



WIOA Four-Year Combined Plan
Regional Plan
Program Years
2024-2028

SECTION I Regional Plan

1.1 Regional Planning Process

A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the Regional Plan, including a description of how all local areas were afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process.

GST Michigan Works! (GSTMW) developed this regional plan through a collaborative process involving agency staff, community stakeholders, program partners, and board members. The process included opportunities for stakeholders to share their perspectives on regional strategies and to prioritize the most effective approaches for serving both job seekers and employers.

- In 2019, GSTMW created and adopted a three-year strategic plan that was coordinated by a consultant. The plan was updated in 2023 and focused primarily on organization-specific strategies. The plan was intended to improve relationships within the organization and across key partners, resulting in efficiency and coordination that ultimately improved services to all customers. The Vision, Mission, and Customer Service Standards reflect the organization’s commitment to quality in all aspects of its work. The strategic priorities outlined in the plan laid a foundation for effective partnerships. Collectively, the components of the plan serve as the basis for effective partnerships and excellent service.

- A committee of staff members representing various programs and departments worked together in 2024 to develop this regional plan. The broad perspectives of business services, career services, administration, and fiscal combined to create a well-rounded document. The committee reviewed and analyzed regional data. They identified potential strategies for workforce services based on their expertise, customer needs, and their interactions with our 6-county region. In addition, GSTMW has relied on our relationships with the businesses in our region to provide input based on their understanding of future workforce needs.

- The plan was reviewed by the Governing Board (comprised of local elected officials from the six counties), the Workforce Development Board and Career and Education Advisory Council (CEAC) and posted for public comment for 30 days. Invitations to review the draft plan and provide comments were sent to all WIOA partners, staff, and customers.

The Regional and Local Plan were available for review and comments from June 18, 2024 through July 18, 2024.

1.2 Regional Labor Market Data and Economic Conditions

An updated and thorough analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions *for the WIOA Planning Region*. (Note: information and analysis provided by the Department of Technology, Management & Budget/Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives for the Prosperity Region may need to be augmented with other sources of data in cases where it does not align with the WIOA Planning Region.) This shall include an analysis of existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. All core partners (WIOA Titles I-IV) should be involved in both providing and analyzing the data. The analysis shall include:

- **The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs of in-demand industry sectors and occupations.**
- **An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must include the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities in the region and the region's capacity to provide the workforce development activities necessary to address the education and skill needs of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.**
- **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.**

GSTMW is connected with our regional economic development organizations (EDO) and works with them to recognize and understand the employment needs and trends in our 6-county region. Our CEO sits on the Regional Leadership Council of the Flint & Genesee Group, the largest EDO in the region. GSTMW is a member of the following chambers: Bad Axe Chamber of Commerce, Burton Chamber of Commerce, Cass City Chamber of Commerce, Clio Chamber of Commerce, Davison Chamber of Commerce, Fenton/Linden Chamber of Commerce, Flint Chamber of Commerce, Flushing Chamber of Commerce, Imlay City Chamber of Commerce, Lapeer Area Chamber of Commerce, Shiawassee Chamber of Commerce, and the Swartz Creek Chamber of Commerce.

GSTMW also partners with the following EDOs: Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership, Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance, Flint & Genesee Education & Talent, Huron and Sanilac County Economic Development Corporation, Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation, and the Lapeer Development Corporation. We are also a member of the Economic Club of Lapeer and the Shiawassee Valley Personnel Association. Our Business Services Managers are very active in writing Business Attraction proposals in conjunction with our local EDOs.

GST Michigan Works! team works with employers from all sectors in Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, Shiawassee, and Tuscola counties. GSTMW Business Services team assists businesses in

developing and aligning talent to meet their business goals. The goal of talent development is to assist businesses in overcoming critical challenges, adapting to new technologies, responding to market forces, and targeting high-quality training. Our Service Centers offer various services, such as online job advertisement, training support, talent recruitment, and resume sorting, to ensure that the labor force meets the needs of employers.

The Business Services team assists employers with providing mini human resources services from listing vacancies on Michigan Talent Connect to finding individuals with skills and credentials required to meet the employers' needs. They help businesses survive and thrive in today's global economy. Our goal is to help strengthen our region and state's economy by assisting employers to select, hire, train, develop and retain a high-performance workforce.

Our management staff uses the information shared by employers and Jobs EQ to assist in the updating of the GSTMW Hot Job Lists High Demand Career Clusters. This list is normally updated bi-annually. This information can be shared with job seekers and those seeking more intensive assistance through GSTMW to ensure that individuals seeking tuition and support service assistance understand the occupations that GSTMW can provide financial assistance for. It also helps individuals make informed occupational choices that will better allow them to move towards self-sufficiency. GSTMW's High Demand Career Clusters table is below.

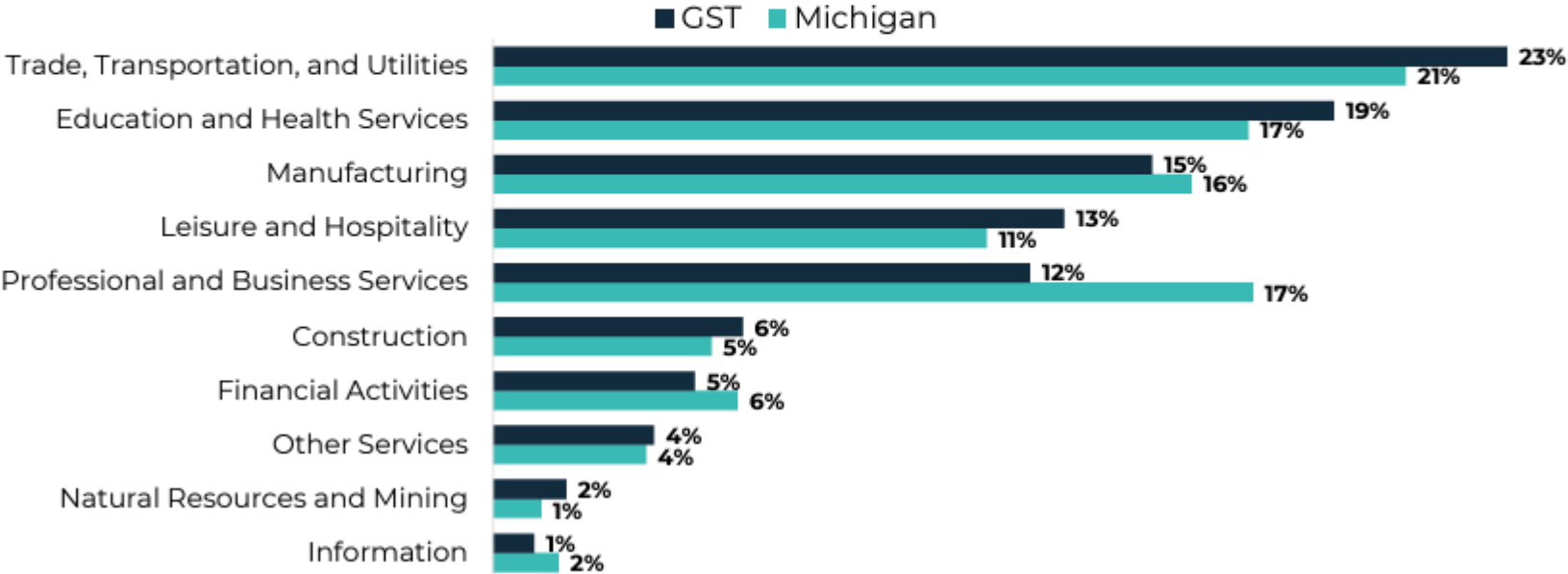
DEMAND OCCUPATIONS



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	EDUCATION & BUSINESS	AGRICULTURE	ADVANCED MANUFACTURING	CONSTRUCTION	HEALTHCARE	TRANSPORTATION & AVIATION
Web Developer / Web Designer	Accountant / Bookkeeper	Agriculture / Farm Manager	CAD/Design Technician	Architect	Certified Nurse Aide	Autobody Technician
	Auditor			Millwright		
Information Security Analyst Ethical Hacking	Administrative Assistant	Livestock Manager	CAD Technician	Plumber	Health information Technician	Automotive Service Technician
Software Developer & Quality Assurance Analyst	Business Manager / Analyst	Farmer	CNC Machinist	Pipefitter	Lab Technician	Automotive Mechanic
Computer User Support Specialist	Customer Service Rep	Farm Worker	PLC Programmer	Brick & Block Mason	Medical Assistant	Bus, Truck Mechanics
Network and Computer Systems Administrator	Financial Manager	Pest Control Technician	Mechanical Engineer	Concrete Finisher	LPN / Registered Nurse	Diesel Engine Specialist
Computer and Information Systems Manager	Human Resource Specialist	Agronomist	Installation Technician	Carpenter	Medical Records Clerk	Truckdriver
Computer Systems Analyst	Office Support Technician	Ag Retail Sales	Maintenance Technician	Roofer	Physical Therapist / Assistant	Bus, Transit and Intercity
	Police/Corrections Academy	Ag Equipment Sales	Machine Operator	Building Construction Worker	EMT & Paramedic	Material / Freight / Stock Handlers
Computer Programmer	Loan/Credit Officer	Food Science Technician	Industrial Production Engineer	Road Construction Worker	Radiology Technician	Logistics Manager
ENERGY	Elementary/ Secondary Teacher	Food Processing Technician	Manufacturing Technician	Sheet Metal Worker	Surgical Technician	Transportation Security Screener
Environmental Engineer / Project Manager	Interpreter/Translator	Meat Processor	Quality Control Specialist	Civil Engineer	Sterile Processing Technician	Airport Security
Environmental Scientist	Insurance Sales	Pesticide Handler	Mig Welder	Surveyor	Dental Lab Technician	Aircraft Mechanics
Chemical Technician	Insurance Processor	Pesticide Applicator	Tig Welder	Heavy Equipment Operator	Home Health Aide	Aircraft Service Technician
HVAC Technician	Child Development Assistant	Food Prep & Service Worker	Gas Welder		Occupational Therapy	Driver / Sales Worker
Electrician	Marketing Manager	Tree Trimmer	Arc Welder		Respiratory Technician	
Telecomm. Equipment Installers	Social Work / Technician	Veterinarian Assistant			Dental Hygienist	
Wind Turbine Service Technician	Paralegal & Legal Assistant				Phlebotomist	
Electrical Power-Line Installer & Repair	Court, Municipal, and License Clerk				Mental Health Tech	

The top three industries represented over half the jobs in the GST area, similar to the state. The area had a **larger employment share in most industries** compared to Michigan with the notable exception of *Professional and business services*.

Distribution of Industry Jobs, Second Quarter 2023



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 10)

GST Michigan Works! recognizes Trade, Transportation, and Utilities as the largest employment sector and works to train job seekers for this career field consistently. This will become increasingly important with upcoming changes in these sectors with the electrification of vehicles and other technological advances.

With three major Healthcare systems and many other smaller systems that are major employers in their counties within the region, work to prepare job seekers for that industry is strong and ongoing, including the existence of employer-led collaboratives. While the data

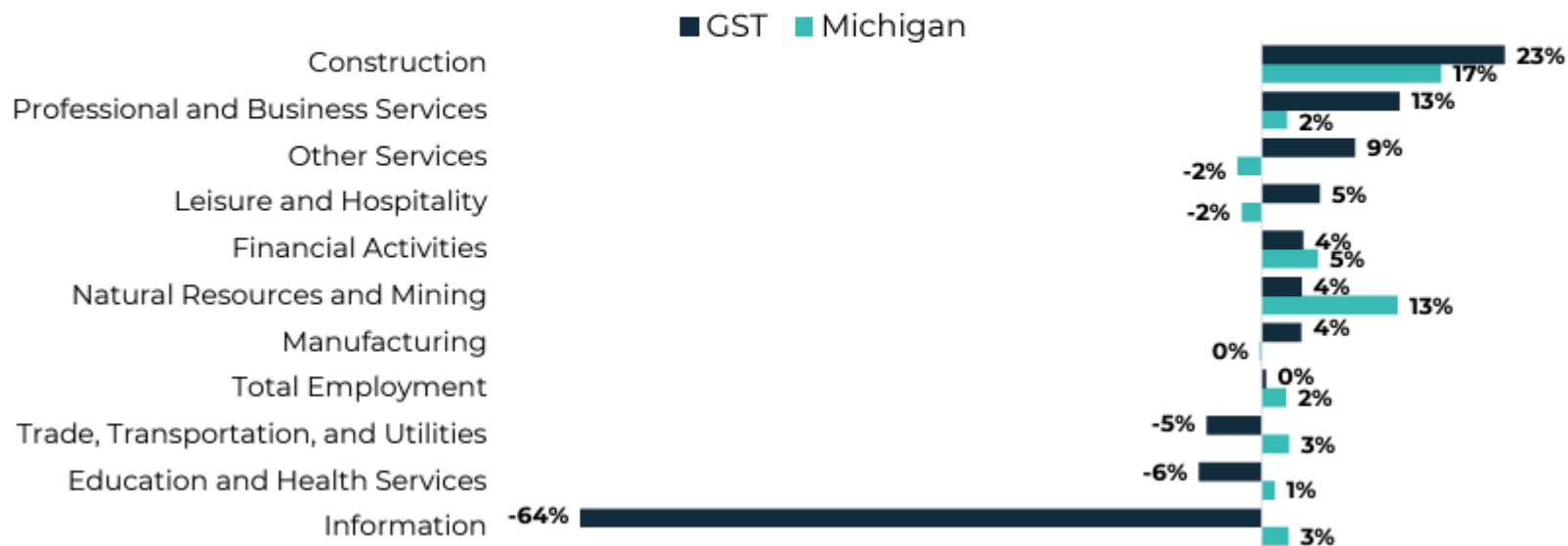
does not show growth in that industry, we know from discussions with employers about upcoming retirements and other shifts expected, the need for workers remains strong.

Manufacturing is the third largest industry and is projected to remain stable in the future. We continue to ensure a prepared talent pipeline for these positions as technology improvements require the need for newly skilled workers as well as training incumbent workers. The Leisure and Hospitality sector is also critical, particularly in our Thumb which is surrounded by over 90 miles of Lake Huron shoreline. While these positions are often lower-paid, they provide a great entry into the job force and offer career laddering opportunities. This is illustrated on page 9 where Retail, Sales, and Food Service workers were in four of the top six online job postings.

Agriculture is another of Michigan's high-growth sectors, as stated in the Michigan Statewide Workforce Plan. The Ag sector is a significant employer in the rural areas of our region. It is also a highly technical field and we work with employers in that sector on areas of need such as maintenance of continuing credits for pesticide licensure, farm safety, and other emerging needs. Lastly, construction is another high-growth industry in the state, and the GST Michigan Works! region. We maintain partnerships with the K-12 sector as well as trade organizations to provide career exploration, training, and apprenticeships to feed this talent pipeline.

Many industries grew at least slightly since 2017. The **most notable decline was within Information** (-63.7 percent) for the area. This was in stark contrast to the growth of this sector at the state level.

Private Sector Job Trends, 2017–2023



Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 10)

While the Information Technology sector did not grow in the GST Michigan Works! region as it did in the state, we realize its growth statewide and understand that jobs are available within a commutable distance from some areas in the region. We will continue to watch projections and employment data as well as maintain conversations with employers about their needs in this sector.

There were 32,400 online job postings in the area during 2023. Over 14 percent of all available advertisements in GST were within the top three jobs.

