

Item 13



Travis County Commissioners Court Agenda Request

Meeting Date: April 9, 2012

Prepared By/Phone Number: Juanita Jackson 854-4467

Elected/Appointed Official/Dept. Head: Sherri E. Fleming,
County Executive for Health and Human Services and Veterans Service

Commissioners Court Sponsor: Judge Samuel T. Biscoe

AGENDA LANGUAGE:

Consider and Take Action to Approve the Strategic and Operational Plan submitted by the Capital Area Workforce Development Board for submission to the Texas Workforce Commission

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY OF REQUEST AND ATTACHMENTS:

State regulations require that each of the Texas' 28 workforce development boards must submit a Strategic and Operational plan to the Texas Workforce Commission. Staff recommends approval of the proposed plan to ensure that the local board remains in compliance with all relevant state and federal regulations. This plan will cover the period from 2013-2015.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff recommends that the Court receive the report.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES:

This plan is required for the Capital Area Workforce Development Board to remain in compliance with state and federal regulations. To be accepted by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the plan must be approved by the appropriate Chief Elected Officials, in this case, the Travis County Judge and the Mayor of Austin. The form and content of this document is largely constrained by direction the boards receive from TWC.

While this document is somewhat limited due to TWC requirements, the Capital Area Workforce Development Board is working with Travis County, the City of Austin, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, and Austin Community College, with advice from the Ray Marshall Center and the University of Texas to develop a true community strategic plan for workforce development that will better inform local efforts to meet workforce needs for both job seekers and potential employers.

FISCAL IMPACT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:

There is no budgetary or fiscal impact on Travis County.

AGENDA REQUEST DEADLINE: All agenda requests and supporting materials must be submitted as a pdf to Cheryl Aker in the County Judge's office, agenda@co.travis.tx.us by **Tuesdays at 5:00 p.m.** for the next week's meeting.

REQUIRED AUTHORIZATIONS:

Leslie Browder, Purchasing and Budget Office

Mary Etta Gerhardt, County Attorney

Cyd Grimes, Travis County Purchasing Agent

Nicki Riley Travis County Auditor

Sherri Fleming, County Executive – HHS/VS

Blanca Leahy, Research & Planning – Division Director

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DATE: April 9, 2013

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT

FROM: *Sherri E. Fleming*
Sherri E. Fleming, County Executive
Travis County Health and Human Services and Veterans Service

SUBJECT: Approve Strategic and Operational Plan for Workforce Solutions –
Capital Area Workforce Development Board.

Proposed Motion:

Approve the Strategic and Operational Plan submitted by the Capital Area Workforce Development Board for submission to the Texas Workforce Commission

Summary and Staff Recommendations:

State regulations require that each of the Texas' 28 workforce development boards must submit a Strategic and Operational plan to the Texas Workforce Commission. Staff recommends approval of the proposed plan to ensure that the local board remains in compliance with all relevant state and federal regulations.

Budgetary and Fiscal Impact:

There is no budgetary or fiscal impact on Travis County.

Issues and Opportunities:

This plan is required for the Capital Area Workforce Development Board to remain in compliance with state and federal regulations. To be accepted by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the plan must be approved by the appropriate Chief Elected

Officials, in this case, the Travis County Judge and the Mayor of Austin. The form and content of this document is largely constrained by direction the boards receive from TWC.

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Background:

TWC requires that all workforce development boards maintain an approved strategic and operational plan on file. This plan will cover the period from 2013-2015.

cc: Leslie Browder, Purchasing and Budget Office
Mary Etta Gerhardt, County Attorney
Cyd Grimes, Travis County Purchasing Agent
Nicki Riley Travis County Auditor
Sherri Fleming, County Executive – HHS/VS
Blanca Leahy, Research & Planning – Division Director

Capital Area Workforce Development Board

Strategic and Operational Plan

FY 2013 – FY 2018

Alan D. Miller, Executive Director

Tamara D. Atkinson, Deputy Executive Director

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SECTION I – STRATEGIC PLAN

BACKGROUND

The Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board (“Board”) serves as the leadership and governing body for the Austin/Travis County workforce development system.

The Board was established and certified in May 1996 in accordance with the Federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998 and the Texas Workforce and Economic Competitiveness Act. It is one of twenty-eight (28) local workforce boards in the State of Texas, that along with the Texas Workforce Commission make up the Texas Workforce Solutions Network.

The Board is comprised of a twenty-seven (27) board of directors appointed by the Mayor of the City of Austin and the Travis County Judge. It is a public/private partnership with members representing business, education, labor, economic development, community-based organizations, public assistance, vocational rehabilitation, literacy, and the public employment service.

The Board is responsible for the planning and oversight of workforce development activities in the LWDA. It also serves as the designated grant recipient and administrative entity for workforce development programs and funds allocated to the local area.

The work of the board includes, but is not limited to:

- Strategic and operational planning;
- Design of the local workforce delivery system, including the establishment of local one-stop career centers;
- Oversight and evaluation of workforce development activities;
- Providing policy guidance;
- Connecting and aligning the various components of the regional workforce system;
- Leveraging and investing resources into workforce development;
- Serving as an advocate for workforce issues and needs;
- Building partnerships and collaborations in support of local workforce development initiatives; and
- Serving as a link between the workforce system and its owners and stakeholders.

Section I – Strategic Plan

a. Part I – Mission, Vision, Values, and Goals

Our Mission

To lead the region’s workforce system in the development of a world-class workforce.

Our Vision

All people (our human capital) are productive and the region is prosperous.

Our Values

Diversity – Our greatest strength is our individual differences (backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, etc.) which are a reflection of our community. We encourage and appreciate open discussion and consideration of diverse perspectives.

Leadership – We inspire and motivate others into action to achieve our vision. We give of our time and talents to build a prosperous community.

Collaboration – We value and foster partnerships with the community to achieve our goals and attain our vision. We treat everyone with respect, listen to each other, and act together for the betterment of all.

Innovation – We value creativity and foster an environment that produces innovative ideas and solutions to address changing needs.