Online Advertised Job Postings in the GST MWA

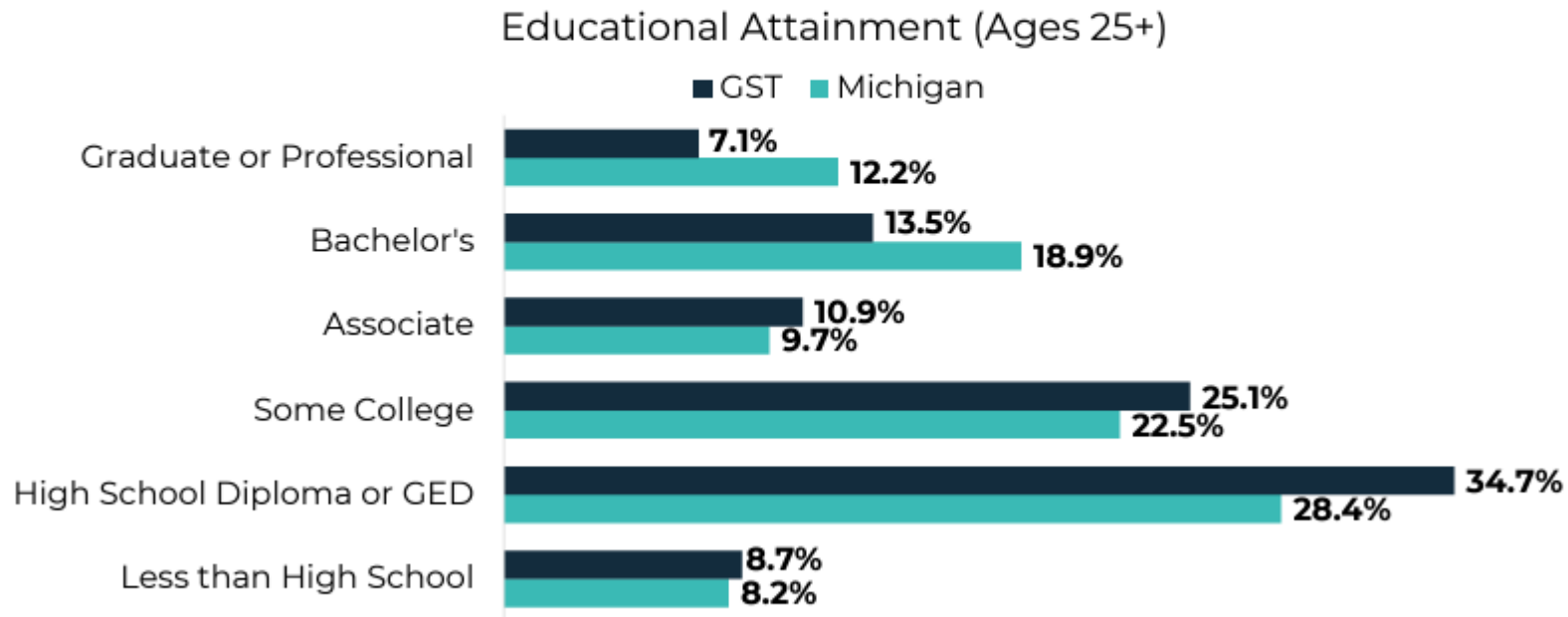
Job Title	Postings
Retail Salespersons	1,860
Registered Nurses	1,526
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,182
Fast Food and Counter Workers	831
Home Health and Personal Care Aides	738
Food Service Managers	670
Janitors and Cleaners, Except Housekeepers	645
Sales Representatives, Goods, Nontechnical	599
Customer Service Representatives	587
Medical and Health Services Managers	523

Source: Help Wanted OnLine, Lightcast Developer (Table 16)

According to the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics Career Outlook through 2030 for East Michigan, the top five high-growth occupations requiring a postsecondary certificate or moderate-term training are Dental Laboratory Techs (42.9%), CNC Tool Programmers (37.5%), Bus Drivers, Transit & Intercity (26.7%), Insurance Sales Agents (17.5%), and Phlebotomists (16.7%).

The top five high-growth occupations requiring an associate degree or long-term training/apprenticeship are Industrial Machinery Mechanics (30.9%) Physical Therapy Assistants (25.9%), Respiratory Therapists (16.7%), Millwrights (14.3%), and Machinists (13.8%). Each of these career areas are short-term training options that GST Michigan Works! recognizes the need for and has available training programs and apprenticeships. Promoting these career opportunities allows for job seekers to enter high-demand, high-wage occupations while helping to attain the Governor’s Sixty by 30 goals.

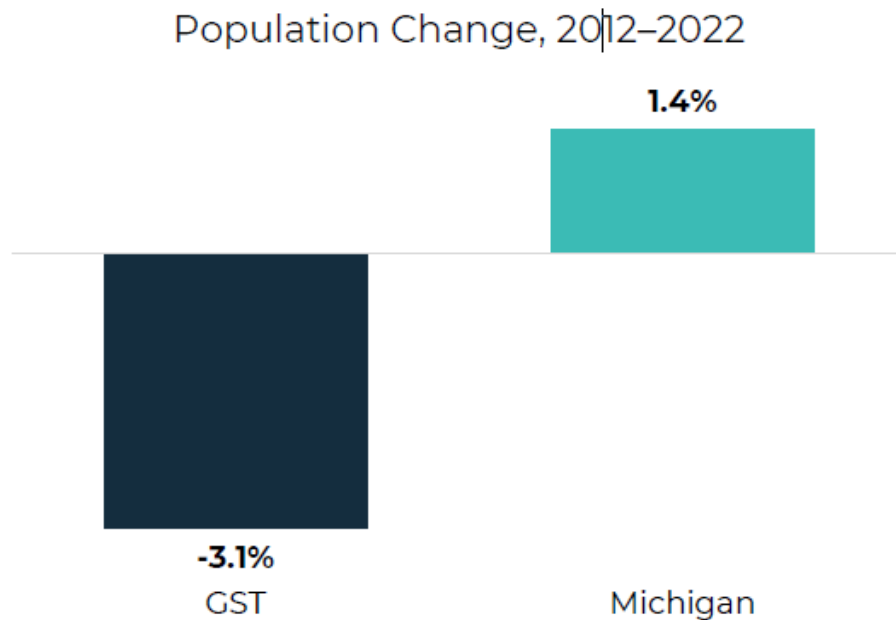
The GST Michigan Works! residents held a **lower level of educational attainment** than the state. The share of individuals age 25 and older with a high school diploma was over six percentage points greater than Michigan.



Source: 2018–2022 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 3)

While the GST Michigan Works! region has a higher level of those with a high-school diploma or GED than the state and a nearly equal level of associate degree attainers, much work must be done to encourage the attainment of bachelor and graduate level attainment. Not only will this increase the region’s median annual wages, but it will also assist in increasing labor force participation rates as stated in the Michigan Statewide Workforce Plan, by creating a path to the middle class for all residents. With proper funding, GST Michigan Works! is poised to provide the support necessary for all advanced learners to succeed in their educational goals.

The **area population declined by 3.1 percent** between 2012 and 2022. This was a loss of 21,600 residents, showing a total population of 683,600.

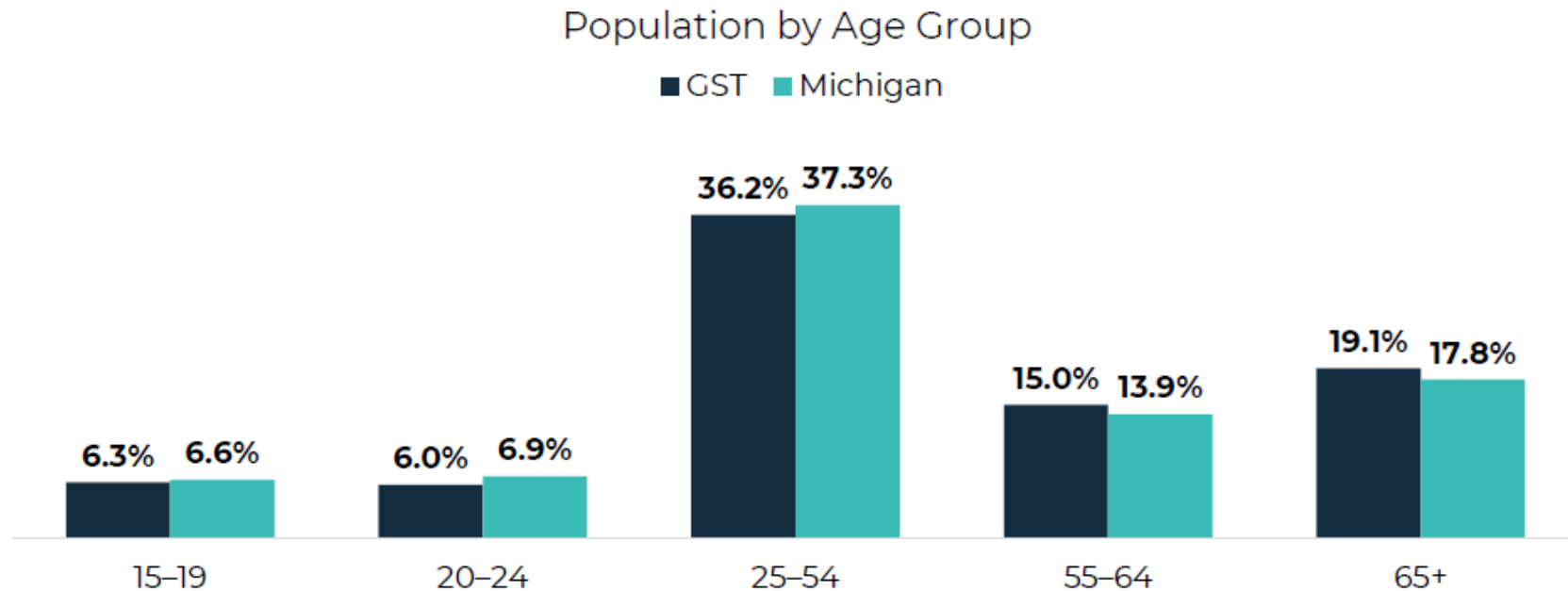


Source: Population Estimates Program, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 1)

- Michigan’s population grew by 1.4 percent between 2012 and 2022.
- The state added just over 135,800 residents by 2022.
- Nationwide, the population rose by more than six percent over this period.

While Michigan’s population grew slightly in the ten-year period, GST Michigan Works! region did not. Because the Thumb region does not have a Community College or University located there, residents often leave to pursue advanced degrees. Once they have gone, they often receive internships or work experiences outside the region and proceed to start a career there. We are currently working on strategies to retain our residents that involve strategies with educational training partners and employers through the use of our Employer-Led Collaboratives.

GST Michigan Works! was closely aligned to Michigan's age distribution. The area was slightly older than the state with more individuals age 55 and older.



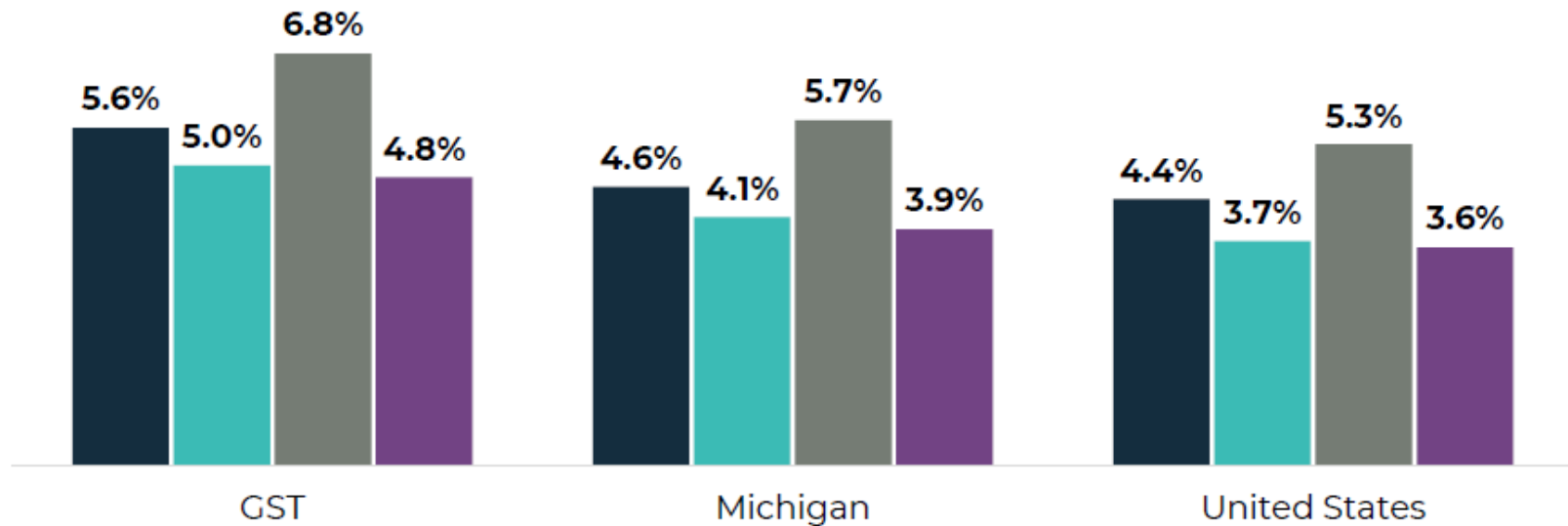
Source: 2018-2022 Five-Year Estimates, American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 2)

The GST Michigan Works! region is slightly older than the state with higher percentages of citizens in the 55-65+ age range. One solution to solving the talent issues occurring in today's economy is encouraging older individuals to stay in the workforce longer. One of GST Michigan Works! strategies is to work with partner agencies serving this population (such as AARP) to bring mature workers back into the workforce. This strategy will be explored and implemented.

The area's 2023 **jobless rate was lower** compared to all other listed years but slightly higher than the Michigan rate. Since 2017, the number of unemployed in the area decreased by 13.6 percent (-2,400 individuals).

Unemployment Rates by Area and Year

■ 2017 ■ 2019 ■ 2021 ■ 2023

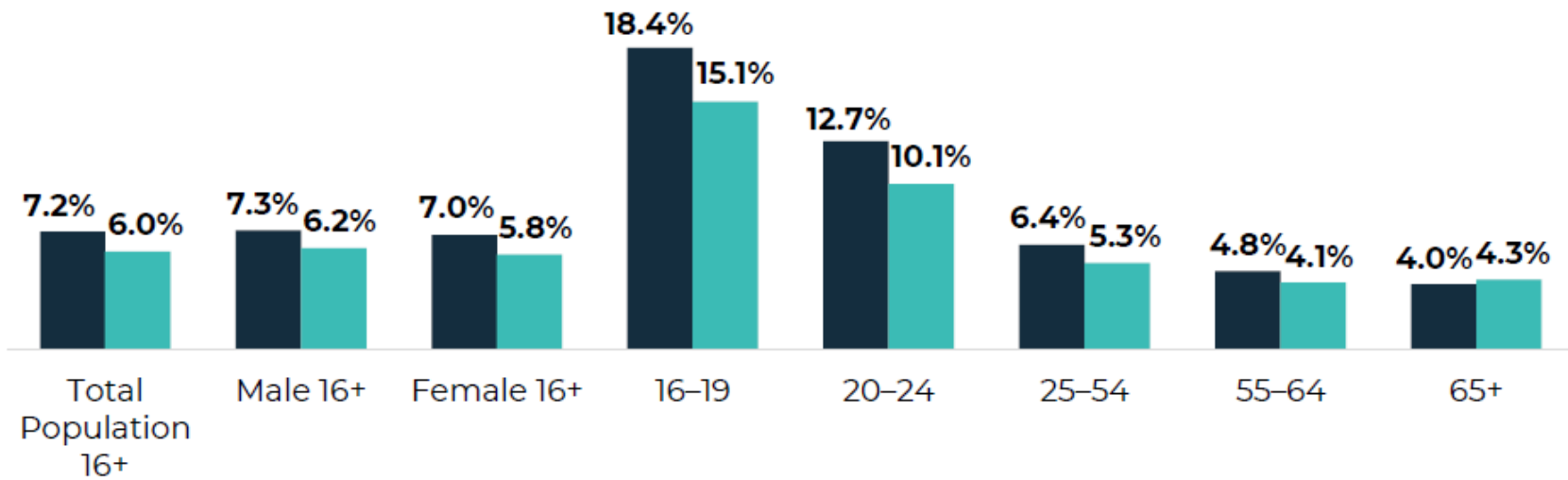


Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Michigan Center for Data and Analytics (Table 6)

The area's young residents (ages 16 to 24) had higher jobless rates than what was seen statewide with the highest rate among those ages 16 to 19.

Unemployment Rates by Age and Gender

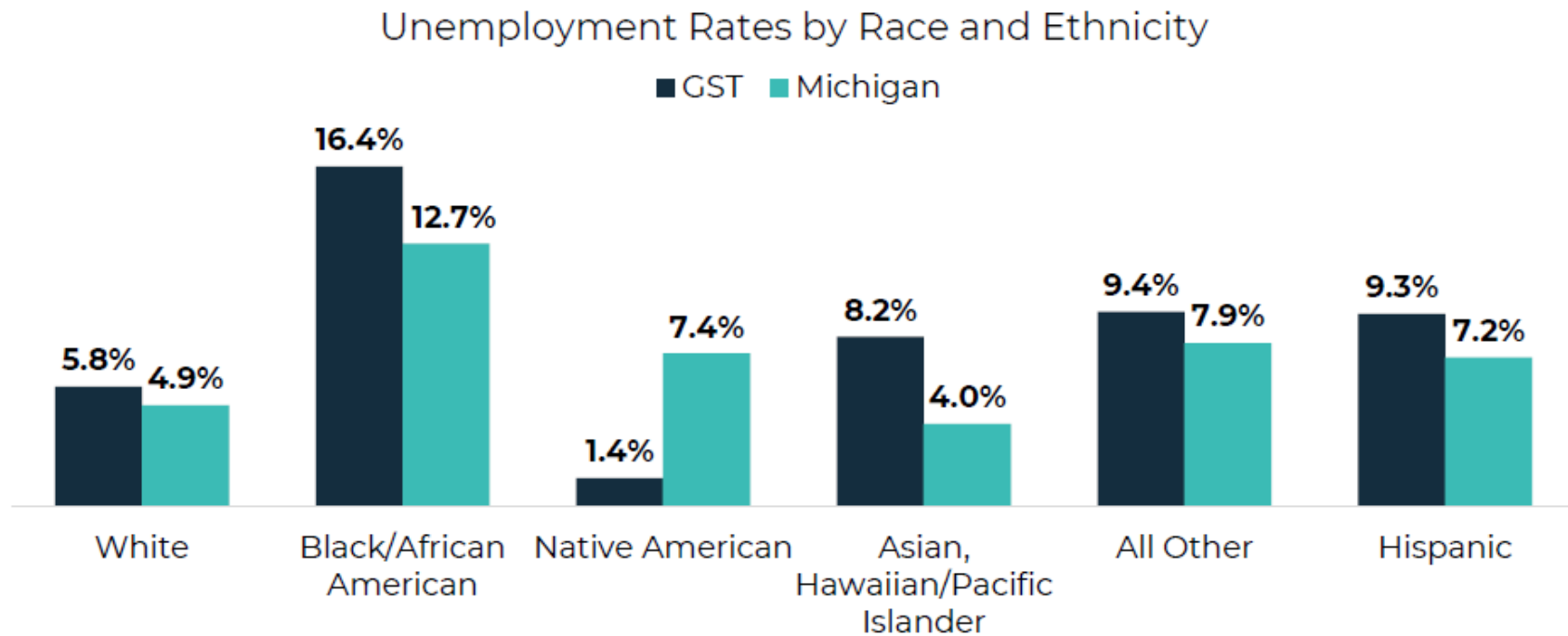
■ GST ■ Michigan



Source: 2018-2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 8)

GST Michigan Works! maintains a Young Professionals program, along with JMG and WIOA youth programs as strategies for adding additional youth into the labor force. These programs will be discussed in greater detail in the local plan.

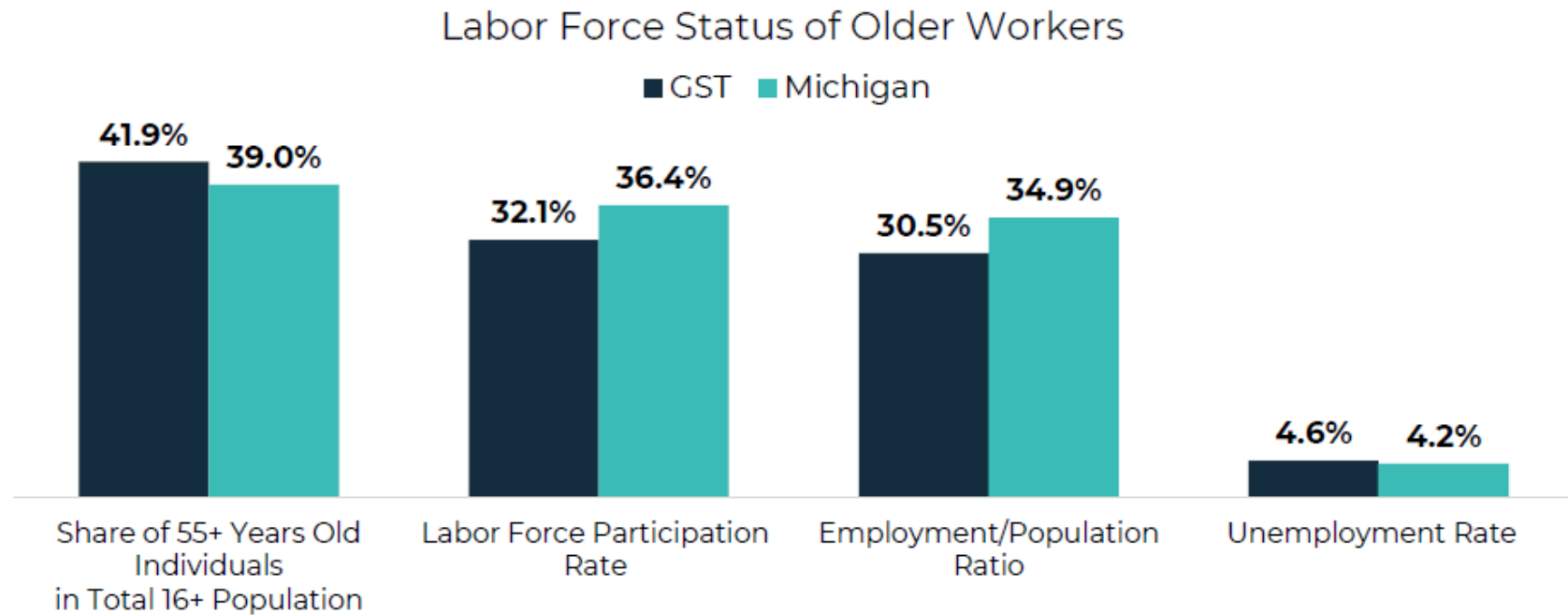
The unemployment rate for those who are **Black/African American** was notably higher than all other demographic groups in both the GST area and Michigan.



Source: 2018–2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 8)

GST Michigan Works! plans to explore ways to address racial and gender equity. GST Michigan Works! CEO and a member of the Business Services team serve on the Greater Flint Taskforce on Racial and Social Equity. This group strives to increase equality in the business, banking and workforce development space in Flint and Genesee County. This work began during the pandemic and is on-going.

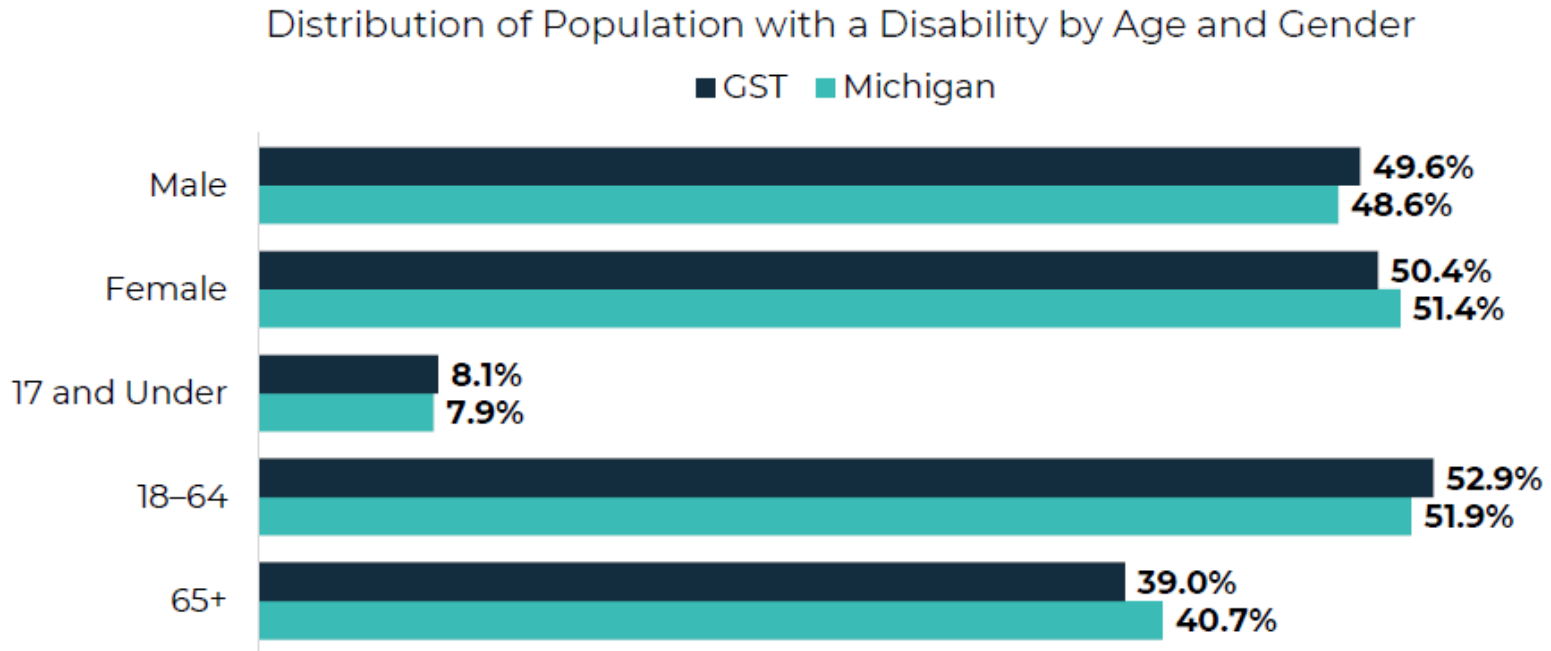
The share of older individuals in the area was slightly greater than Michigan's. However, these individuals had a lower labor force participation rate and a slightly higher jobless rate.



Source: 2018–2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 9)

As stated previously, one strategy to increase the labor force participation rate in the GST Michigan Works! region includes keeping individuals in the workforce longer and encouraging those who have left the workforce to return. Partnering with local agencies such as AARP is one strategy in the planning stages.

About 17.0 percent of GST's population was reported to have a disability. Like Michigan, more females than males in the area were reported to have a disability.

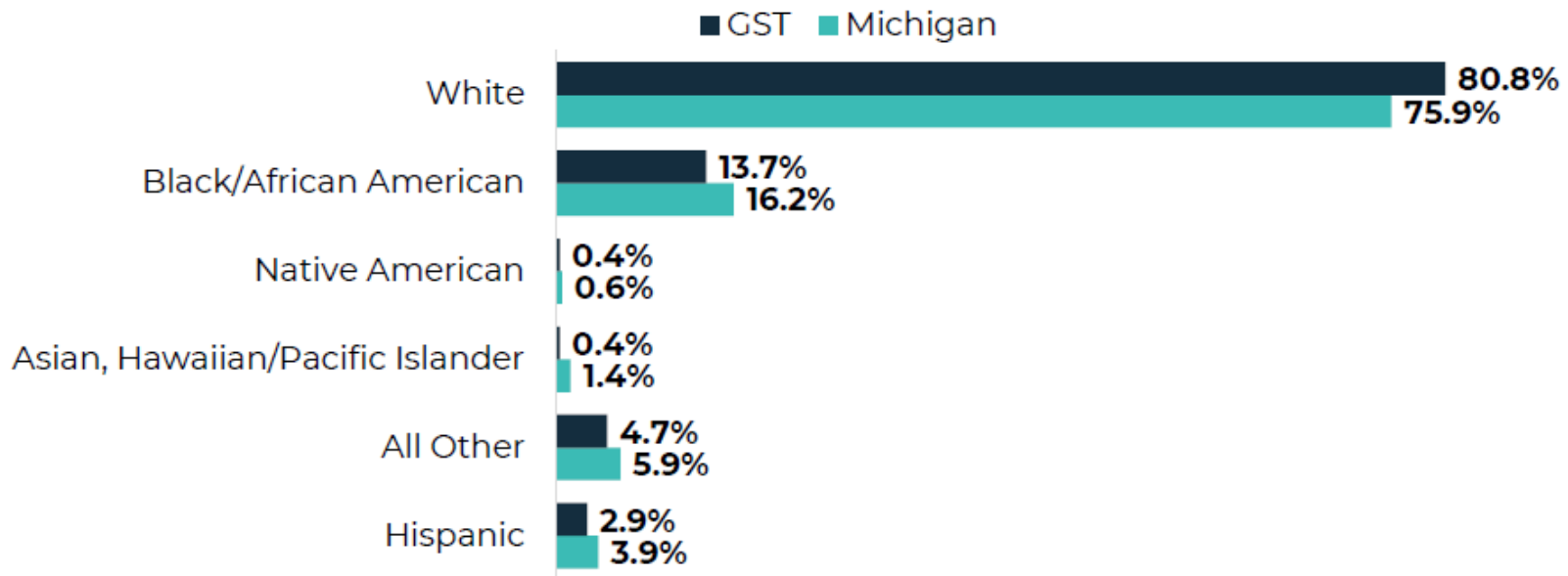


Source: 2018–2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 20)

As mentioned in the Michigan Statewide Workforce Plan, in Michigan, approximately 1.3 million individuals have disabilities and over half are of working age. GST Michigan Works! percentages are slightly higher except for females, which is only slightly lower. Our partnership with Michigan Rehabilitation Services ensures that the specialized services and training required to serve this group are available and utilized to their fullest potential. The MRS District Manager from our region also holds a seat on our Workforce Development Board to weigh in on policies and projects that arise. The Bureau of Services for Blind Persons representative also attends our WDB meetings, and both departments share building space in our Flint AJC.

The area distribution of individuals with **disabilities by race and ethnicity differs slightly** from Michigan for most groups. **White and Black/African American individuals showed the largest differences.**

Distribution of Population with a Disability by Race and Ethnicity



Source: 2018–2022 American Community Survey Five-Year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau (Table 20)

1.3 Regional Service Strategies

A description of regional service strategies that have been or will be established as a result of coordinated regional analysis and delivery of services, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements, when appropriate. Regions may consider:

- **Existing service delivery strategies that will be expanded, streamlined, or eliminated.**
- **New service strategies necessary to address regional education and training needs.**
- **Strategies to address geographic advantages.**
- **Approaches to improve services to individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth, or other hard-to-serve populations.**
- **Strategies to connect the unemployed with work-based learning opportunities.**
- **Strategies to integrate existing regional planning efforts among core partners.**

Existing service delivery strategies that will be expanded, streamlined, or eliminated.

GSTMW's primary customer is the Employers. GSTMW Business Services' (BS) team receive a Business Solutions Professionals (BSP) certification. The training showcases the vast array of business and economic assets available to assist businesses. Our BS team focuses on the service strategies listed below to serve employers:

- Going Pro Talent Fund
- Incumbent Worker Training
- On the Job Training
- Registered Apprenticeships
- State Apprenticeship Expansion (SAE)
- Michigan Statewide Targeted Apprenticeship Inclusion & Readiness System (MiSTAIRS)
- Pre-Apprenticeship (CPWR)
- ECE Scale Up Apprenticeship
- Single Company Job Fairs
- Industry Job Fairs
- Work Opportunity Tax Credit
- Fidelity Bonding
- Business Resource Network (BRN) Services
- Sector Strategies – Employer Led Collaborative

Our BSP staff can quickly respond to employer needs and service delivery can be updated, expanded, or created to be locally responsive.

New service strategies necessary to address regional education and training needs.

GSTMW maintains that there is a connection between our in-demand industries and our Michigan Training Connect (MiTC) programs. This ensures that individuals seeking new career opportunities can review available training programs. GSTMW continues to secure grant funds targeting training which has helped us braid funding where other sources may be limited.

- SS – ELC
- Transfr VR Training
- Advanced Digital Outreach Strategies
- EVJA and GEM
- Refugee Services
- CEAC
- Adult Education
- MiCareer Quest Event
- Virtual Communication
- Work Experience
- Apprenticeships
- Community Colleges and 4-Year Universities
- Reviewing Education Institutions Registrations on Training-Connect
- Career Pathfinder
- Expanded Apprenticeship Opportunities Across the Region
- Expanded access to the Going Pro Talent Fund
- CTE
- MiSTEM Network
- Talent Pipeline Management
- Stackable Credentials

Strategies to address geographic advantages.

GSTMW serves a 6-county region that has a combination of rural and urban communities. Our strategies to serve employers are tailored to meet the business and scaled according to the requirements of the project and location of the business. GSTMW has strong regional partnerships with business, Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Organizations, community faith-based and non-profit organizations, and education that can be leveraged as needed to assist with the requests of most companies in the region.

Approaches to improve services to individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth, or other hard-to-serve populations.

GST Michigan Works! is always seeking to improve services. Our strategic plan includes emphasis on:

- Access to services by increasing outreach to diverse communities to reach customers where they are.
- Public recognition is achieved through targeted marketing and promotional activities for program-specific populations.
- Purposeful partnership is achieved by improving the quality of relationships with partner service agencies to increase resources for customers.

GSTMW is committed to equity of access to all programs. It has relationships with The Bureau for Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Michigan Veteran’s Employment Services, The Disability Network (TDN), local veteran’s services groups, local ISDs,

multiple community groups and organizations that serve minorities, homeless, youth, refugees, immigrants, and other underrepresented populations.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services is co-located in 3 of the 7 GSTMW service centers and is willing to meet customers in our other centers. This has enabled us to increase collaboration and jointly serve individuals with disabilities. We have assistive technology available in all of our locations for those who may require additional support in accessing program services. In addition, BSBP and AARP are co-located in the Flint service center. A MSFW is co-located in the Lapeer office. The Disability Network, MRS, Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency – Transportation Solutions are co-located in the Owosso office.

LEO-WD Veteran Career Advisors are co-located in 2 GSTMW service centers and hold office hours by appointment in the others. They work closely with GSTMW's staff to ensure veterans and eligible spouses have seamless access to Michigan Works! services.

GTMW is always working to reinforce relationships with community and faith-based organizations to connect with individuals who may not otherwise connect with its services. These relationships include Catholic Charities, MADE Institute, the Genesee County's Ignite programs for justice involved citizens. GSTMW applied for and received a CDL Demonstration grant specifically focused on justice involved citizens. In addition, GSTMW provides the Clean Slate program to assist with the expungement of criminal records.

WIOA Youth programs are operated on a year-round basis by GSTMW. Available services include tutoring; study skills training; alternative secondary school offerings; dropout recovery services; paid and unpaid work experiences including summer employment opportunities; occupational skills training; and education offered concurrently with workforce preparation.