Accountability and Results – As stewards of public trust, we operate with high standards of integrity and professionalism. We are responsible for our actions and accountable for the results. We are transparent in conducting our business.

Our Long-Term Ends/Results

- An educated, skilled workforce
- Economic equity
- A strong, competitive economy

Overarching Goals

- Reduce disparities in education/skills, employment and income
- Build an integrated, seamless workforce system

- Provide employers with a qualified, skilled pool of talent

Issues, Challenges and Opportunities

The Capital Area represents a paradox. It is an area of significant growth and prosperity. But is it also an area of increasing disparity.

Population Growth

The Austin-Round Rock MSA is one of the fastest growing metro-areas in the country. In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau ranked the Austin-Round Rock MSA as the nation's 35th largest metro-area. Between 2000 and 2010, the region's population increased by 37.3%, making it the third fastest growing MSA only behind Las Vegas-Paradise (NV) and Raleigh-Clay (NC), both of which grew by 41.8%. The Texas State Data Center projects the region's population to reach almost 4 million by 2040.

The Capital Area has become a popular destination, with people migrating here from around the United States and the world. Around 2004, migration became the leading component in the region's population growth (64%). Forty-one percent was attributable to domestic migration (within Texas or from other states) and twenty-three percent the result of international migration.

Not only is the region's population growing, it is also becoming more diverse. From 2000 to 2010 the Hispanic population grew by 64.2%, Asian by 86.5%, and Anglo by 23.8%. While Whites still comprise the largest population group in the region, their relative portion of the total population declined from 61% in 2000 to 56% in 2010, and is expected to drop to 43% by 2040. The City of Austin, the region's largest city, is already a majority minority community (no one race or ethnic group representing a majority).

From a labor perspective the region benefits from having a relatively youthful population. The median age of the Capital Area is 32.5 years. Fifty-five percent of the population is under the age of 34. In addition to being youthful, the region's population is comparatively well-educated. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 87% of the region's population age 25 and over had attained an educational level of a high school graduate or higher, with 39% having a bachelor's degree or higher.

Economic – Job Growth

The Capital Area was one of the "last in and first out" of the economic recession that rocked the country in 2008. It was able to quickly recover jobs lost and to continue to add new ones. The region ranked first in job market growth (2004-2012) out of the top 50 MSAs, with a 26.5% growth rate, adding 174,800 jobs. Between December 2011 and December 2012, the region added 34,600 new jobs (4.3% growth).

The Austin-Round Rock MSA is consistently rated as one of the top places in the nation to do business by Forbes, Kiplinger, Brookings Institute, Milken Institute, and others. The region offers an innovative, creative and entrepreneurial climate, that combined with its high quality of life and the State's stable tax and regulatory environment, have made it a mecca for job creation.

According to the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, 256 businesses have relocated to the region since 2004 (94 since 2010). Digital media, headquarters/regional offices, and software development companies have produced the greatest number of new jobs.

Government, education, healthcare and leisure & hospitality provide a solid economic foundation, while growth in information technology, biotechnology, and clean energy continue the diversification of the region's economy.

The Paradox

The region presents a paradox of growth/prosperity and of growing disparity. It is like a giant onion with multiple layers. As you pull the layers off, a different picture emerges.

The fastest growing (and one of the largest) population groups in the region – Hispanics, lag significantly behind their White and Asian counterparts in educational attainment. An increasing number have basic education and/or English language skill deficiencies. Hispanics and African Americans also have proportionately lower high school graduation rates. These groups also have lower income levels and high rates of unemployment.

As a result of these disparities, a growing portion of the region's population is becoming more and more marginalized, having to work multiple low-wage, low-skill jobs to make ends meet. They are unable to take advantage of the high-demand, high-wage jobs that are being created.

The region also has a bi-furcated economy. It has seen tremendous growth in the high-tech sectors, producing a large number of high-demand, high-skill jobs. It has also seen significant job growth at the lower end as well, producing a growing number of low-skill, low-wage jobs. The region suffers from a gap or absence of growth in so-called "middle-skill" jobs.

While the region has an adequate supply of labor, talent shortages in specific sectors/occupations are becoming evident. Employers have been able to recruit talent from outside the region, and a portion of the talent migrating to the area has the skills needed. But this is not a sustainable situation. As more talent moves into the region, those with lower education and skill levels become further removed from being able to take advantage of the economic prosperity.

Summary

Workforce Solutions Capital Area is faced with a number of challenges as described above. In addition to the problems associated with growing disparities, other challenges include diminishing resources and conflicting and competing interests.

While we are faced with numerous challenges, we believe that those challenges are simply opportunities. They are opportunities for creative and innovative problem solving.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Build better connections with and alignment between education, workforce development and economic development.

- Identify current and future workforce trends, needs and priorities and disseminate information to workforce partners and stakeholders.
- Increase involvement with the various employer advisory groups/business associations in the region.
- Improve communications/interactions with the City and Chamber's economic development teams.
- Work with the economic development community and education to provide solutions to talent needs of businesses locating to the Capital Area and those already here who are seeking to expand.
- Convene an annual meeting of community leaders from education, workforce development and economic development.

Goal 2: Increase the awareness of available workforce services and engagement with the workforce system by those who are traditionally under-served and who are under-represented in the labor force.

- Improve and expand linkages with (identify opportunities for partnering/collaborating) with other workforce entities that serve targeted populations.
- Encourage and support efforts to develop accelerated training programs for targeted occupations, including programs that integrate basic skills and occupational training.
- Broaden and promote outreach, workforce education and training, and employment opportunities for individuals facing barriers to employment.
- Support the work of and help connect individuals to pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs.
- Increase the number of customers receiving and completing training.
- Increase the number of customers certified as "work ready" through Work Ready Austin.

Goal 3: Assist in efforts to prepare the future workforce.