Additional services include leadership development opportunities; supportive services; adult mentoring; follow-up services; comprehensive guidance and counseling; financial literacy education; entrepreneurial skills training; provision of labor market and employment information; and activities that help youth prepare for, and transition to, postsecondary education and training.

GSTMW has several Jobs for Michigan's Graduates programs, including both in-school Multi-Year programs and out of school programs. Jobs for Michigan's Graduates is a state affiliate for the national Jobs for America's Graduates program, using a nationally recognized and time-tested curriculum for dropout prevention/dropout recovery, soft skills training, career exploration, leadership development and post-secondary and career readiness.

GST Michigan Works! has implemented the FAET Plus program in the 2023-2024 program year with three community partners who serve hard-to-serve populations. These partners serve the homeless, persons with disabilities, persons in substance abuse recovery, justice-involved citizens, persons with limited English competency, long-term unemployed, and other hard-to-serve populations. As the program increases in capacity, other community partners will be evaluated for program fit, partner capacity, and interest.

Since 2022, GSTMW has experienced an influx of refugees and immigrants. The most significant number of persons originated from Cuba. No bilingual staff were available in Genesee County, and customer service suffered. GSTMW now has two bilingual staff in the Flint service center. GSTMW serves several distinct groups of Cubans:

- Cuban families with dependent children participating in the PATH program;
- Cuban persons who have relocated from other regions of the USA, some with legal authorization to work, and some in the application process;

In addition, we provide services to refugees in various family compositions from numerous countries, including Ukraine and Central and South American countries. GSTMW has partnered with other groups seeking to serve new Americans, including LATINX and Samaritas.

GSTMW has developed relationships with local employers willing to hire persons with limited English proficiency (LEP). GSTMW will work with training providers to provide more access to training to LEP persons and develop knowledge of transferring technical certifications and educational certifications and English as a Second Language resources.

Strategies to connect the unemployed with work-based learning opportunities.

GSTMW works to connect and provide job seekers with the assets, education, and training they need for the occupations that are in demand in our region. GSTMW's work-based learning opportunities include On-The-Job Training (OJT), Incumbent Worker Training (IW) and Registered Apprenticeships (RA). Each of these work-based models can be effectively used to target jobseeker and employer needs.

On-the-Job Training (OJT): An OJT is primarily designed to first hire the participant and provide the participant with the knowledge and skills necessary for the full performance of the job. The OJT is a critical tool that can help job seekers enter into successful employment. The term "on-the-job training" means training by an employer that is provided to a paid participant while engaged in productive work in a job that:

- Provides knowledge or skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job.
- Provides reimbursement to the employer of up to a percentage of the wage rate of the participant for the extraordinary costs of providing the training and additional supervision related to the training.
- Is limited in duration as appropriate to the occupation for which the participant is being trained, considering the content of the training, the prior work experience of the participant, and the service strategy of the participant, as appropriate.

Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) Programs: The IWT is designed to ensure that employees of a company are able to acquire the skills necessary to retain employment and advance within the company or to provide the skills necessary to avert a layoff and must increase both the participant's and a company's competitiveness. An ideal IWT is one where a participant acquires new skills allowing the participant to move into a higher skilled and higher paid job within the company, thus allowing the company to hire a job seeker to backfill the incumbent worker's

position. The training should, whenever possible, allow the participant to gain industry-recognized training experience and ultimately, should lead to an increase in wages.

Registered Apprenticeships: Registered Apprenticeships (RA) offer practical, hands-on training to help individuals develop in-demand skills and ensure businesses have the talent they need to expand. Registered Apprenticeships are a proven training model and are an area of focus in the GSTMW region. RAs have been an important tool in helping to secure prosperous economic futures for residents and their families. Staff work closely with employers and partners with USDOL staff to develop and expand RAs in the region. Our staff work with industry groups to identify areas of need and develop standards/examples/models/ to support that need. Both apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship training programs are an important part of an industry and cluster development strategy, as well as an effective means of advancing growth and competitiveness for individual small and/or groups of related businesses. GSTMW holds standards for 24 employers in our region in 13 occupations.

In a demand-driven environment, the public workforce system at the federal, state, and local levels work collaboratively with business and industry, economic development, education, training providers, and other key partners on talent development strategies and workforce solutions to provide workers with the skills businesses need. Registered Apprenticeship is a potential workforce solution that contributes to the development of industry-defined competencies and also serves as a proven industry-driven workforce education and preparation strategy for workers.

Strategies to integrate existing regional planning efforts among core partners.

GSTMW has long standing relationships with the WIOA Core partners. Most of the core partners are either co-located in our American Job Centers (AJC) or will hold appointment hours on a scheduled basis. We have developed positive and cooperative relationships with the state agencies, such as Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), MRS, BSBP, Department of Education, Veteran Employment Services, MSFW, LEO/WD and others. We strive to serve employers and job seekers through unduplicated, coordinated services with the assets they need to build a prosperous region. GSTMW will co-enroll participants and jointly serve them in a manner that is seamless to the participant.

Recently, we have enlisted the UIA to hold regular “pop-up” visits in each of our services centers. Individuals can make appointments to meet with the UIA representative to resolve unemployment issues they may have. This new UIA function has been well received by customers and staff. The added value from these pop-ups is unmeasurable.

GSTMW will continue to build strong partnerships with the region’s Adult Education and other Title II partners to address basic skills deficiencies, including literacy and limited English language skills. GSTMW participates in the monthly Adult Education meetings. Family Literacy Center provides adult tutoring in most of our service centers. Adults, who are age 18 and older and need to improve their reading or math skills, can receive one-to-one tutoring to help prepare for the high school equivalency or need to raise their skills. The Family Literacy Center is dedicated to

helping those who struggle with reading and can offer one-to-one tutoring designed to improve reading, writing, understanding, and math skills.

1.4 Regional Sector Strategies

A description of plans for the development and implementation of, or the expansion of, sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region. Regions should consider:

- **Current in-demand industry sectors and occupations within the region.**
- **The status of regional collaboration in support of the sector initiatives.**
- **Current sector-based partnerships within the region.**
- **Which sectors are regional priorities, based upon data-driven analysis.**
- **The extent of business involvement in current initiatives.**
- **Other public-private partnerships in the region that could support sector strategies.**

Employer-Led Collaboratives (ELC) are a group of businesses coming together to solve a common or shared workforce problem. Through this work, the collaborative will bring together employers, education and training institutions, workforce development organizations and other applicable partners such as economic development organizations and government, to create solutions to fill identified talent gaps. GSTMW Business Services staff work collaboratively with the State, Economic Development organizations, education and businesses to provide the talent solutions they need.

GSTMW supports the United Way's Flint Employer Led Collaborative, a MICA grant, to provide extensive talent recruitment, training, coaching/mentoring, and job retention services. This grant targets manufacturing and logistics business. The Flint ELC will increase access to talent and provide Flint ELC businesses with training to improve the retention and productivity of employees through the GST Michigan Works! Business Resource Network (BRN).

Recently, GSTMW applied and received a Sector Strategies Employer-Led Collaborative grant focused on Healthcare for the rural Thumb area. Targeted occupations are Registered Nurses, Sanitarian, Certified Nursing Assistants, Medical Assistants, and Outpatient Therapists.

GSTMW supports, with WIOA funding, the Greater Flint Health Coalition (GFHC) - Flint Healthcare Employment Opportunities (FHEO) program to assist unemployed and underemployed residents of Genesee County with obtaining training and employment in the healthcare industry. Entry Level Training Options with short term certificate programs for those looking to jumpstart their healthcare career include: Certified Nurse Assistant, Health Unit Coordinator, Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomist, and Sterile Processing Technician.

Advanced Healthcare Training Options, for those individuals one or two semesters away from completing an Associate or Bachelor level degree include: Registered Nurse, Licensed Practical Nurse, Respiratory Therapist, Physical Therapy Assistant, and Occupational Therapy Assistant.

The FHEO Program’s partner organizations make the work to assist residents with training and education for future healthcare careers a shared success by helping participants find sustainable careers while helping meet the needs of local healthcare employers.

The Global Epicenter of Mobility (GEM) coalition, led by the Detroit Regional Partnership Foundation, received approximately \$52.2 million to transform the larger Detroit area’s legacy automotive industry into a highly competitive advanced mobility cluster. This talent transformation project will work with businesses across the supply chain to identify talent needs and it will invest in wraparound supports and training for workers to fill those gaps. The Mobility Accelerator Innovation Network will help identify and support more fundable start-ups in the mobility space. EDA funding will support foundational infrastructure, increasing accessibility and capacity of testing and proving sites, and preparing industrial sites for private investment. GEM unites 136 coalition members – including the Big Three automakers; United Auto Workers; several Michigan Works Agencies, universities; and state, local, and community leadership – with a vision for a more collaborative and equitable regional economy.

The Michigan Electric Vehicle Jobs Academy (EV Jobs Academy) collaborative puts employers in the driver’s seat to develop education and training solutions to meet the advanced automotive mobility and electrification industry’s talent needs. This means job seekers will be able to plug-in to some great career opportunities.

With more than 100 partners including employers, labor, industry stakeholders and education institutions, the collaborative is driving the state’s advanced mobility talent development for the future. The EV Jobs Academy can aid with tuition and supportive services to help ensure participants’ success. Participants may also be able to “earn while you learn” with a Registered Apprenticeship.

1.5 Administrative Cost Arrangement

A description of any administrative cost arrangements that currently exist or that will be established within the region, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. Regions may consider:

- **Current or proposed resource leveraging agreements.**
- **Establishing a process to evaluate cost sharing arrangements.**

Over the last decade, GSTMW along with MWAs in WIOA Planning Regions 7, 9 and 10 have developed a wide variety of administrative cost-sharing arrangements. Two cost-sharing arrangements that have been particularly successful are activities driven by the Southeast Michigan Works Agency Council (SEMWAC) and the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN). It is the intention of all seven MWAs in these regions to continue to support SEMWAC and WIN activities.

Some of the services provided by SEMWAC to the regions include:

- Planning and facilitation of regular meetings with MWA Directors.
- Facilitation of annual regional planning that helps determine joint goals and priorities.
- Providing joint staff development training like Rapid Response, On-the-Job, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Customer Services training for staff from all seven MWAs.

WIN is comprised of seven MWAs and ten community colleges from WIOA Planning Regions 6, 7, 9, and 10. Each MWA and community college contributes an equal share annually to support WIN operations and activities. SEMCA acts as the fiscal agent and is responsible for administering WIN activities. Some of the services provided by WIN to the regions include:

- Providing real-time labor market information on a regular basis to individual MWAs, WIOA Planning Regions, and the multiple county WIN service region.
- Researching and publishing reports on innovation and disruption in the workforce and understanding jobs and talent in southeast Michigan, including skills gap analyses related to connected and automated vehicles and cybersecurity, regional employee turnover studies, and more.
- Researching and writing regional grant proposals and convening grant initiatives.

Memorandums of Understanding and Infrastructure Funding Agreements

GSTMW has developed MOUs and Infrastructure Funding Agreements to comply with provisions of the WIOA, the WIOA Final Regulations, federal guidance, and state policy. As required, all American Job Center partner programs must contribute to the infrastructure costs and certain additional costs of the one-stop delivery system based on their proportionate use. To ensure compliance, GSTMW has negotiated infrastructure cost agreements with all American Job Center partners for cost sharing based on relative benefits received by each partner agency.

GSTMW has also established administrative cost arrangements with other MWAs in WIOA Planning Regions 7, 9, 10, and several other areas, and will continue to look for new cost-sharing opportunities. Other administrative cost arrangements include:

- Joint Procurements: GSTMW and other MWAs in WIOA Planning Regions 9 and 10 have jointly procured services through their administrative arrangements with SEMWAC and WIN, including procurement of consultants, facilitators, project managers, media outlets, and public relations firms. They have also been able to jointly negotiate pricing to reduce costs of technologies including Burning Glass and G*STARS/PRIME. One challenge that makes joint procurements difficult is that each MWA involved is responsible for documenting procurements and is accountable for monitoring/audits.
- In-Kind Contribution Arrangements: GSTMW makes in-kind contributions to support regional initiatives, primarily by subsidizing staff time for their involvement in the initiatives described in this section and the sector initiative section. This is especially true for fiscal agents who dedicate administrative resources as well.

There are many other cost-sharing agreements and informal arrangements in WIOA Planning Region 6 (GSTMW) and its state and local partners, and between GSTMW and other MWAs in WIOA Planning Regions 7, 9 and 10. These include:

- Arrangements between GSTMW and other MWAs in WIOA Planning Regions 7, 9, and 10 to serve participants from each other's counties.
- Agreements with St. Clair County Community College and Delta College to provide training services to GSTMW participants.
- Agreements with Mott Community College to provide employment services.
- Agreements between GSTMW and nonprofit organizations to provide employment and program delivery services.
- Arrangements between GSTMW with the Michigan Works Association to provide advocacy, education, and professional development services.
- Arrangements between GSTMW with the Veterans Services Division to house Disabled Veteran Outreach Program staff on-site to work with disabled veterans.
- Arrangement between GSTMW with the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity – Workforce Development to house Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers (MSFW) staff on-site to work with MSFW individuals.

1.6 Regional Supportive Services Coordination

A description of how transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, currently are coordinated or will be coordinated within the region. Regions may consider:

- **Whether the provision of transportation or other supportive services could be enhanced, and if so, how.**
- **What organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services.**
- **Establishing a process to promote coordination of supportive services delivery.**

Regional Transportation Services

Transportation continues to be one of the biggest barriers for many job seekers in WIOA Planning Region 6. GSTMW is collaborating with many organizations throughout the region to address this critical issue. Unfortunately, given the current state of transportation services in the region and the lack of funding for transportation-related supportive services, there has been very little GSTMW can do to address the immediate concerns of job seekers needing transportation beyond providing limited transportation-related subsidies to qualified participants. However, GSTMW continues to explore regional transportation initiatives, which should help address this need. The six counties in Region 6 are served by the following public transit systems:

- Genesee County (Flint Mass Transportation Authority- Flint MTA)
- Huron County (Huron Transit Corporation also known as Thumb Area Transit- TAT)
- Lapeer County (Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority- GLTA)
- Sanilac County (Sanilac Transportation-STC)
- Shiawassee County (Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency-SATA)
- Tuscola County (Thumbody Express)

The MTA in Flint currently provides limited service to Northern Oakland county and Livingston County in Howell and Brighton for employment opportunities for Genesee County residents.

Other transportation authorities (GLTA, TAT, STC, Thumbody, and SATA) in the region provide local bus and curb-to-curb services with limited out-of-county services available upon request.

Regional Supportive Services Strategies

Throughout WIOA Planning Region 6, there are a wealth of organizations that provide a wide variety of supportive services. GSTMW works with many of these agencies, many of which provide subsidies to qualified participants and referrals.

As part of the employment services offered within the Flint American Job Center, the Community Resource Navigator/BRN Success Coach serves participants funded through GSTMW. Key functions include researching, maintaining, and sharing community resource information with participants and staff. Soft referrals to many community agencies are available. The navigator maintains an information resource area with flyers from numerous community agencies meeting needs in the areas of legal, food, transportation, housing, adult education, and others. In addition, free notary services are available enabling clients to complete a key step in applying for utility and other emergency services. Justice Involved Citizens is another area of focus in employment services. Assistance with expungement is available.

GSTMW provides a number of participants with private vehicle mileage, and subsidies for vehicle repairs, where applicable. These supportive services are provided to participants, so they have access to transportation to get back and forth to training/employment. The goal of providing private vehicle gas mileage is to ensure the participants have the resources to successfully complete their goals. Mass transit/bus tokens and passes are also purchased for participants when appropriate. These supportive services are in accordance with GSTMW supportive services policy.

The Connection a “Business Resource Network” is a state program that operated in collaboration with GSTMW in WIOA Planning Region 6. The BRN is an innovative economic development initiative that promotes employment and retention. BRN supportive services strategies include success coaches that provide wrap-around services that assist with job retention and removal of barriers to employment (e.g., job coaching, transportation, etc.).

The BRN is a private-public consortium whose purpose is to improve workforce retention through employee support and training. The BRN facilitates business engagement, cross-sector collaboration among employers, human services and educators, workplace-based employee success coaching (case management), and real-time referrals to community resources. The Connection has demonstrated a better than 90% retention rate for member employers. Since October of 2018, the BRN has provided 22,750 services to 2,939 unique employees. GSTMW has received additional grant money as a result of our partnership with the United Way, in the amount of \$145,000 from the Ally Challenge and General Motors, and the City of Flint from the Kellogg Foundation in the amount of \$100,000. These funds are meant to help offset the cost of coaching, lowering prices for employers, and provide additional wrap-around dollars.

GSTMW along with its many partners in the region will continue to explore opportunities to coordinate these services.