- Support the development of a continuum of career awareness and exploration activities for students.
- Develop a summer youth internship program with private sector employers/investment.
- Encourage the adoption and integration of work readiness skills standards/certification.
- Connect and align with and support other youth development initiatives/plans – i.e. School Readiness Action Plan, E3 Alliance, Ready-by-21, etc.
- Advocate for growth in Career and Technology Education. Work with ISDs to provide guidance to ensure programs align with the region’s targeted industries and employer needs.

Goal 4: Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the workforce system.

- Explore ways in which to increase the use of technology in delivering services.
- Streamline access to workforce services.
- Develop a framework of performance goals/indicators (i.e. a workforce “dashboard”) and issue an annual report card.
- Partner with other workforce entities to reduce duplication, leverage resources, and expand services.

Aligning efforts among workforce development partners to achieve accessible, seamless, integrated, and comprehensive service.

Internal

Within the Board’s “sphere of control” – that portion of the workforce system that we are directly responsible for (i.e. federally funded workforce programs), there are several partners involved in the delivery system:

- Career Center contractor (WIA Adult, WIA Dislocated Worker, TAA, SNAP, TANF/Choices, NCP, etc.)
- Child Care contractor
- WIA Youth Services contractor
- TWC Wagner-Peyser Employment Services
- Texas Veterans Leadership Program
- Texas Veterans Commission (DVOP/LVER)
- Job Corp
- Senior Community Service Employment Program (AARP)

The alignment of efforts among our partners to achieve accessible, seamless, integrated and comprehensive service is an ongoing, evolving process. We regularly engage in the following activities:

- Working with customers to identify their needs
- Adding or adjusting services based on customer needs

- Evaluating work-flow and processes
- Cross-training of staffs
- Better aligning services with each other
- Joint meetings between contractor and board staff
- Exploring greater use of technology
- Utilizing co-enrollments between programs to leverage resources
- Increase the use of data to make data-driven decisions

External

The programs and services administered by the Board are but a piece of the overall workforce system. We not only work to align efforts internally to achieve accessible, seamless, integrated and comprehensive services, but we also do so with other workforce entities in the community. We work to accomplish this through several different means, including but not limited to:

- Developing Memorandum of Understanding with other organizations for the mutual referral of customers
- Inventorying workforce services and providers in the community
- Looking for opportunities to partner and collaborate in the development of workforce solutions
- Sharing of labor market information to help align services with employer needs
- Providing leadership and advocacy for the workforce system
- Working to develop a community plan for the workforce system – common goals and objectives; common set of performance metrics; common definitions; minimum standards; etc.
- Connecting and aligning efforts with other community plans and initiatives – Success by Six, School Readiness, Opportunity Austin, E3 Alliance, ARRO, Ready-by-21

Alignment and Support of Advancing Texas (TWIC & TWC Goals)

TWIC Goal 1: Design and implement a demonstration program targeted at improving the perception of career options that Career and Technical Education (CTE) enable.	
	Objective: Provide students, parents, and ISD staff in Central Texas area with labor market information for technical careers in industries and careers that are driving the local economies.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish agreements with ISDs to conduct presentations. • Determine appropriate forums and timeline for future presentations. • Develop power point presentation targeted to ISD staff. • Provide presentations; collect feedback and revise presentation.

TWIC Goal 2: Design and implement integrated Adult Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner populations.	
	Objective: Expedite academic basic skills and professional technical skills attainment through an I-BEST model program so that job seekers may enter the workforce more quickly and ready to meet employers' needs.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a baseline number of English language learners who will be supported in the program. • Identify responsibilities among partnering agencies and Board to manage and coordinate program. • Establish agreement with local community college for basic skills and professional technical training delivery. • Recognize training program(s) in ETPL in order to use financially support students with WIA funds, as applicable. • Enroll students for instruction.

TWIC Goal 3: Gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction	
	Objective: Provide employers with a single, user-friendly method for providing feedback that can be used by a variety of appropriate stakeholders.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing forums where employer customers are already participating. • Actively participate and engage with employers in these forums. • Identify any new forums that need to be created. • Develop a survey or other easy-to-use method for gathering consistent data.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use data to refine and refresh employer customer engagement practices, and job seeker preparation practices.
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TWIC Goal 4: Use the employment data / outcomes from Workforce Solutions' supported programs to understand and improve those programs.	
	Objective: Better utilize and analyze current and new sources of data to improve service delivery and quality of job candidates.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish what service delivery and outcome goals are most important for the Board to track and understand. Establish and set local policy on which data fields in TWIST and WIT are required to be completed by Program Specialists and others working within the local service delivery area. Identify Board and contractor staff responsible for pulling data reports. Hold annual Data Retreat and/or Workforce Summit to review reports and set policy and funding priority recommendations based on data.

TWC Goal 1: Increase the percentage of adult education students receiving high school diplomas or GEDs.	
	Objective: Create a network of interconnected community-based and community college providers who use funding administered by the Board to assist youth and adults in receiving high school diplomas and GEDs.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Execute contracts with community-based and community college providers utilizing quality instruction techniques in order to ensure that GED services are available in a number of locations convenient to students. Establish metrics adopted by the community of providers and the board for evaluating and increasing quality instruction.

TWC Goal 2: Increase the number of certificates, associates, and bachelor degrees awarded annually.	
	Objective: Assist students in completing occupational training supported by locally approved training programs through the use of WIA, TAA, and local funding streams.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish goals for Board-supported training completions that result in a certificate or a degree.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish data collection and reporting strategies. • Establish interventions and supports for clients who are at risk of non-completion.
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TWC Goal 3: Increase the percentage of exiting secondary students pursuing academic and/or workforce education.	
	<u>Objective:</u> To assist students exiting high school to further education and training in order to support self-sufficiency goals.
Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Ready by 21 Coalition and other relevant existing youth-focused organizations to effectively reach at-risk youth and let them know of opportunities to pursue academic and/or workforce education. • Set “reach goal” for number of students to target and support. • Create a resource list of all funding available to support students pursuing academic and / or workforce education.