1.7 Workforce Development Services Coordination

A description of how workforce development services currently are, or could be, coordinated with economic development services and providers within the region, and a description of the strategies that have been or will be established to enhance service delivery as a result of the coordinated regional analysis of such services. Regions may consider:

- **Current economic development organizations engaged in regional planning.**
- **Education and training providers involved with economic development.**
- **Current businesses involved with economic development organizations.**
- **Targeted businesses from emerging sectors/industries.**

GSTMW has a close working relationship with all state and local economic development partners. Business Services Managers regularly attend retention visits with local economic development leaders and MEDC representatives. The agency meets with the I-69 Thumb Region leaders regularly, this includes local economic developers, MEDC, SBDC, MMTC, and others based on regional projects and initiatives. Additionally, GSTMW is an active participant in workforce development collaboratives in the City of Flint, and other economic development organizations in the region. GSTMW assists in developing business recruitment and retention strategies and providing labor market information and access to GSTMW business services, training grants, and talent. Upon request from the MEDC or EDOs, GSTMW compiles and provides a Recruiting, Hiring, and Training Proposal piece to attract and/or retain business. In return, these partnerships help ensure that the MWAs in the region are business-driven and that the workforce system aligns with business needs. What follows are several examples of how GSTMW coordinates workforce development and economic development services.

GSTMW is committed to coordinating workforce investment activities with local economic development partners. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Working directly with local economic development agencies and MEDC to provide workforce assets for business attraction projects and key initiatives.
- Connecting with local EDOs and MEDC to provide talent recruitment resources for attracting new businesses.
- Attending annual and quarterly partner meetings.
- Working to build the talent pipeline to assist with company workforce needs.
- Attending networking/training functions sponsored by MEDC, local economic development, and chambers of commerce.
- Working with the local EDOs to assess future workforce needs and partner on strategies to address them.
- In addition to local economic development, GSTMW works with MSU Extension, Small Business Development Center (SBDC), Small 'Agribusiness' Consultants, and Conservation Districts to provide connections to "AG-Entrepreneurs" interested in starting a cottage food business, farming, agriculture inventions, expansion of small farm or farm market vendor businesses through the Agriculture Sector networking and workshop opportunities offered by the agency and its partners. Other offerings for entrepreneurial and microenterprise

services are available through MSU Extension, community, and private colleges and universities.

The MWA refers individuals and promotes the use of SBDC, which offers expert assistance at no cost to entrepreneurs looking to start or grow a business. The SBDC has a variety of free or low-cost workshops that offer the opportunity to learn more about running and growing a business. Workshop offerings include topics such as: Starting a Business, Writing a Business Plan, and Marketing Your Business. Additionally, SBDC has personalized, one-on-one business counseling to help small business owners with planning and growth strategies. GSTMW partners with the SBDC and includes their Small Business Consultants as guest participants to provide information regarding SBDC services and other entrepreneurial resources available throughout the region at our events and in our outreach efforts.

Additionally, due to the online nature of many of the SBDC “Business Start Up” workshops, the MWA has made computers and technology available for those interested in participating in a workshop online. Further development and expansion of small groups accessing SBDC’s online entrepreneurial options is a priority for the agency. SBDC utilizes available meeting space in administrative and one-stop AJC for one-on-one consultation sessions when the need arises.

GSTMW has also worked on a number of grants for our service area in an effective collaboration with other agencies, educational institutions, philanthropic organizations, faith-based organizations, chambers of commerce and others to enable a coordinated approach and reduce duplication of efforts. GSTMW is an active member of the Southeast Michigan Works Agency Coalition (SEMWAC) and Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN), a collaboration of ten community colleges and seven workforce boards. WIN specializes in fostering collaboration among talent partners in order to leverage assets to build a comprehensive and cohesive workforce and talent system across the region.

GSTMW Business Solutions Professionals (BSPs) and Career Coaches are trained to evaluate a customer’s needs through ‘fact-finding’ to obtain the information necessary to provide referrals for inventors and entrepreneurs to appropriate State-wide and regional partners, such as Mid-Michigan Innovation Center (MMIC).

The GSTMW’s BSPs collaborate with economic development organizations and chamber partners to jointly promote incumbent worker training and the Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF). BSPs are available to provide Labor Market Information (LMI) and Jobs EQ information while working with the local EDOs and Chambers to help attract businesses to the region with Workforce Development Proposals of available assistance. These services are provided at no cost to the EDO, Chamber, and businesses and are aimed at meeting their talent needs. The Business Services Managers help coordinate and participate in area business retention calls with local EDO, MEDC and MDARD representatives. Strong partnerships are continually forged and maintained with City and Village managers.

GSTMW’s Economic Development partners include:

Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance: The Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance team, a division of the Flint & Genesee Group, promotes job creation, investment, and increased revenue in our region. Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance help local businesses reach their greatest potential, assisting with financing and incentives, workforce hiring and training, lean/process improvement, business strategic planning, export and trade, site selection and talent connection services.

Lapeer Development Corporation: The Lapeer Development Corporation (LDC) is a community based economic development organization created to lead and coordinate economic development throughout Lapeer County. LDC provides a link between federal, state, and local governments and businesses interested in locating or expanding in Lapeer County and acts as a liaison between the public and private sectors to obtain the necessary assistance focusing on retaining, expanding, and attracting key business sectors to Lapeer County.

Shiawassee Economic Development Partnership (SEDP): Our Purpose/Cause/Passion: We exist to help business grow in our community. SEDP strives to attract and grow companies that bring money in from outside the community, creating jobs and local investment. SEDP cultivates a business-friendly environment in Shiawassee County, and provides clients with access to resources, tools, and knowledge to empower decisions that will lead to their success.

Tuscola County Economic Development Corporation: The Tuscola County EDC is dedicated to raising the quality of life in Tuscola County through economic development. Their success is measured by the number of jobs created and retained, business retention services, business consultations, business loan and grant assistance and more.

Huron County Economic Development Corporation: The Huron County Economic Development strives to develop, maintain and enhance the economic base and quality of life in Huron & Sanilac counties. This is accomplished by marketing the area, assisting businesses to start up or expand, consulting with local governments and organizations on development issues and acting as a catalyst for projects at the local, state and national levels.

Sanilac Regional Economic Consortium: The Sanilac Regional Economic Consortium is hosted at the Huron County EDC Offices. The Huron County EDC contracts with Sanilac County to provide economic support in Sanilac County.

I-69 Thumb Region: The I-69 Thumb Region is rich in assets and opportunities. Covering seven counties in eastern Michigan, the region has a wide range of agricultural richness, manufacturing know-how and transportation resources. If it's grown or created in the region or beyond, the I-69 Thumb Region can transport it via rail, road, air or ship across the country and around the world.

The I-69 Thumb region includes Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, and Tuscola counties. Each county plays a unique role in making the region one of the most resource rich in the state. The region offers a low cost of living and an outstanding quality of life, which features miles of beaches, natural waterways, unique cities and towns, recreation, and entertainment.

As one of ten Michigan regions, the I-69 Thumb region boasts a population of over 860,000 residents and a workforce of more than 395,000. Nine percent of the state's population and over

eight percent of the state’s workforce live and work in the region. A strong partnership between the lead economic development organizations from each of the seven counties provides many benefits through collaborative planning and implementation. The economic development partners collaborate with workforce, transportation, real estate and finance.

The I-69 International Trade Corridor: The I-69 International Trade Corridor is a collaborative effort by businesses and local government partners from Shiawassee, Genesee, Lapeer, and St. Clair Counties to market the area’s airport, highway, railroad, and water port resources to companies that are engaged in international commerce, particularly through Canada. The goal is to encourage firms to not only ship through this corridor but to also set up manufacturing and distribution facilities here to take advantage of these multi-modal transportation opportunities. To support this collaboration, a Next Michigan Development Corporation was created with participation from 36 municipalities in the four counties, making it one of the largest intergovernmental collaboratives in the state of Michigan.

1.8 Performance Accountability

A description of how the region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in the WIOA Section 116(c), for the local areas or the planning region.

GSTMW, along with its Workforce Development Board and the Chief Elected Officials will individually and independently negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor and the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity – Workforce Development on its respective local levels of performance for the performance accountability measures described in Section 116(c) of the WIOA. GSTMW performance levels are included in the local plan.



WIOA Four-Year Combined Plan

Local Plan

Program Years

2024-2028

SECTION II

LOCAL PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Local Plans serve as four-year action plans to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and to support the state’s vision and strategic and operational goals. The Local Plan sets forth the strategy to:

- **Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs to focus on providing relevant education and training to ensure that individuals, including youth and individuals with barriers to employment, have the skills to compete in the job market and that employers have a ready supply of skilled workers.**
- **Apply job-driven strategies in the one-stop system.**
- **Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation in, and alignment of, employment, training, and education programs.**
- **Incorporate the Local Plan into the Regional Plan per 20 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 679.540.**

Section 108(b) (1) through (22) of WIOA requires local boards and CEOs to develop and submit a comprehensive four-year Local Plan that is consistent with the State Plan and based on an analysis of regional labor market data. The Local Plan must include:

1. An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions including:

The regional analysis prepared as part of the regional plan. *(See Section I, #2 of the Regional Plan).*

- **A description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment).**

GSTMW! (GSTMW!) is a regional workforce development system that engages numerous partners for the benefit of job seekers, employers, and entire communities. Through our partnerships, we form a comprehensive network that provides opportunities and resources in the six counties we serve. We believe that all our communities – urban and rural – are strengthened when we focus on long-term employment, business viability and collaborative connections. Our vision statement expresses our deep desire to see a region where economic success is driven by local businesses and the people who make them run.

The GSTMW! strategic plan, created and adopted in 2019, revised in 2023, focuses primarily on organization-specific strategies. The plan is intended to improve relationships within the organization and across key partners, resulting in efficiency and coordination that ultimately improves services to all customers. The vision, mission, and customer service standards reflect the organization’s commitment to quality in all aspects of its work. The strategic priorities outlined in the plan lay a foundation for effective partnerships. Collectively, the components of the plan serve as a foundation for effective partnerships and excellent service. A summary of the primary components of the plan is provided here:

VISION: Employers and job seekers are empowered and equipped to connect, advance, and thrive.
MISSION: GST Michigan Work! connects and provides employers and job seekers with the assets they need to work together in building a prosperous region.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS:

Attitude: We provide services in a genuinely helpful and courteous manner.

Listening: We care enough to listen intently to our customers.

Empathy: We understand our customer’s perspective and strive to meet their unique needs.

Honesty: We communicate with transparency and integrity.

Follow-through: We provide complete services, going above and beyond to exceed the customer’s expectations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Internal Communication and Coordination

Access to Services

Public Recognition

Purposeful Partnerships

Proactive Services

The Strategic Plan presented an opportunity for regional planning. By expanding the scope of the plan, the many stakeholders and partners across the region have a framework for developing strategies that will guide the workforce development system for the foreseeable future. GSTMW! developed its Strategic Plan to help focus its role within the overall workforce development system, providing a means for prioritizing efforts and streamlining services.

The plan identified the board’s mission, vision, customer service standards, strategic priorities, and goals. The result is a robust set of strategies that will guide the organization’s commitment of energy and resources for the coming years.

The vision and mission address issues that are evident in our region, where we face significant challenges in preparing a skilled workforce and meeting the needs of employers. We see sizeable mismatches across a complex system: between employers and job seekers; workers and in-demand skills; the labor pool and open jobs; customers and resources; current awareness levels and the knowledge needed to make strategic decisions. To alleviate these mismatches and navigate the complexity, we make connections and provide services based on customer need. We facilitate and support each partner’s role in building a thriving community.

GSTMW! connects and provides employers and job seekers with the assets they need to work together in building a prosperous region.

- **Training:** occupational, academic, and soft skills education.
- **Funding:** to upskill and build a workforce and grow a business.
- **Services:** job search assistance, recruitment strategies, and much more; all customized based on the needs of the employer and job seeker.
- **Connections:** to a network of partners providing much-needed support.

To focus on the strategies detailed in the next section, the following goals and desired outcomes will serve as a compass to align efforts and ensure collective impact.

Internal Communication and Coordination

Improve communications and coordination across departments and throughout all levels of the organization.

Strengthen professional development systems.

Access to Services

Customize the use of technology to improve access to services.

Increase outreach to diverse communities in order to reach customers where they are.

Public Recognition

Increase internal awareness and participation in marketing efforts.

Target marketing and promotional activities to program-specific populations.

Purposeful Partnerships

Improve the quality of relationships with partner service agencies in order to increase resources for customers.

Increase awareness of and exposure to partner service agencies among staff and customers.

Proactive Services

Increase knowledge of employer and job seeker needs both locally and regionally.

Standardize customer service across the entire region.

Strategies

The strategies that were developed from this robust process fall into two primary categories: partnerships and services. Of equal importance, the two categories reinforce each other – effective partnerships result in quality services, and in turn, collaborative services strengthen partnerships. Collectively, these strategies reflect the diverse needs of the region, with its mix of urban and rural settings, emphasizing the need for teamwork and sharing of resources. It is also important to recognize that these strategies cover the full range of customers, from the hardest-to-serve job seekers to the most successful employers.

The updated strategic plan was shared with staff at the annual all-staff meeting, and with the Governing and Workforce Development Boards at the September 2023 meetings.

Partnership-Based Strategies

The following partnership-based strategies were developed and prioritized by stakeholders across the region. They are listed in order of potential impact, with the first being viewed as the most needed to improve partnerships, the second as the next most impactful, and so on.

1. Develop a formal, consistent system of referrals that includes a feedback loop.

Stakeholders across the region felt that the most vital strategy was to work together to improve referrals. The partnerships currently suffer from a lack of feedback regarding the outcomes of referrals. This can impact performance, reduce the likelihood that a customer receives the complete set of services available to them, and can also minimize the trust between partners. A system that is used comprehensively and consistently across the region would address many of these issues and build a stronger network that ultimately benefits all customers. It will also set the stage for increasing and improving collaborative case management between partners with mutual customers.

2. Share professional development and cross-train staff across partners.

This strategy will build not only knowledge of the many services across the region but will also build relationships between frontline staff. Activities that will support this strategy include offering resource fairs for staff, holding joint orientations, and opening staff training programs to partners.

3. Regular meetings among partners.

Although this strategy is already in place, stakeholders felt it should have high priority in order to improve communication. Increasing the number of meetings is not necessarily the goal unless they are targeted and effective in sharing information and developing new collaborative approaches to the needs of customers. This strategy was seen as especially important because of the COVID-19 crisis; several stakeholders desired more connection and regular updates from GSTMW!, the State of Michigan, and other partners.

4. Work together to deliver services in underserved areas of the region.

This strategy applies in both urban and rural settings: areas in the City of Flint can be targeted to ensure that the most in-need job seekers are provided with services and connected to employment opportunities near them. In addition, the rural counties of the region struggle to meet the needs of their many small communities. With only one American Job Center in each county, customers often travel significant distances to access services. The quick onset of delivering services virtually due to COVID-19 can help to successfully implement this strategy but should be done in a coordinated manner across the many partners who utilize the AJCs to provide services.

5. Share data on customers served and performance outcomes among partners.

All partners must meet performance requirements, but those expectations and metrics, that guide their service delivery, are not widely known. Even with public reports such as WIOA performance, the data can be difficult to interpret without explanation. Also, there is no overarching system for analyzing data and/or sharing it. However, the AJCs track customer visits and the use of various services. This data is presented to the Workforce Development Board at every meeting. This data is shared in the Talent Talk newsletter which is dispersed to all partners. A strategy that finds a way to share data among all partners, with meaningful context, would improve understanding of each other's motives and service plans.

The above strategies represent the top five deemed most important by the region. By focusing on these partnership-based strategies for the coming four years, the workforce development system will see vast improvements in its communication, coordination, and access to services. Other partnership-based strategies identified by the stakeholders, but lower on the priority list, are as follows:

- Leverage technology to improve communication across partners.
- Pursue grant funds collaboratively among partners.
- Provide more services virtually, including case management.
- Improve marketing materials with clear, concise descriptions of services.
- Share marketing efforts among partners.
- Use social media collaboratively.

Service-Based Strategies

The following service-based strategies were developed and prioritized by stakeholders across the region. They are listed in order of potential impact, with the first being viewed as the most needed to improve services, the second as the next most impactful, and so on.

- 1. Increase supports to job seekers for barriers to employment, including housing, childcare, and transportation.**

This strategy recognizes that job seekers cannot work, and employers cannot hire when the local workforce does not have adequate supports in place. While it is not feasible for the workforce development system to solve major infrastructure issues, the partners can work together to increase supportive services available to those who need them. In addition, the system can advocate for structural improvements that ensure affordable, accessible, housing, childcare, and transportation. GSTMW!'s work through the BRN, United Way grant, and BRES supportive services is helping to address these barriers.

- 2. Increase work-based learning opportunities.**

This super-strategy consists of multiple components, all of which are integral to offering job seekers a chance to earn a paycheck while improving their skills and improving their advancement potential. In addition, this strategy supports businesses with a workforce that is trained to meet their specific needs.

- Increase career awareness activities, such as MiCareer Quest, Talent Tours, etc.* These activities are the first steppingstones to work-based learning. Students who are knowledgeable about their career prospects are better able to plan their career paths and seek opportunities for increased exposure to the world of work, such as co-ops and internships.
- Increase utilization of USDOL Registered Apprenticeship (RA) Programs.* RAs in the region are established and available. Partners in the region will work together to inform employers about the opportunities, especially for non-traditional occupations. Special populations, including women, minorities, veterans, and individuals with disabilities, will be targeted as priority recruits.
- Encouraging the use of WIOA On-the-Job Training funding when appropriate.* GSTMW! will utilize OJTs for WIOA-eligible customers of partners across the region.
- Encouraging State initiatives including the Going Pro Talent Fund.* WIOA core partners and local economic development entities will work together collaboratively to recruit more companies to apply, by providing thorough information and facilitated support.
- Encouraging Incumbent Worker training initiatives with local employers.* Partners in the region will promote the availability of this funding mechanism, available through WIOA Adult funds. This approach prevents layoffs by improving the skills of workers within a company or group of companies.

- 3. Develop career pathways.**

Using a sector-based approach, the region should map available career pathways, identify gaps in pathways for demand industries, and work with employers and training providers to fill them. This builds on the work-based learning strategies shown above and builds capacity within the region to successfully address workforce needs.

4. Identify the skills needed by local employers and share this information with all stakeholders and partners.

The demand-driven approach requires extensive knowledge of employer needs, with ongoing relationships to stay up to date. Several WIOA partners, including Michigan Works!, veterans services, and vocational rehabilitation, dedicate staff to this very purpose – working exclusively with employers to identify their needs and access a variety of tools and resources to support them. This strategy was implemented by publishing a list of local hot jobs, using the career pathways maps above, and/or regular reporting by employer services staff to all partners.

5. Provide soft skills training for adults, so they learn teamwork, communication, persistence, etc.

This strategy recognizes that many job seekers are not equipped with workplace skills that cut across all industries and occupations. Soft skills, also called “employability skills” or “workplace literacy,” are critically important and often cited as the number one need by employers of all types. GSTMW! has implemented a program to provide this training, which could be expanded to include customers of partners and existing workforce for local companies. (This strategy also applies to youth, but it would be implemented differently – via youth programs and institutionalized across the K-12 system.)

The above strategies represent the top five deemed most important by the region. By focusing on these service-based strategies for the coming four years, the workforce development system will see vast improvements in its ability to prepare a skilled workforce for local employers. Other service-based strategies identified by the stakeholders include the following:

- Connect employers with overlooked talent pools, such as individuals with disabilities, justice-involved citizens, etc.
- Provide more support for individuals to transition from adult education programs to post-secondary training.
- Help employers retain their workforce and workers to keep their jobs through programs such as Business Resource Networks – GSTMW’s *The Connection*.
- Convene employers within sectors to collaboratively address workforce needs; and
- Expand programs and support for veterans.

Although this list did not make the top five, each of them is still fundamentally important to the success of the workforce development system. The region will make every effort to integrate these into the activities and initiatives that emerge from this plan, ensuring that services are as robust and responsive as possible.

Performance Measures:

GST’s current PY 22 and PY 23 Performance Goals are listed below. At this time our PY 24 and PY 25 goals have not been negotiated.

PY 22 and PY 23 Performance Goals				
	Adult	Dislocated Worker	Youth	Wagner Peyser
2nd Qtr Placement	85.0%	86.8%	77.0%	72.0%
4th Qtr Placement	81.2%	83.3%	74.0%	67.5%
2nd Qtr Median Earnings	\$7,011	\$7,846	\$3,668	\$6,213
Credential Rate	83.4%	81.4%	75.9%	NA
Measurable Skill Gains	45.6%	48.0%	43.2%	NA

- **A description of the local board’s strategy to align local resources, required partners, and entities that carry out core programs to achieve the strategic vision and goals.**

Core programs delivered at the One-Stop American Job Centers (AJC) and administered by GSTMW! include Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Adult, Dislocated Worker (DW) and Youth programs, Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), Wagner Peyser (WP), and the Partnership Accountability Training Hope (PATH) program. Programs may be delivered directly by the Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) or sub-recipients selected through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. GSTMW! is closely aligned with required partners and entities, as well as local resources, in the East Michigan area. We have an extensive history of working with partners in the region to leverage resources to support the population and individuals we serve. GSTMW! recognizes there is often an overlap of individuals being served by multiple partners. Purposeful relationships have been established with partners, such as Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Adult Education, Job Corps, Unemployment Insurance (UI), Veteran Services, transportation agencies, The Disability Network (TDN), training providers, chambers, local foundations, economic development agencies and Career & Technical Education (CTE) programs.

- GSTMW! puts a significant portion of its WIOA Title I, TAA, and PATH resources towards these efforts.
- Wagner-Peyser funding contributes toward job seeker’s skill upgrades.
- A partnership with MRS allows for the full array of services to be offered to individuals with disabilities in an inclusive, non-segregated, seamless manner. GSTMW! works with other disability-focused agencies that also contribute towards the alignment of resources and carry out the strategic vision and goals, such as the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), The Disability Network, and local special education programs.
- Partnership with Labor and Economic Opportunity’s (LEO) Veterans Services assures eligible veterans and spouses can receive additional services assisting them with overcoming significant barriers to employment.
- The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) helps by assuring that recently dislocated job seekers receive income while participating in GSTMW! programs. Coordination with UIA through the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) helps job seekers

overcome the negative inertia caused by job loss and helps incentivize individuals to be proactive in finding new employment. In addition, UIA holds pop-up sessions in each of our service centers monthly.

- Close collaboration with Adult Education improves work-related academic skills and increases high school completion (HSC) or equivalency (HSE) attainments. This is accomplished both onsite at our AJC and through referrals to and from Adult Education providers.
- Partnerships with training agencies include, but are not limited to University of Michigan, Mott Community College, Baker College, Delta College, Mid-Michigan Community College, Saginaw Valley State University, St. Clair Community College, Dorsey Schools, and Ross Medical Education Center. In addition, Genesee Career Institute, Huron Area Technical Center, Lapeer Education & Technology Center, Tuscola Technology Center, Shiawassee College and Readiness Center, and the Sanilac Career Center offer job skills training to meet the needs of local employers.
- Close planning, with programs under the Carl Perkins Act and other CTE programs, helps build the talent pipeline of our local employers.
- Coordination with Justice-Involved Citizens and Clean Slate programs are excellent resources to help those in the workforce with criminal backgrounds.
- GSTMW! has an excellent relationship with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). This helps to address the barriers to training and employment through access to Medicaid, food assistance, childcare, transportation, etc.
- A wide referral base to a variety of community and faith-based groups helps with many barriers through transportation, mentoring, motivational support, clothing, etc.

GST will continue the development and connection of services across program partners/entities to more effectively serve our common customers.

2. A description of the workforce development system in the local area including:

- **The programs that are included in that system.**

GSTMW!'s workforce development system must be flexible and diverse, as the job seekers we serve fluctuate from rural to urban settings, and the employers vary from very small businesses to multibillion-dollar organizations. Keeping this in mind, the GSTMW! AJC focuses on the populations and business employers they serve and tailors their services to meet the local needs. GSTMW! has seven AJC locations within the six-county region. The AJCs' hours of operation are from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday. The centers are strategically located in each County with considerations for the overall population, eligible population for services, employer location, and access. Most AJCs have been at their current locations for many years and are well-established in the communities. The addresses for the centers are listed below:

Flint Service Center
711 N. Saginaw Street
Flint, MI 48503

Fenton Service Center
4045 Owen Road
Fenton, MI 48430

Huron County Service Center
614 N. Port Crescent Street
Bad Axe, MI 48413

Lapeer County Service Center
550 Lake Drive
Lapeer, MI 48446

Sanilac County Service Center
575 W. Sanilac Road
Sandusky, MI 48471

Shiawassee County Service Center
1975 W. M-21, Second Floor
Owosso, MI 48867

Tuscola County Service Center
1184 Cleaver Road
Caro, MI 48723

GSTMW! strives to ensure that the delivery of services is available to businesses and job seekers, with equity and access for all. The AJCs provide One-Stop access to key workforce investment programs and partners, promoting seamless service delivery to employers and job seekers. Services are available to veterans and eligible spouses, youth, individuals with disabilities, welfare recipients, migrant and seasonal workers, justice-involved citizens, unemployed, under-employed, employed individuals, and the public. A core set of services is available at each AJC location free of charge.

Access to services is provided through GSTMW!'s AJC locations or referrals to various programs. GSTMW! administers or engages with the following grants/programs:

- ❖ Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) - Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
- ❖ Wagner-Peyser Employment Services (WP)
- ❖ Re-Employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)
- ❖ Partnership Accountability Training Hope (PATH)
- ❖ Jobs for Michigan Graduates (JMG)
- ❖ Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA)
- ❖ Food Assistance Employment & Training (FAE&T)
- ❖ Food Assistance Employment & Training Plus
- ❖ Going Pro Talent Fund (GPTF)
- ❖ Michigan Industry Cluster Approach (MICA)
- ❖ Industry Infinity
- ❖ Clean Slate
- ❖ WIN MiREACH
- ❖ SWA MiREACH Grant
- ❖ Thumb Health SS ELC Grant
- ❖ MiLEAP
- ❖ MiApprenticeship
- ❖ MiCOACH
- ❖ MiCareer Quest
- ❖ MiLIUNA
- ❖ MiSTAIRS
- ❖ CPWR Apprenticeship Readiness
- ❖ SWA CDL Demonstration Grant
- ❖ Auto Related DWG
- ❖ Business Resource Network (BRN) – The Connection
- ❖ WIN EV Academy
- ❖ EVJA State Funded Grant
- ❖ Global Epicenter of Mobility (GEM)

- ❖ Talent Action Team Grant (TAT)
- ❖ Migrant & Seasonal Workers (MSW)
- ❖ Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP)
- ❖ Young Professionals Grant
- ❖ Justice Involved Citizens
- ❖ Fidelity Bonding and
- ❖ National Emergency Grants (NEG).

- **A description of the local board's strategy to work with entities carrying out core programs and other workforce development programs to provide service alignment (including programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006).**

Each center provides referrals (to and from) for services regarding veteran services, Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), CTE, adult education and literacy, Unemployment Insurance Agency, Job Corps, AARP, Community Services Block grants, Vocational Rehabilitation - Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Centers for Independent Living and Disability Networks. GSTMW! collaborates with and participates in strategic partnerships with local foundations, Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and local economic development organizations (EDOs) to support economic development and job creation efforts. GSTMW! partners with public and independent colleges and universities in the development of training programs to meet employer needs. In addition, GSTMW! is part of the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN) which develops and provides training to meet the needs of participants and employers.

Customers in the AJCs may also receive referrals to health and human services providers, such as mental health, transportation services, 211/United Way, pregnancy resources, and legal services to name a few. A State of Michigan - MSFW staff person is available at the Lapeer County office to assist the region's migrant and seasonal workers and agriculture employers who hire them. State of Michigan - veteran representatives are in the Flint and Lapeer offices. These individuals schedule visits to the Huron, Sanilac, Shiawassee, Tuscola, and Fenton AJCs on an itinerant basis. This ensures that programs are operated most effectively. GSTMW!'s policy on Veteran's priority of service is applied and utilized within the region, to ensure Veterans receive exceptional service.

A community resource navigator is located within the Flint AJC. This position rotates our BRN Success Coaches to cover the navigator duties. The key functions include researching, maintaining, and sharing community resource information with participants and staff. The navigator maintains an information resource area with flyers from numerous community agencies meeting needs in the areas of legal, food, transportation, housing, adult education, and others. In addition, free notary services are available enabling clients to complete a key step in applying for utility and other emergency services. The navigator is Genesee Human Oppression Strike Team (G.H.O.S.T) Certified, collaborating with the Genesee County Sheriff's office to combat human trafficking. This position makes soft referrals to various community agencies.

GSTMW! is a MI Bridges Community Partner. This partnership engages GSTMW! with the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) in spreading the word about the revised MI Bridges site, connecting with clients, and assisting applicants. This also connects with

the Statewide 211 referral and information system, facilitating the connection of Michigan residents with needed services. GSTMW! is engaged as a navigation, referral, and access partner.

GSTMW! has developed positive and cooperative relationships with State of Michigan agencies such as Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS), Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS), the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP), Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA), the Department of Education and others. During 2020 and 2021 GSTMW! staff worked with UIA assisting customers through the UIA system. GSTMW! can better serve our customers (both employers and job seekers) through unduplicated, coordinated services. By establishing common practices across the Talent System, GSTMW! and its partners hope to assure that our customers will have a consistent quality of service, no matter where they enter the system. GSTMW! works cooperatively with the core program providers and others to implement common practices across the region, track performance and measure customer satisfaction to ensure quality of service.

All services and programs are aligned to avoid duplication of services. Infrastructure Agreements (IFA) and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) have been developed and implemented with the organizations and agencies that operate core programs that outline the responsibilities of each agency and the services delivered.

GSTMW! recognizes how partners of workforce development and education continue to develop, strengthen, and influence each other. GSTMW! partners with community colleges, universities, Intermediate School Districts (ISD), EDCs, non-profits, chambers, and foundations to impact the workforce and the economy. These partners, many of whom serve on GST's Workforce Development Board and Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC), provide guidance on GSTMW!'s programs and services.

The Career and Educational Advisory Council (CEAC) serves in an advisory capacity to the WDB on all educational issues. Our Youth Services Leader is a member of the CEAC. In addition, GSTMW! staff (CEO, COO, CSO, Program & Data, Business Services, and Apprenticeship managers) attend the CEAC meetings with the educational providers - the CTE Directors, STEM staff, post-secondary staff, ISD staff, and local businesses. Our region is fortunate to have received two Adult Education: Section 107 CTE Pilot grants.

It is the WDB's strategy to heighten its focus on available CTE training in the area. GSTMW! works intently with the State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) offices, the local ISDs, the CEAC, adult education and literacy providers, the many private/public colleges, and universities to provide service alignment through programs authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act. Currently, there are 160+ CTE programs in operation across the region, serving high school students. Current opportunities are available in Agri-Science, CAD, Culinary Arts, Diesel Technology, Health Occupations, Public Safety, Avionics, HVAC, Robotics, and Automotive Services to name a few. GSTMW! will continue to work with these partners to align services and build greater efficiencies within the Talent System.

- 3. A description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs will:**
- **Expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment.**
 - **Facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs.**

GSTMW! does an excellent job providing employment, training, education, and supportive services to individuals with barriers to employment. Our goal is to help individuals gain employment and to make them good employees. We provide services that assist them in becoming better and more prepared job seekers and address barriers such as lack of education, soft skills, computer skills, and occupation skills. All of these services are designed to identify and remove barriers.

GSTMW! will provide support services to remove barriers and ensure the success of participants. Support service needs will be evaluated at intake and documented in OSMIS. When appropriate, eligible participants will be enrolled in WIOA to ensure access to other appropriate programs and support services. Examples of support services include, but are not limited to, protective clothing, mileage reimbursement, automobile repair, and/or other support in accordance with GSTMW!'s local WIOA Supportive Services policy.

GSTMW! takes a diverse approach to outreach and is committed to utilizing structured methods to strategically implement a varied approach to outreach within our budget constraints. The communications team recognizes the value of building strong relationships with internal stakeholders and key external stakeholders. As those relationships are cultivated and maintained, they will assist with brand awareness, which aligns with our grassroots efforts: meeting people where they are. Engagement with people and the community is a part of our overall marketing schematics. The communications team understands the importance of sincere human-to-human interaction and the results that dynamic yields. While we have a solid digital presence, we successfully balance that with our traditional marketing efforts.

The agency invests in digital marketing, automated messaging, and a strong online social media presence, including Facebook, Facebook Group Community Pages, Twitter, and LinkedIn. The agency also maintains a highly interactive website – www.gstmiworks.org. In addition to digital marketing, GSTMW! uses a mixture of traditional and more advanced marketing approaches with GEO fencing, streaming, mobile banner advertising, newspaper advertising, and advertorials.

GSTMW! also publishes a quarterly newsletter called *Talent Talk*, which is delivered in full to the GSTMW! Workforce Development Board, Governing Board, Legislators, staff, and community stakeholders. Engaging our partners in our recruiting efforts for key initiatives is critical. GSTMW!'s communications team provides up-to-date branded print collateral for mass distribution via digital and “feet-on-the-street” distribution in the communities we serve. This includes posting on local bulletin boards, in community organization newsletters, Chambers of Commerce communications, faith-based organizations, and more.

Receiving referrals from community partnerships that are valued and nourished indicates trust, respect, brand awareness, and peer inclusion. GSTMW!'s recruiting methods range from high-tech digital strategies to effective grassroots marketing implementation. GSTMW!

communications leadership understands that community engagement and brand awareness go hand and hand. GSTMW! has developed ongoing active relationships with community partners to increase visibility and connect with the communities being served across the region; positioning itself as a value add to the customers of its community partners, thus expanding its reach related to community engagement and brand recognition.

GSTMW!'s CEO is strategically placed on television and print news media to further solidify who we are as an organization and to discuss how we can help those in the communities we serve with needs related to workforce development. With the use of a dropdown menu, our webpage offers eight languages to broaden our outreach to the various populations in the region. GSTMW! has added an EEO banner to the top of its webpage so that with one click the individual can quickly access all EEO information. GSTMW!'s website is "Bobby" compliant. Our web page showcases the MWA's upcoming events with easy access for registration. Our communications team ensures that the GSTMW! brand and messaging are consistent across all media formats.