Section I – Strategic Plan

b. Part II – Economic and Workforce Analysis

Workforce Needs of Businesses, Job Seekers, and Workers

The Capital Area Board has worked to identify the workforce needs of the region using a combination of labor market information, analytical tools and local wisdom. Resources used included:

- TWC/LMCI – SOCRATES, TRACER, Texas Industry Profiles, SWAP
- Economic Modeling Specialists Intl. (EMSI)
- Bureau of Labor Statistics
- Chambers of Commerce
- Opportunity Austin
- City of Austin
- Travis County
- Austin Community College
- Austin Area Research Organization
- Austin Human Resource Management Association
- E3 Alliance
- United Way
- Ray Marshall Center
- Door 64
- Austin Technology Council
- Health Industry Steering Committee
- Board Contractors (C2 Global – career centers; Goodwill Industries – WIA Youth; TMC – Child Care)
- Ready-by-21 Youth Consortium

Targeted Industries

We began the targeting process using the Industrial Evaluation (INDEVAL) and Shift Share Analysis (3 & 4 Digit NAICS codes) available through SOCRATES. INDEVAL identifies “industry sectors that are significant to the local economy and thus might be candidates for the creation of employer-driven partnerships”, by analyzing national, state and regional economic data, and applied weights. The industries identified by the INDEVAL model offer the “greatest potential for job opportunity” and “are likely to have an increasing demand for workers, many of who are still in the education pipeline.”

Using the results of the INDEVAL analysis, we further evaluated industries for growth rate, base employment, and average wage.

The Shift Share Analysis examines the competitiveness of the region’s industries by decomposing employment change over a specified period of time into mutually exclusive factors. “It paints a picture of how well the region’s current industries are performing by systematically examining the national, local, and industrial components of employment change.” Shift-share analysis identifies and groups industries as those producing the Greatest Likelihood for Potential Job Opportunities, Strong Likelihood, Potential Comparative, Less Likely, or Indeterminate. The Shift-Share analysis included looking at both the 3 and 4 digit NAICS codes over a five (5) year base period.

Industries were selected from the list of Greatest Likelihood for Potential Job Opportunities, Strong Likelihood, and Potential Comparative Advantage. We further examined industries for base employment and average weekly wage. We also used information/data from Texas Industry Profiles (LED Industry Focus, LED Quarterly Workforce Indicators, and Regional Local Quotients (TWC/LMCI Sectors and the Governor’s Industry Clusters) in identifying Targeted Industries. Finally, we also looked at industries closely related to Opportunity Austin 3.0.

As part of our industrial analysis we considered the following factors/criteria:

- Projected employment growth rate
- Projected employment growth
- Projected employment level
- Growth in hiring and new hires
- Average weekly wages

We also looked to targeted industries that aligned to the region’s economic development targets identified in Opportunity Austin 3.0, which include:

- Advanced and General Manufacturing
- Multi-Media Technology (Mobile Apps, Software, Music & Film, Education Tech)
- Clean Energy & Power Technology
- Life Sciences & Bio-Technology
- Data Management
- Corporate Headquarters & Regional Offices

Targeted Industries List

NAICS Code	Title
3344*	Semiconductor & Electronic Components
5112*	Software Publishers
5415*	Computer Systems Design & Related Services
5416	Management & Technical Consulting Services
6211	Offices of Physicians
6215*	Medical & Diagnostic Labs
6221	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
9399	Local Government, Ex. Hospitals & Education
9229	State Government, Ex. Hospitals & Education

*Included in Governor’s Industry Clusters

Targeted Occupations

Our “targeted” occupations are derived from an analysis of demand occupations (simply a factor of large numbers of jobs) and applying filtering criteria. The “targeted” occupations list is made up of high-demand, high-skill and high-wage occupations. They offer, in our opinion, the best job opportunities over the next ten years. Many of these occupations are found across multiple industries in the region as well as those on the targeted industries list. In refining our targeted occupations list, we used the following general factors/criteria:

- Projected employment for 2020 equal to or greater than the average for all occupations in the region (22%)
- Project employment growth rate equal to or greater than the average growth rate for all industries in the region (1,112)
- Average annual job openings (50)
- Education requirements – post secondary certificate or degree (Associate or Bachelor’s), long-term on-the-job training (apprenticeship)
- Median hourly wages equal to or greater than the median for all occupations in the region (\$17.73)
- Labor supply/availability
- Relationship to targeted industries, including TWC/LMCI sectors and the Governor’s clusters.

The following resources were used as part of the targeting process:

- SOCRATES
- Wanted Analytics
- Texas Profiles
- TRACER
- Input from local sources – Health Industry Steering Committee, Austin Area Research Organization, Ray Marshall Center, Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce, Door 64, et.al)

The targeted occupations list is used to help guide staff in our career centers in investing funds into Individual Training Accounts (ITAs).

Targeted Occupations List

SOC Code	Title
29-1094	Community Health Care Worker
29-2031	Cardiovascular Technologists & Technicians
29-2032	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
29-2061	Licensed Vocational Nurses
29-2011	Medical and Clinical Lab Technologists
29-2012	Medical and Clinical Lab Technicians
29-2052	Pharmacy Technicians

29-1123	Physical Therapists
31-2022	Physical Therapist Assistants
29-2034	Radiologic Technologists & Technicians
20-1141	Registered Nurses
29-1126	Respiratory Therapists
29-2055	Surgical Technologists
15-1179	Information Security Analysts, Web Developers & Computer Network Architects
15-1021	Computer Programmers
15-1150	Computer Support Specialists
15-1121	Computer Systems Analysts
15-1141	Database Administrators
15-1142	Network and Computer Systems Administrators
15-1132	Software Developers, Applications
15-1133	Software Developers, Systems Software
15-1199	Software Quality Assurance Engineers & Testers
17-2071	Electrical Engineers
17-3023	Electrical & Electronic Engineering Technicians
47-2111	Electricians
13-1111	Management Analysts
49-9051	Electrical Power-Line Installers & Repairers
49-9021	HVAC Mechanics & Installers
47-2152	Plumbers & Pipefitters
13-2011	Accountants and Auditors
49-3023	Automotive Technicians and Mechanics
43-3031	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerks

Workforce Needs of Businesses, Job Seekers, and Workers and How the Workforce System Will Address Them

Businesses need access to a pool of qualified, skilled labor. They need entry-level workers to be “job ready”. Job seekers and workers need the education and skills that map to the changing needs of the workplace. As previously described, the Capital Area has a rising number of individuals who lack the necessary education and skills to compete in the labor market for high-demand, high-skill, high-wage jobs. Many face basic skill and English language deficiencies. Reiterating from previous parts of this section, the workforce system will work to address these needs using the following strategies:

- Increase the number of customers obtaining a work ready certification through the Board’s *Work Ready Austin* initiative
- Work with the adult education and literacy community to improve/expand services and implement models that incorporate both basic/English language skills and occupational training

- Work with the education and training provider community to align programs with employer needs
- Increase the number of training providers and programs on the Board’s Eligible Training Provider List
- Improve the overall quality of training provided.
- Increase the number of individuals enrolled in and who complete occupational training in targeted occupations.

Strategies and Initiatives To Support Targeted Industries and Occupations

- Coordinating with Austin Community College, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce and industry sector employers (information technology) to develop fast-track training programs around specific skills and certifications to help address talent gap in software developers. Also explore similar initiatives in other occupational areas.
- Coordinating with area employer advisory groups and business associations to closely monitor changes in industries and impact on the labor force and economic development.
- Improve and increase communications with education and training providers on employer needs – facilitate input on program and curriculum needs.
- Increase communications with the City of Austin and the Greater Austin Chamber’s economic development teams.
- Work with Austin Community College, the Chamber, and employers to create internships and incorporate work-based learning into training programs.
- Improve outreach to employers in targeted industries by the Business Services Team to increase engagement with the workforce system.

SECTION II – OPERATIONAL PLAN

a. Part I – Services to Target Populations

<p>How the Board will ensure continuous improvement of eligible providers of services and ensure that providers meet employment needs of local employers and participants.</p>	<p>Workforce Solutions Capital Area has its most significant service contracts on staggered procurement cycles, allowing the Board to carefully consider its needs before and during each procurement cycle. Through its contracts, the Board creates minimum standards for operation of the Career Centers. These standards become the basis for evaluation, and are tracked quarterly by Board staff through review of actual performance against Participant Planning Summaries. Local performance measures are negotiated annually and made a part of the contract each fiscal year. The performance measures and goals are aligned with the needs of local employers and participants. Board staff meet with representatives from each contractor at least twice a week, and are daily reviewing aspects of each contractors performance, operations, and compliance.</p>
<p>Description / assessment of type and availability of adult and dislocated worker training activities</p>	<p>Austin has a very robust and growing community of training activities. The Board has worked for more than ten years to build relationships with these providers, most notably Austin Community College. The Workforce Investment Act Adult and Dislocated Worker program provide vocational training assistance in target occupations. On-the-job training activities are also available as a training activity, and in addition, older youth are co-enrolled in the Youth and Adult programs. Work experience activities are offered to help the young adult gain necessary job skills.</p> <p>Basic education are primarily coordinated with Austin Community College District, the adult education provider for TEA in the Austin area. ACC co-locates an Adult Education transitions staff at the One Stop Center to better facilitate enrollment of Choices and WIA clients into ACC courses. ACC also has two education advisors co-located at One Stops to counsel students on their training options. Further, ACC utilizes the One Stop in the evenings for GED classes for WIA, TANF, and universal customers. Because both the One Stop and Adult Education systems use the TABE as the assessment for literacy levels, transitioning from one agency to</p>

	<p>the other is simple for the clients.</p> <p>Career Facilitators develop workshops geared toward WIA program participants to help customers train in job search activities and selecting training providers. The training activities conducted in the workshops are specifically targeted to WIA customers to assist in networking, interviewing, resume writing, and overall job search tracking skills.</p> <p>Further, the Capital Area has successfully piloted a cohort-based approach to training activities. This format allows customers to build a bond with fellow classmates, while allowing staff to more successfully focus case management and support efforts at a group of students.</p> <p>Finally, in an effort to ensure high quality training activities for its clients, the Board of Directors voted in May, 2012 to refine training provider policies in order to layer on quality standards for providers, effective July , 2013. These standards will set caps on training tuition costs by occupational type (based on market value through the community college system) as well as hold providers accountable for the employment outcomes of their trainees and employer satisfaction with training completers. The desired result is a training activity system that earns the trust of both the job seekers and the employers in the region.</p>
<p>How the Board will coordinate workforce investment activities with Rapid Response activities, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Potentially WIA eligible workers receive information regarding WIA at each Rapid Response Orientation meeting and instruction on how to proceed with the application process.</p>
<p>Description / assessment of the type and availability of youth activities, including successful providers.</p>	<p>Workforce Solutions Capital Area is unique in that youth services are provided through a partnership of youth serving agencies in the community, with Goodwill Industries of Central Texas being the lead and responsible for case management activities. GED preparation and Alternative High School programs are offered through the partnership (Goodwill, Lifeworks and American Youth Works) and case managers are housed in priority high schools and services are provided through the Communities in Schools program. By providing services through a partnership, WFS Capital Area is</p>