GSTMW! selected a digital marketing company through a competitive RFP process. With the guidance and partnership of the communications team, this company assists with implementing our strategic outreach plan to engage employers in our region and the eligible population that we serve. They manage our website and assist with our digital marketing efforts.

GSTMW! has created an effective referral process with core partners to further expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services. MWA staff work with many local faith and community-based organizations to leverage resources and programs, as well as, have wider access to best practices. As mentioned previously, a community resource navigator is available for customers and staff to assist with navigating community assets. Key functions include researching, maintaining, and sharing community resource information. The Navigator provides one-on-one confidential assistance to anyone who needs help accessing community resources, by phone, in person, or email. Information and referrals are available for food, shelter, legal assistance, clothing, personal needs, transportation, and more.

In addition, the MWA reviewed and updated its internal policies to broaden the eligibility definitions to expand access to employment, training, education, and supportive services within the MWA region.

- **Improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential (including a credential that is an industry-recognized certificate or certification, portable, and stackable).**

Our region is fortunate to have several educational providers located in and near our region and we work closely with these entities to increase access to post-secondary credentials associated with in-demand occupations. These local training partners include but are not limited to: 160 Driving Academy, AIS Technical Institute, American Training Institute, Baker College, Central Michigan University, Chamberlain College, Charter Health Care Training Center, Classic Driving School, CNA Academy, Coast to Coast Truck Driving School, Corunna Area Ambulance Service, Davenport University, Davis Training Institute, Delta College, Dorsey Schools, Ferris State University, Genesee Health Careers, Great Lakes Medical Training, Heart to Heart Healthcare Training, Huron Area Tech Center, Lapeer Advanced Manufacturing Training Center, Lapeer County Education & Technology Center, Lansing Community College, Macomb Community

College, Maier Driver Education School, MedCerts, MiCHWA, Mott Community College, Michigan State University, Mid-Michigan College, Northwestern Michigan College, Northwood University, Oakland University, Polyservice Driving School, Ross Medical, Saginaw Valley State University, Sanilac Career Center, Schoolcraft College, Serenity Health Training Institute, Soaring Healthcare Training, St. Clair Community College, Sokol Healthcare Training, Suburban Truck Driving School, TEACH LLC, Thumb CDL, Tri-Area Trucking School, Tuscola Technology Center, University of Michigan and US Truck Driving School. GSTMW! works with these training providers to ensure that occupations in high demand have quality education and training programs to meet the talent needs of employers. Decisions regarding the training to be provided will result from a combination of LMI data and the hiring needs of local employers.

GSTMW! is working with local colleges, universities, and proprietary schools to improve access and increase the number of recognized post-secondary credential offerings. Credentials are industry-recognized certificates or certifications, which are portable and stackable. The credentials used by GSTMW! include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) Certified Production Technician (CPT);
- Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) CLA;
- Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC) CLT;
- National Institute of Metal Working Standards (NIMS);
- American Welding Society (AWS) Level 1;
- GED;
- High School Diploma;
- College degrees such as Associate's, Bachelor's, or Master's degrees;
- EPA Lead RRP;
- EPA-Section 608A Refrigerant Handling;
- CompTIA A+;
- State Certification for Nurse Aid; Medical Assistant; Nursing;
- Electronic Medical Records;
- American Medical Technologist's (AMT) Medical Administrative Specialist (CMAS) Certification;
- Insurance Coding;
- American Medical Technologist's (AMT) Medical Assistant (RMA) Certification;
- Factory Automation Numerical Control (FANUC) I & II;
- Pharmacy Technician Certification Boards (PTCB);
- National Retail Federation Certificate Customer Service and Sales;
- National Retail Federation Certificate Advanced Customer Service and Sales;
- National Retail Federation Certificate Retail Management;
- National Retail Federation Certificate Retail Business;
- SERV Safe Manager;
- CDL - A;
- CDL - B;
- Child Development Associate Course (CDA);
- Accelerated Teacher Certification Programs;
- Any Michigan Motor Vehicle Specialty Certifications or Master Mechanic Certification;
- Microsoft Office Suite;
- College-issued Career Credential Certificates;
- Various IT Certifications recognized by industries; and

➤ Project Management Certifications, such as Six Sigma.

According to the National Skills Coalition, Middle-Skill Credentials, and Immigrant Workers: Michigan's Untapped Assets, Michigan's economy has a robust demand for middle-skill workers. More than half of all jobs in Michigan (54 percent) are middle-skill occupations that require more than a high school diploma, but not a four-year degree. Yet only 48 percent of Michigan workers have been educated to the middle-skill level. Middle-skill positions include jobs as varied as insurance sales agent, computer user support specialist, dental hygienist, and HVAC mechanic and installer. Individuals prepare for these occupations through a variety of pathways, including career and technical education programs; apprenticeships, and other work-based learning opportunities; community colleges; and nonprofit or other private job training providers. Demand for workers with middle-skill credentials is anticipated to remain strong in Michigan, with 50 percent of new job openings between 2014-2024 expected to be at the middle-skill level. The data is clear that investing in skill building can ensure Michigan's ability to meet that demand. Such an investment makes economic sense: A report from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) calculates that each year of post-secondary education leads to an increased per capita output of between 4 and 7 percent.

One strategy of this MWA is to encourage skill-building and the attainment of post-secondary credentials, as those workers have a significantly higher median wage than those with only a high school diploma. The job skills necessary to obtain employment opportunities in high-demand areas paying family-sustainable wages require this MWA to continue its examination of the congruity of the labor demand and labor supply. One factor that continues to be increasingly an issue is the need for skilled workers. This is of special concern to this highly populated manufacturing region with an aging workforce. In nearly all the top industries, the desire for a workforce with improved technology, communication, basic academic and specialty skills is reinforced.

GSTMW! is supportive of the State of Michigan goal to increase the number of working-age adults with a skill certificate or college degree to 60% by 2030. Sixty by 30 seeks to build a better Michigan in three ways:

- Close the skills gap that poses the single greatest threat to the success of our businesses and our state's prosperity. Jobs requiring skilled employees today, as well as jobs on the horizon, demand greater education and training than ever before. Increasingly, the best jobs require more than a high school diploma.
- Increase opportunity and Michiganders greater access to the education and skills that create opportunities for better jobs and bigger paychecks.
- Make Michigan more competitive for inclusive economic growth.

With the projected numbers of those retiring from the workforce, regional employers are using the apprenticeship training model to 'grow their own talent.' The GSTMW! is working to assist employers in meeting that need by holding standards approved by the United States Department of Labor (USDOL), Office of Apprenticeship (OA), and providing intermediary services. GSTMW! works with the state and local colleges to develop industry-recognized certificates/credentials. GSTMW! also works closely with employers with existing apprenticeship programs, including many of the Building Trade Construction Unions, to provide recruitment assistance and services for existing apprentices registered with USDOL OA.

4. A description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area to:

- ***Facilitate engagement of employers, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations, in workforce development programs.***
 - Encouraging and promoting State initiatives including the Going Pro Talent Fund and assisting with possible talent solutions, specialized apprenticeship grants, etc.;
 - Facilitating single-employer and multi-employer regional and local job/career fairs for local employers both on-site and at the location requested by the employer;
 - Participating in the Employer-Led Collaborative facilitated by the Greater Flint Health Coalition;
 - Facilitating Rural Healthcare Sector Strategy Employer Lead Collaborative;
 - Promoting the Small Business Support Hub in Genesee County to encourage the development of entrepreneurs;
 - Participating in and promoting area business expos;
 - Facilitating Business Forum meetings, promoting cross-sector industry workshops and professional development;
 - Promoting local community and private college programs at service centers;
 - Working directly with local Tech Centers/ISDs to develop, promote and connect courses/programs with employer talent needs including mock interviews;
 - Participating in local and statewide industry sector focus groups; such as MiREACH, MiLEAP, WIN's HCA, and MiCOACH;
 - Seeking out and meeting with employers and prospective new businesses to communicate GST Michigan Works! programs, services, and opportunities;
 - Engaging employers to promote and/or participate in the MiCareerQuest™ East event for talent and talent pipeline development; and
 - Promoting GSTMW!'s Business Resource Network "The Connection."
- ***Support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area.***
 - Meeting the talent needs of employers, improving their ability to compete in the marketplace;
 - Understanding the needs of industry leaders concerning existing, new, and emerging occupations;
 - Delivering the needed support for career seekers to improve their employment-related skills, improving their ability to compete for high-quality employment opportunities;
 - Advancing training opportunities, supporting progressive implementation and achieving improved training outcomes;
 - Following a demand-driven focus on crafting workforce solutions tailored to specific employer needs;
 - Creating the partnerships with employers that provide solutions that benefit both workers and employers;
 - Seeking out and contacting local employers to provide customized talent acquisition services;
 - Providing local employer/company job fairs;
 - Providing talent recruitment services for employers;
 - Promoting, conducting, and encouraging talent tours with businesses;

- Informing employers of State and Federal resources for talent development including:
 - ✓ Encouraging the use of WIOA On-the-Job Training (OJT) funding when appropriate
 - ✓ Encouraging Incumbent Worker training initiatives with local employers
 - ✓ Encouraging state initiatives including Going Pro Talent Fund and specialized apprenticeship grants, etc.;
 - Promoting Pure Michigan Business Connect networking for supply chain sourcing;
 - Promoting Small Business Administration (SBA) programs and services;
 - Monitoring local and regional labor market information and trends;
 - Promoting the use of national emergency grants to assist companies needing to acquire talent;
 - Working to build the talent pipeline to assist with company workforce needs;
 - Facilitating and participating in regular professional HR manager meetings; and
 - Promoting Tri-Share Partnerships in the region to assist businesses and their employees with childcare barriers.
- ***Improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development.***
 - Collaborate with Region 6 local economic development partners;
 - Working directly with local economic development agencies to provide workforce assets for business attraction projects and key initiatives;
 - Connecting with SBA & MEDC to provide talent recruitment resources for attracting new businesses;
 - Inviting Talent Development Liaison (TDL) partner on joint economic development business retention calls;
 - Attending annual and quarterly partner meetings;
 - Working to build the talent pipeline to assist with company workforce needs;
 - Attending networking/training functions sponsored by MEDC, local economic development, and chambers of commerce; and
 - Working with the local economic development organizations (EDO) to assess future workforce needs and partner on strategies to address them.
 - ***Strengthen linkages between the One-Stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs.***
 - Providing “register for work” activities to assist with persons filing for unemployment compensation;
 - Promoting and providing adult and dislocated worker re-employment services;
 - Participating in Rapid Response teams to connect laid-off workers with opportunities for retraining and connecting with partner agencies; and
 - Attending and providing jobseeker information at Rapid Response worker orientation sessions.
 - Connecting UIA and customers through pop-up sessions at GSTMW! service centers.

5. A description of how the local board will coordinate local workforce investment activities with regional economic development activities that are carried out in the local area and how the local board will promote entrepreneurial skills training and microenterprise services.

GSTMW! is dedicated to aligning workforce investment activities with local economic development partners, fostering strong collaborations to bolster regional prosperity. Business Solutions Professionals (BSPs) engage with local county economic development staff individually to enhance connections, while also partnering with Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) on various local, regional, and industry-specific initiatives convened in the GSTMW! service area.

The agency promotes the utilization of SBDC resources, advocating for entrepreneurs to access expert assistance and participate in workshops covering essential topics like business planning and marketing. Additionally, GSTMW! integrates SBDC consultants into its events to disseminate information about available services and entrepreneurial resources.

Referrals to local and regional entrepreneur support organizations such as Flint & Genesee Economic Alliance's Small Business Support Hub and 100K Ideas in downtown Flint are facilitated, offering mentorship and guidance to investors navigating product or service development. Recognizing the importance of digital access, GSTMW! provides technology support for online SBDC workshops, prioritizing the expansion of online entrepreneurial opportunities.

Business Solutions Professionals (BSPs) and Career Coaches are adept at assessing customer needs and providing referrals to statewide and regional partners. Collaborations with EDOs and chambers aim to promote workforce development initiatives like incumbent worker training and the Going Pro Talent Fund, supporting businesses in meeting their talent needs.

Furthermore, GSTMW! actively engages in grant collaborations with various agencies and organizations, ensuring a cohesive and effective approach to addressing regional needs. Membership in the Southeast Michigan Works Advisory Council (SEMWAC) and the Workforce Intelligence Network (WIN) underscores the agency's commitment to data-driven solutions and responsiveness to evolving labor market demands. Through these concerted efforts, GSTMW! contributes to building a resilient and vibrant regional economy.

6. A description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area, including:

- a. How the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and that such providers will meet the employment needs of local employers, workers, and job seekers.***

Training:

The MWA encourages continuous improvement for its entire staff and service providers. One strategy GSTMW! uses for continuous improvement is the Michigan Works! Association. The Association connects local agencies and partners with resources to help the MWA better serve employers and job seekers. The Michigan Works! Association provides training and networking opportunities for MWA staff and service providers through workshops, conferences, and webinars. GSTMW! requires its BSPs to attend the Business Solutions Professional training provided by the Association.

GSTMW! also implemented a Learning Management System (LMS) to provide further training to staff and service providers. Our GSTMW! LMS Learning Academy contains hundreds of training options in categories including Microsoft programs, communication, health and wellness, productivity, compliance, emotional intelligence, and writing. Staff and service providers have unlimited access to training that has been chosen to contain real-world relevancy to their work.

Most of the case management staff attend the Global Career Development Facilitator and Family-Centered Coaching training. GSTMW! has implemented Tuapath. Tuapath is a goal achievement coaching model hand-in-glove with a technology-based coaching platform. The combined approach will redirect time and energy from data collection toward employment outcomes. It also helps build accountability and a trusting relationship between participants and career coaches. The platform incorporates a goal-oriented coaching methodology and an understanding of the role of executive function in achieving employment goals. Additionally, many staff have attended training such as Veteran Services, Fidelity Bonding, Re-entry Services, Youth Services, Dale Carnegie Training, Customer Service Excellence, De-Escalating Conflict, CPR & First Aid-AED, Pure Michigan Talent Connect, Procurement Training, and FOIA. Recently, staff have attended Hope Network's youth and adult First Aid Mental Health, and QPR Suicide training.

Staff and service providers are encouraged to attend training not only through the Michigan Works Association but other training institutions as well. Staff attend trainings in Emergency Response, Agriculture Trends, OSMIS, EEO, Migrant & Seasonal Workers (MSW), Rapid Response, Trade Adjustment, Apprenticeships, Going Pro Talent Fund, College Access Networks, Career & Technical Education, Jobs for Michigan Graduates, Cultural Diversification/DEI, Personnel, Hiring Techniques and Marketing.

GSTMW! staff and service providers are encouraged to join and attend business and professional associations to maintain their professional certifications, update their skills, and keep abreast of current trends. The MWA also takes advantage of the ability to close the AICs, twice a year for staff and partner all-day in-service training.

Data:

Data and metrics drive policy and decisions at GSTMW! This will be done by identifying and creating performance metrics, using the data collection system, generating key reports on training, employment, retention, and credentials, and analyzing this information to improve the talent system. GSTMW! analyzes data closely to ensure that training is in demand occupations and employment rates of completers meet metrics. By engaging stakeholders, (partners, employers, job seekers, and funders), GSTMW! secures cooperation and agreement to increase training that leads to the attainment of credentials, employment, retention, and wages.

Strategic Plan:

GSTMW!'s strategic plan was developed through an extensive process that involved numerous stakeholders including our Governing and Workforce Development Boards (WDB) and input from a variety of sources. It is endorsed by our Governing and Workforce Development Boards. The result is a robust set of strategies that will guide the organization's commitment of energy and resources for the coming four years. The purpose of a strategic plan is to provide an organization with guidelines for prioritizing and staying focused on what is most impactful. It helps to leverage

assets – human, financial, and more – in a way that is both efficient and effective. In an era of continuous accessibility and information overload, having guidelines for directing limited resources is more important than ever. Throughout the process, the consultant aggregated the high volume of input, organized it into formats that could be reviewed and revised, and developed the plan presented below. The resulting strategies reveal the entire organization’s commitment to high-quality service and maximum impact for all we serve. We intend to utilize this plan as a roadmap for navigating the difficult and exciting path that lies ahead.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS:

Attitude: We provide services in a genuinely helpful and courteous manner.

Listening: We care enough to listen intently to our customers.

Empathy: We understand our customer's perspective and strive to meet their unique needs.

Honesty: We communicate with transparency and integrity.

Follow-through: We provide complete services, going above and beyond to exceed the customer’s expectations.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Internal Communication and Coordination

Improve communication and coordination across departments and throughout all levels of the organization.

Strengthen the professional development system.

Access to Services

Customize the use of technology to improve access to services.

Increase outreach to diverse communities in order to reach customers where they are.

Public Recognition

Increase internal awareness and participation in marketing efforts.

Target marketing and promotional activities to program-specific populations.

Purposeful Partnerships

Improve the quality of relationships with partner service agencies in order to increase resources for customers.

Increase awareness of and exposure to partner service agencies among staff and customers.

Proactive Services

Increase knowledge of employer and job seeker needs both locally and regionally.

Standardize customer service across the entire region.