	<p>able to provide services to targeted youth, such as foster youth and those that have dropped out of school.</p> <p>Paid and unpaid internships are offered to youth participants. Examples of internship sites are Keep Austin Beautiful, Excel Learning Center, Legal Aid, Advocacy Outreach, Travis County Juvenile Justice Center, and Goodwill. Often times the youth are hired permanently as a result of the internship placement. For PY 2012, 50 youth were hired permanently as a result of internship/summer youth employment opportunities. Counseling services and support groups are also offered through the Partnership.</p> <p>Workforce Solutions Capital Area provides assessments to youth to aid in program participation and career exploration. Assessments offered are the WRAT, My Next Move (O*NET), and Barriers to Employment Success Inventory. These assessments are utilized in conjunction with an Individual Employment Plan and case management to help determine the most appropriate services for youth.</p>
List of current and projected employment opportunities in the workforce area for the occupations targeted for training, using Attachment 3, the Target Industries and Occupations Template.	See Attachment 3
Outreach efforts to Migrant Seasonal Farm Workers, if applicable	Not applicable.
Services provided for Trade Adjustment Assistance, if applicable	Potentially eligible Trade impacted workers receive an information booklet on TAA benefits and instructions on contacting a TAA case manager. Workforce Center staff receives bi-annual training on the TAA program. TAA activity is monitored a regular basis at the Board level.
How the Board will work with the local Senior Community Service Employment Programs (SCSEP), if applicable.	The Capital Area Board has executed an MOU with AARP, the local SCSEP contractor, to provide work experience opportunities within its One Stops. Through this arrangement, AARP is also able to promote its services and program to eligibility seniors who utilize the One Stop for employment assistance.

b. Part II – Customer Services

<p>How Business Services Units will effectively coordinate multiple programs and provide quality customer service.</p>	<p>The Capital Area Business Services Unit will effectively coordinate multiple programs and ensure quality customer service by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Operating a responsive staffing structure that is integrated with Career Center operations,2. Ensuring quality job seeker and employer data populates the WIT labor exchange system, and3. Leveraging technology to improve the quality of business services provided. <p><u>Responsive Staffing Structure:</u> Workforce Solutions Capital Area's BSU is structured to ensure quality services are provided to three distinct customer groups: (1) external employer customers, (2) job seeker customers, and (3) internal Career Center staff. The BSU is divided into two dedicated staff groups with one focusing on external outreach and customer relationship management and the second focused on generating quality referrals to job seekers and coordinating with Career Center staff to ensure all operational staff are aware of high-priority job postings, major hirings/layoffs, labor market trends, etc. Acknowledging and tailoring services to each customer grouping in a structured manner ensures the BSU is responsive to multiple program demands or changes in any single customer grouping.</p> <p><u>Quality WIT Data:</u> Workforce Solutions Capital Area invests heavily in staff development and employs rigorous quality control measures to ensure the integrity of the data that populates the WIT system. Staff development investments include bi-annual WIT training for all staff to ensure a thorough understanding of the functionality of the system and what data impacts performance outcomes for multiple programs. Quality control measures include review, scoring, and correction of significant samples of WIT job postings and job seeker applications and ad hoc analysis of data within WIT.</p>
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	<p>Leveraging Technology: Workforce Solutions Capital Area's BSU strives to "raise the bar" for how workforce systems leverage technology to improve customer service and better manage program demands. Examples of technology employed to this end includes (1) BSU's use of iPads to dynamically present the workforce system's portfolio of services to employers and resource room use of iPads to speed services to job seekers; (2) Microsoft Dynamics CRM to better track customer interactions and collect data points for analysis that are not collected via WIT (ex. current and projected labor needs); (3) social media strategies that aim to engage non-traditional workforce customer such as use of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn campaigns; and (4) solutions for improving accessibility of workforce services such as mapping/geocoding spatial information and communicating information via Flickr, Craigslist, text and email blasts. Effectively leveraging technology enables the Capital Area BSU to manage not only traditional workforce programs effectively (i.e. WIA, TANF, SNAP, etc.), but also to operate specialized workforce programs for Travis County and City of Austin while providing exceptional customer services through a seamless flow of "complete" information.</p>
<p>How Boards will support and promote state operated programs (Skills Development Fund, Skills for Small Business, Self-Sufficiency Fund, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Apprenticeship, other contracts).</p>	<p>Support: Work with our local community college, chambers, ED organizations, the City, the Governor's office and our contractor to identify companies who are expanding and/or relocating to the area who have an interest or need for these programs.</p> <p>Promotion: Actively participate and engage with employers by providing outreach literature at job fairs, direct one-on-one meetings, speaking engagements, Trade Associations, Advisory Councils, forums, marketing campaigns, etc.</p>
<p>How the Board will use technology (i.e. mobile units, job search aggregators, social media) to provide services to employers and job seekers.</p>	<p>Workforce Solutions Capital Area's BSU strives to "raise the bar" for how workforce systems leverage technology to improve customer service and better manage program demands. Examples of technology employed to this end includes (1) BSU's use of iPads to dynamically present the workforce system's portfolio of services to employers and resource room use of iPads to</p>

	<p>speed services to job seekers; (2) Microsoft Dynamics CRM to better track customer interactions and collect data points for analysis that are not collected via WIT (ex. current and projected labor needs); (3) social media strategies that aim to engage non-traditional workforce customer such as use of Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn campaigns; and (4) solutions for improving accessibility of workforce services such as mapping/geocoding spatial information and communicating information via Flickr, Craigslist, text and email blasts. Effectively leveraging technology enables the Capital Area BSU to manage not only traditional workforce programs effectively (i.e. WIA, TANF, SNAP, etc.), but also to operate specialized workforce programs for Travis County and City of Austin while providing exceptional customer services through a seamless flow of "complete" information.</p>
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c. Part III – Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC) Requirements

TWIC Requirements Part I

Provide detailed information on plan strategies that are specifically designed to meet the needs of Veterans and to facilitate their entry into the workforce. Where applicable, specify related performance measures and targets for each population.

Workforce Solutions – Capital Area Workforce Board will establish a veteran recruitment campaign to assist Central Texas employers in recruiting skilled workers. In 2012, Workforce Solutions launched the Veterans Resource Center (VRC) within its largest One Stop facility in North Austin. The VRC has become a popular job search site for those transitioning from military service, averaging 16 veteran job seekers each day. The VRC is staffed from Texas Veterans Commission, Texas Workforce Commission, and volunteer veterans trained through Red Cross of Central Texas.

The Capital Area Board has long made returning area veterans a priority group to be provided services that lead to gainful employment. The Capital Area works closely with the City of Austin Mayor’s office and the Travis County veterans services office to coordinate hiring events and other initiatives that target veterans. Most notably, the City of Austin awarded the Capital Area Board a 30-month, \$7.9M education and training grant with veterans identified as a priority group to be trained and provided support services.

The Capital Area board supports the College Credit for Heroes initiative and works to implement the ideals of the CCH program in our region. The Board encourages Austin Community College to accept the CCH military transcript, and reduce the number of classroom hours a veteran must obtain in order to expedite the degree process and get them into the workforce sooner. Board staff, working in tandem with the Career Center contractor and co-located Austin Community College staff, facilitates a more “veteran friendly” environment for veterans returning to the college campus.

Thanks to a generous one-time grant from IBM, the Board will use developed marketing collateral to conduct awareness about the variety of job search tools and services available to veterans, whether they are searching for a survival job or a career path. The specific steps that the Capital Area board will take include:

1. Educate program specialists and other job assistance staff on the O*Net crosswalk to translate the Military Occupational Specialty code (MOS) into the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system. This steps ensures that the skills of transitioning veterans can be properly evaluated and ease their transition into a job.
2. Provide employers with easy-to-understand information about federal and state programs, including TWC, which may assist them when they hire a veteran.

Finally, the Capital Area board will continue to work with local offices that target veterans and the Texas Veterans Commission representatives to promote veterans activities within the Career Centers.

FY 12 Baseline number of veterans who enrolled in programs managed by the Capital Area's Career Center contractor: 592

Provide detailed information on plan strategies that are specifically designed to meet the needs of Texans with low literacy or poor English language fluency and to facilitate their entry into the workforce. Where applicable, specify related performance measures and targets for each population.

The Capital Area Board has long recognized that it must target and provide quality services to individuals with low literacy or poor English language fluency skills. The Capital Area has a robust and productive relationship with Austin Community College's Adult Education Division, which administers TEA's adult education funds for the region.

The Capital Area Board sets contracted performance expectations with its WIA Youth, and WIA Adult Worker providers each year. For the current year (CY13), the following expectations are in the Participant Planning Summary included in each contract:

- WIA Youth: 250 youth who are currently at low literacy levels, including limited English proficiency, will be provided services that lead to post-secondary school completion and dropout prevention strategies.
- For WIA Adult: 40 individuals, at minimum, will be connected and supported in ABE/GED/ESL services.

The Capital Area's commitment to serving those with low literacy or poor English language skills is demonstrated in the following ways:

- The Board hosts GED and ESL classes on-site in the evening at its North Career Center;
- A recruitment and assessment advisor from Austin Community College is co-located at the North Career Center to assist with TANF client enrollment into Adult Education courses;
- The Capital Area Board and ACC have collaborated on current and previous grants targeted at serving low literacy clients, including a current grant from the Department of Labor under Workforce Innovation Funding;
- The Board is a partner with Austin Community College in the Texas Higher Education Coordination Board's Innovations Grant; and
- The Board is a partner with Community Action, Inc. in the Central Texas C4 Initiative.

Perhaps most notably, the Capital Area Board is leading an ambitious grant project funded by the City of Austin. The Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC) is comprised of 11 community agencies with the goal of helping Austin-area residents prepare for today's competitive job market. The Continuum is like a chain where each link is a different type of adult education program. Before students can get their GED, they need to have a good grasp of written English. However, a native Spanish speaker may not be literate in her/his own language, so before they can take ESL, they need to learn Spanish language literacy. Each client has her/his own particular path to take throughout the WERC programs.

WERC agencies share a data system that helps them track each client's goals and achievements as they progress from program to program. Ultimately, WERC clients will complete the Continuum with the skills and resources needed to find and keep a job.

FY 12 Baseline number of individuals with low literacy (less than a 9th grade education) or poor English language fluency who enrolled in programs managed by the Capital Area's Career Center contractor: 301

Provide detailed information on plan strategies that are specifically designed to meet the needs of Blind or Disabled Texans and to facilitate their entry into the workforce. Where applicable, specify related performance measures and targets for each population.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) mandates state and local governments give civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities the same as is provided to individuals on the basis of race, religion, sex, and national origin. The Capital Area Board has established policies and procedures regarding physical and programmatic access to individuals with disabilities at the Career Centers.

The Board works closely with Division of Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and the Division of Blind Services (DBS) to ensure that services for individuals who are blind or disabled are provided equal services within the workforce system. Each year, the two Divisions and the Capital Area Board and its contractors facilitate staff cross-training sessions. The purpose of these sessions is to increase awareness and service to customers who are blind or disabled by making staff feel more comfortable with working with clients with disabilities.

Additionally, the Board has purchased adaptive equipment to ensure that individuals with disabilities are able to access workforce programs and information. As such, the three Career Centers are all equipped to serve individuals with visual, hearing, physical, cognitive, and other disabilities through the provision of adaptive equipment. The Board revisits its accessibility technology plan at least once a year to ensure that it is keeping up with the most appropriate devices that will aid clients with accessing information in a format equal to those customers without disabilities. The technology accessible to clients includes:

- ZoomText Magnifier which enlarges and enhances everything on your computer screen, making all applications easy to see and use.
- JAWS for Windows is a Screen Reading Software
JAWS reads aloud what's on the PC screen and gives the user a unique set of intelligent tools for navigating and accesses Web pages and all screen content.

In additional all public workstations have Microsoft version of accessibility software enabled for magnification and screen readers as backs ups.

TWIC Requirements Part II

Provide detailed information on an innovative strategy contained in your plan that includes collaboration with two or more system partners. Describe the rationale for the strategy and its intended outcomes. Describe how both the process and the outcomes of the strategy will be evaluated to determine the strategy’s success over time.

Purpose

Leverage the expertise and investments among community-based organizations and publicly funded institutions to advance the workforce readiness of economically disadvantaged job seekers.

Strategy

The Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum (WERC) is comprised of eleven community organizations that come together using existing resources and those from the City of Austin to provide services to Austin-area residents. Rather than build a new organization to assist participants in gaining the necessary skills to enter or re-enter the job market, WERC leverages the existing expertise and community ties of its partners to create a “no wrong door” policy for literacy (Spanish literacy, ESL, Computer Literacy), education (Adult Basic Education, GED training) and workforce training (Job Readiness, Occupational Training) in the region. Clients who meet income and residency eligibility criteria are welcome to “on board” the initiative at whatever their educational level. As participants progress through the continuum, they will be introduced to the next WERC partner and service in their journey to gainful employment and self-sufficiency.

The following table contains the list of services and partners who participate in WERC:

Services Provided in WERC:

Literacy and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult Basic Education (ABE)• English as a Second Language (ESL)• GED Preparation• Spanish Language Literacy• Financial Literacy• Computer Literacy• Job Readiness Instruction• Occupationally-specific training
One-on-One Case Management and Support Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of an Individual Employment Plan• Customized Job Search Assistance• Resume, Interviewing, and Job Search workshops• Transportation Assistance• Employment Supports (uniforms, tools, pre-employment needs, and retention incentives)• Emergency Rent, Utilities, and Car Repair Assistance

WERC Partners:

Literacy/Education	Workforce Development/Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascend Center for Learning • American YouthWorks • Any Baby Can • Austin Community College, Adult Ed Dept. • El Buen Samaritano Episcopal Mission • Foundation Communities • Manos de Cristo • Literacy Coalition of Central Texas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ascend Center for Learning • Austin Area Urban League • Goodwill Industries of Central Texas • Workforce Solutions Capital Area

Rationale for the Strategy

Prior to the launch of WERC, the City of Austin, Travis County, and Workforce Solutions all made investments in workforce development, in most cases by subcontracting with the same organizations. It was not uncommon for one community-based organization to hold three different workforce development contracts for similar services from Austin-based publicly funded organizations. This system was not only inefficient, it did not provide policy makers or planners with accurate information about who was being served in Austin or what outcomes, in aggregate, were being achieved in the community. Moreover, funders did not have an accurate understanding of how much services that led to successful outcomes cost so return on investment (ROI) figures were not achievable.

Because the Board’s mission is to lead the region’s workforce system in the development of a world class workforce, the Board saw the opportunity to align the disparate community partners under one umbrella initiative related to education and workforce development, while allowing each agency to maintain its identity and purpose, so that like services could be better coordinated. The Board believes that this model may represent a new way of doing business in the Austin community, a model that more efficiently services job seekers and prepares them for the thriving Austin business community.

How both the process and outcomes of the strategy will be evaluated to determine the strategy’s success over time

Several innovative solutions are at the heart of WERC and will make its evaluation over the short- and long-term possible. One significant innovation is the use of a shared data management system. All participating partners use the same web-based client tracking tool to enroll and track services for clients, as well as upload original documentation into the system. Behind this user interface is a power reporting capability that allows the Board to monitor every aspect of performance, and thus evaluate whether the actual outcomes match with planned outcomes. It also allows third-party evaluators at the City of Austin to measure success over time. The table below outlines the outcomes promised through the Workforce and Education Readiness Continuum that will serve as the baseline for future evaluation:

WERC Performance Measures:

OUTPUT # 1	Total (30 month goals)
Number of unduplicated clients served	3327

OUTCOME # 1	Total
Number of clients participating in an educational program	2074
Number of clients who complete an educational program and improve their knowledge	1113
Percentage of clients who complete an educational program and improve their knowledge	54%
OUTCOME # 2	Total
Number of WERC clients exiting employment-related services	1500
Total number of WERC clients who increase their income as a result of employment-related services	916
Percentage of WERC clients who increase their income as a result of employment-related services	61%

Another innovation included in WERC is the ability to transfer clients between partner agencies electronically, thus alerting the receiving agency that a client is coming. This innovation was important to the Board because too often, clients were provided referral documents, but staff had no way of knowing whether clients ever actually accessed services. Now, with the assistance of both the electronic tracking tool and Transitions Staff whose job is to assist with “warm hand-offs” between clients, the Board can evaluate over time whether clients find assistance with the services they request.

Finally, with the shared data base system, the Board can get an accurate picture of who is being served across a number of now inter-related organizations, which clients are most likely to succeed with different types and levels of intervention, and what the actual cost per client is by service type. Ultimately, the goal of evaluation is to determine whether a coordinated approach to education and workforce development yields outcome successes that one agency alone could not achieve, and what the overall return on investment (ROI) is to the funders and greater Austin community.

d. Part IV - Grants

Identify the entity responsible for disbursement of grant funds and describe the competitive process to be used in awarding grants and contracts

The Workforce Solutions Capital Area Workforce Board is the designated grant recipient and administrative entity for the Capital Area, and is responsible for disbursement of grant funds. The Board complies with the requirements set forth in the Texas Workforce Commission's Financial Manual for Grants and Contracts (FMGC). We use a Request for Proposal method for all major contracts (e.g. career center management/operation, child care operations, WIA youth development).

e. Part V – Public Comments

Describe the process used to provide an opportunity for public comment.

A public notice of the availability of the draft plan for 30-day comment has been posted in the Austin American Statesman. Notice of plan availability for public comment and a downloadable version of the draft plan have also been posted on our website at www.wfscapitalarea.com.

A public hearing will be held on March 27, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. at Workforce Solutions Capital Area, 6505 Airport Blvd., Suite 101E, Austin, Texas 78752.

**STATEMENT OF APPROVAL
LOCAL WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Fiscal Years 2013 – 2018**

Local Workforce Development Area: Capital Area

Board Contact: Alan D. Miller

Phone Number: (512) 597-7101

Fiscal Agent: Workforce Solutions Capital Area
Workforce Board

Phone Number: (512) 597-7101

State Comptroller ID Number: 1-742327454

The signatures below certify the plan has been reviewed and approved by the Chief Elected Official and the Workforce Development Board.

Chief Elected Official:

The Honorable Samuel T. Biscoe, Travis County Judge Date

Board Chair:

Anamita Mukherjee, Workforce Board Chair Date

Fiscal Agent:

Alan D. Miller, Executive Director/Fiscal Agent Date