GSTMW! is a regional workforce development system that engages numerous partners for the benefit of job seekers, employers, and entire communities. Through our partnerships, we form a comprehensive network that provides opportunities and resources in the six counties we serve. We believe that all of our communities – urban and rural – are strengthened when we focus on long-term employment, business viability, and collaborative connections.

b. How the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the One-Stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and other means.

Each county in the region has an American Job Center (AJC) that is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Genesee County has two centers, one in Flint and the other located in Fenton. The Genesee County AJCs operate in urban settings. The other five centers operate in more rural settings. GSTMW! encourages individuals entering the centers to use the self-service system to the greatest extent possible. All efforts are made to make the process as user-friendly as possible.

GSTMW! staff are available by phone, email, text, and virtual technology, to allow job seekers, employers, and program participants the ability to connect with our offices. Our website also assists with facilitating access to services. Job seekers will find career coaching, featured jobs, workshops, job search links, resume templates, registered apprenticeship, program information and a job seeker toolkit. Employers have access to information on The Connection (BRN), Going Pro, employer toolkit, labor force demographics, Rapid Response, business solutions, JMG and apprenticeships.

Our website includes workshop calendars, GSTMW!'s local policies, EEO policy, FOIA information and grievance procedures. Our strong social media channels further assist with facilitating access to services. The MWA's website, www.gstmworks.org and online social media channels (Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter), serve as key tools in the overall outreach efforts of the agency. Website and social media are an inexpensive and efficient way of sharing information. With a focus on leveraging social context to encourage "friends of friends," this method of information sharing aids in building an invitation to engage further with the agency and begins building a relationship of trust important to developing our brand and agency identity. GSTMW! has procured 3Sixty Interactive to enhance our website and social media reach. Social media has shown to be an effective tool for marketing our services and programs, especially for youth.

c. How entities within the One-Stop delivery system, including One-Stop operators and the One-Stop partners, will comply with the nondiscrimination provisions of the WIOA (Section 188), if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101, et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology, and materials for individuals with disabilities, including providing staff training and support for addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The GSTMW! (GSTMW!) One-Stop Delivery System, including its service provider network complies with the nondiscrimination provisions (Section 188) of WIOA, 29 CFR Part 38 – Implementation of the Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Provisions of WIOA, applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAA). GSTMW's Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity Requirements policy highlights Federal requirements for implementing the nondiscrimination and equal opportunity provisions of WIOA and aligns with state policy.

All GSTMW! facilities are physically accessible to individuals with disabilities. Self-certification accessibility checklists were conducted on all GSTMW! service centers and administrative offices in 2018 and submitted to the State Equal Opportunity (EO) officer. Ongoing informal/visual monitoring of accessibility is conducted by the GSTMW! EO Manager.

Appropriate auxiliary aids and services are available in every GSTMW! AJC and administrative office which affords individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in and enjoy the benefits of all WIOA Title I – financially assisted services, programs, and activities. A non-exhaustive listing of auxiliary aids and services includes over-the-phone interpretation services, video remote interpretation (VRI) for American sign language. Braille keyboards, large print keyboards, rollerball/track mouse, hearing enhancement instruments, headphones, Job Access with Speech (JAWS) screen reader, Merlin Enhanced Vision Screen Magnifier (Flint & Owosso Service Centers), and page magnifiers. These are in addition to standardized accessibility programs contained in Microsoft Windows operating systems. In-person interpreters via the Michigan Online Interpreter System or other sources may be utilized as well when needs arise (e.g., job interviews). Other accommodations may be provided onsite or requested via the GSTMW! Reasonable Accommodations policy. Signage indicating “Assistive Listening Device Available” (with Braille) is located at the resources desk in each service center, plus all rooms (training rooms, accessible restrooms, and other essential areas) have ADA compliant signage with Braille.

The GSTMW! EO Manager’s nondiscrimination and equal opportunity training is ongoing. The EO Manager attends training opportunities offered by the State, the Michigan Works! Association, and other reputable/recognized expert trainings on nondiscrimination. In addition, the EO Manager subscribes to numerous disability-related newsletters (ODEP-USDOL Office of Disability Employment Policy, LEAD Center-National Center on Leadership for Employment and Economic Advancement of People with Disabilities, JAN-Job Accommodation Network), and applicable subject related webinars.

Staff training on the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA occurs at new hire orientation and is ongoing via communications from the EO Manager. GSTMW! has developed an Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Resources Guide which focuses on Section 188 of WIOA (29 CFR Part 38). The guide is distributed in all GSTMW! service centers and provides an abundance of information, including, but not limited to accessing assistive technology, in-person, and over-the-phone/VRI interpreter services (including American sign language), service animals, disability awareness & etiquette guide, and requesting reasonable accommodations. A slideshow has recently been produced which provides training on the use of the EO and Nondiscrimination Resources Guide. GSTMW! staff and service providers can access this training 24/7/365 via the online GSTMW! LMS Learning Academy.

Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between GSTMW! and the One-Stop partners also include a provision addressing the nondiscrimination provisions of WIOA (Section 188) and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

d. A description of the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners.

Following state guidelines, GSTMW! has executed MOUs with each of its required One-Stop partners. GSTMW! has several core and non-core partners housed within the AJC locations. The MOUs formally detail the roles and resource contributions of the One-Stop partners. The MOUs are reviewed and renewed approximately every three years. Infrastructure costs outlined in the Infrastructure Funding Agreements (IFA) are calculated based on the formulas dictated by the State. In addition, some non-core program partners have subleases in place.

7. A description and assessment of the type and availability of Adult and Dislocated Worker employment and training activities in the local area.

Employment and training activities are available to job seekers based on available funds and priority of service. GSTMW! aligns WIOA Adult and Dislocated Worker (DW) programs, services and funding with the priority industry sectors for the local area. The Adult and DW programs will coordinate with the GSTMW! business services team to identify local, current, and projected employment hiring trends and configure activities that match the hiring and education demands of the region. Services that are offered will be as a direct result of demand driven requests by employers/businesses in the region or a commutable distance in the neighboring regions as well as intel from labor market information via the Michigan Center for Data and Analytics and a subscription to JobsEQ by Chmura. All job seekers will have access to programs and services directly related to making them more employable in demand sectors within the State.

GSTMW! uses a case management model where job seekers who are pursuing employment and training opportunities are assessed for employment barriers, transferable skills, interest, and goals. Activities available include self-services, basic career services, individualized career services, work experience and training services that lead to an industry recognized credential. Training providers may include private and community colleges, universities, and nontraditional condensed training programs. Using the WIOA Individual Training Account (ITA) funds and other federal funds, eligible individuals may engage in these activities at little or no cost. Additionally, GSTMW! coordinates with core partners through referrals to maximize co-enrollment opportunities. Staff are trained to maximize co-enrollment options for the benefit of the individual being trained.

Job seekers who visit our AJC locations will be greeted by Employment Services (ES) staff in the resource area. These staff members connect job seekers with activities and services available through GSTMW! They may also connect employers to the business services team to help them with their hiring needs. ES, WIOA or PATH career coaches will assist with facilitating self-service to share information and resources that are available to the general public for free.

GSTMW! resource rooms feature a variety of job seeker tools and resources that include:

- Computer access for:
 - Community resources
 - Job search tools
 - Computer skill tutorials
 - Skill assessments
 - Career and training exploration
 - Labor market information
 - MiWAM
- Phone access with designated direct lines to access UIA
- Live Chat feature with UIA staff
- Fax and copy machines
- Job boards and postings
- Single-employer and multi-employer regional and local job/career fairs
- Veteran resources
- Expungement services

- Referral to literacy services
- Fidelity bonding services
- Migrant and Seasonal Worker services
- MRS and BSBP referrals

In addition, no-cost services are offered for job seekers, including the following workshops: Resume Writing, Interviewing, Computer Skills, Job Search, GED Assistance, Workplace Excellence training series, Money Management, Expungement, Improving Your Credit and Goal Setting. These workshops are posted on our website and are scheduled with varying times to allow for better access for all job seekers.

Career services, as identified in sec. 134(c)(2) of WIOA, consist of three types:

- (A) **Basic career services** must be made available and, at a minimum, must include the following services, as consistent with allowable program activities and Federal cost principles:
- (1) WIOA eligibility determinations for adult, dislocated worker, or youth programs.
 - (2) Outreach and intake (including RESEA) and orientation to information and other services available through the One-Stop delivery system.
 - (3) Initial assessment of skill levels including literacy, numeracy and English language proficiency, as well as aptitudes, abilities (including skills gaps) and supportive service needs.
 - (4) Labor exchange services, including -
 - Job search and placement assistance and, when needed by an individual, career counseling, including provision of information on in-demand industry sectors and occupations and provision of information on nontraditional employment; and
 - Appropriate recruitment and other business services on behalf of employers, including information and referrals to specialized business services other than those traditionally offered through the One-Stop delivery system.
 - (5) Referrals to and coordination of activities with other programs and services, including programs and services within the One-Stop delivery system and, when appropriate, other workforce development programs.
 - (6) Provision of workforce and labor market employment statistics information, including the provision of accurate information relating to local, regional, and national labor market areas, including -
 - Job vacancy listings in labor market areas;
 - Information on job skills necessary to obtain the vacant jobs listed; and
 - Information relating to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements and opportunities for advancement for those jobs.

- (7) Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of education, training and workforce services by program and type of providers.
 - (8) Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, about how the local area is performing on local performance accountability measures, as well as any additional performance information relating to the area's One-Stop delivery system.
 - (9) Provision of information, in usable and understandable formats and languages, relating to the availability of supportive services or assistance and appropriate referrals to those services and assistance.
 - (10) Provision of information and meaningful assistance to individuals seeking assistance in filing a claim for unemployment compensation. "Meaningful assistance" means:
 - Providing assistance on-site using staff who are well-trained in unemployment compensation claims filing and the rights and responsibilities of claimants; or
 - Providing assistance by phone or via other technology, as long as the assistance is provided by trained and available staff and within a reasonable time.
 - (11) Assistance in establishing eligibility for programs of financial aid assistance for training and education programs not provided under WIOA.
- (B) Individualized career services** are available, if appropriate, for an individual to obtain or retain employment. These services require adult, youth, or dislocated worker eligibility and registration. Priority will be given to veterans, recipients of public assistance, low-income and those who are basic skills deficient.
- (1) Comprehensive and specialized assessments of the skill levels and service needs of adults and dislocated workers, which may include diagnostic testing and use of other assessment tools; and in-depth interviewing and evaluation to identify employment barriers and appropriate employment goals. GSTMW! uses the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) to evaluate the educational level of clients. CASAS tests measure basic skills and academic achievement in reading, listening, math, writing, and related areas. The local adult education providers also use CASAS, providing for ease of students working jointly on their educational goals as well as employment-focused training. When required by training providers, WorkKeys testing is also available. Other assessments are available, such as iWork Zone and ONet Interest Profiler.
 - (2) Development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS) plan, to identify the employment goals, appropriate achievement objectives, and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his or her employment goals, including the list of and information about, the eligible training providers.
 - (3) Group counseling.
 - (4) Individual counseling.

- (5) Career planning.
- (6) Short-term pre-vocational services including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training.
- (7) Internships and work experiences that are linked to careers; (can be with a private for-profit, a non-profit, or public sector employer.)
- (8) Workforce preparation activities, including programs or services designed to help an individual acquire a combination of basic academic skills, critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, and self-management skills including competencies in utilizing resources, using information, working with others, understanding systems, and obtaining skills necessary for successful transition into and completion of post-secondary education, training, or employment.
- (9) Financial literacy services including services which:
- Support the ability of participants to create budgets, initiate checking and savings accounts at banks, and make informed financial decisions;
 - Support participants in learning how to effectively manage spending, credit, and debt, including student loans, consumer credit, and credit cards;
 - Teach participants about the significance of credit reports and credit scores; what their rights are regarding their credit and financial information; how to determine the accuracy of a credit report and how to correct inaccuracies; and how to improve or maintain good credit;
 - Support a participant's ability to understand, evaluate, and compare financial products, services, and opportunities and to make informed financial decisions;
 - Educate participants about identity theft, ways to protect themselves from identity theft and how to resolve cases of identity theft and in other ways understand their rights and protections related to personal identity and financial data;
 - Support activities that address the particular financial literacy needs of non-English speakers, including providing support through the development and distribution of multilingual financial literacy and education materials;
 - Support activities that address the particular financial literacy needs of youth with disabilities, including connecting them to benefits planning and work incentives counseling;

- Provide financial education that is age-appropriate, timely and provides opportunities to put lessons into practice, such as by access to safe and affordable financial products that enable money management and savings; and
- Implement other approaches to help participants gain the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed financial decisions that enable them to attain greater financial health and stability by using high-quality, age-appropriate, and relevant strategies and channels, including, where possible, timely and customized information, guidance, tools and instruction.

(10) Out-of-area job search assistance and relocation assistance.

(11) English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs.

(12) Transitional jobs, which are:

- Time-limited work experience that is subsidized and is in the public, private, or non-profit sectors for those individuals with barriers to employment who are chronically unemployed or have inconsistent work history;
- Combined with comprehensive employment and support services; and
- Designed to assist individuals with barriers to employment to establish a work history, demonstrate success in the workplace, and develop the skills that lead to entry and retention into unsubsidized employment.

(C) Follow-up services must be provided, as appropriate, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in adult or dislocated worker workforce investment activities who are placed in unsubsidized employment, for up to 12 months after the first day of employment.

Training Services

Training services are available to targeted populations to support workforce development efforts based on program eligibility and other locally developed criteria. Training services are provided to equip participants to enter the workforce and retain employment. Training services may be made available to employed and unemployed adult and dislocated workers.

- (1)** Training is made available to individuals after an interview, assessment or evaluation, and career planning determines whether the individual requires training to obtain employment or remains employed and meets the following criteria:
- Is unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment through career services;
 - In need of training services to obtain or retain employment that leads to economic self-sufficiency or wages comparable to or higher than wages from previous employment; and
 - Have the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in training services.

- (2) The training is directly linked to employment opportunities either in the local area or in another area in which the individual is willing to commute or relocate.
- (3) The participant is unable to obtain grant assistance from other sources to pay for the training, including other grants such as state-funded training grants, TAA, and Federal Pell grant, or requires assistance beyond that available from other sources to pay for the cost of training.

Training services may include the following:

- Occupational skills training, including training for nontraditional employment
- On-the-Job Training (OJT), GSTMW!'s OJT policy is available on GSTMW!'s website at www.gstmworks.org.
- Programs that combine workplace training with related instruction, which may include cooperative education programs
- Registered apprenticeship
- Incumbent worker training
- Training programs operated by the private sector
- Skills upgrading and retraining
- Entrepreneurial training programs that assist qualified unemployed individuals who are seriously interested in starting a business in Michigan and becoming self-employed
- Job readiness training provided in combination with any of the aforementioned training services except for registered apprenticeships
- Adult education and literacy activities, including activities of English language acquisition and integrated education and training programs provided concurrently or in combination with any of the aforementioned training services, except for registered apprenticeships and transitional jobs training
- Customized training conducted by a commitment by an employer or group of employers to employ an individual upon successful completion of the training

In most cases, an individual will receive training services through an Individual Training Account (ITA). These may be approved for up to two years of training to attain a certificate or degree leading to employment identified as in-demand. The requested training provider is required to be an Eligible Training Provider (ETP) and the training program and provider must be included on the State's ETP, Michigan Training Connect (MiTC), website. The MiTC includes programs representing high-demand occupations based on input from employers. GSTMW! utilizes the MiTC system for providing adult, DW, and older youth training services. Any exception to using ITAs will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Funding may come from non-GSTMW! sources such as Pell Grants, scholarships, etc. The MWA's ITA policy is available on GSTMW!'s website at www.gstmworks.org.

GSTMW! may offer an OJT contract while the participant is engaged in productive work which provides knowledge and skills essential to the full and adequate performance of the job. An OJT contract will allow the employer to be reimbursed for the cost of providing training. The OJT employer may receive a 50% wage reimbursement for wages paid during the initial training period. GSTMW!'s OJT Policy is available on our webpage.

Local areas can also use adult and dislocated worker funds to support sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the region. GSTMW! understands it is in the best interest of employers and job seekers to implement a demand-driven system based on a cluster strategy in response to 1) current employer demand; 2) the need for the workforce system to adapt to a changed labor market environment; and 3) the Michigan Works! system's goal of continuous improvement. Building upon the performance measures and other accomplishments of the Michigan Works! system, continuous program improvement is necessary to maintain the system's high standing.

A cluster is a geographic concentration of related employers, industry suppliers, and support institutions in a product or service field. For workforce development, Michigan's clusters are broad industry sectors. Clusters are an organizing framework to permit the selection of significant industry sectors for which in-depth knowledge and expertise on workforce issues are developed by convening employers. A cluster leverages the knowledge and resources of all involved, decreases duplication of effort, and often achieves cost savings for training.

- The primary objective of the MWA cluster approach is to adapt the workforce system to produce more trainees with skills and competencies that align better with industry and hence increase the likelihood of long-term employment upon completion of training. To meet the needs of the labor market where the demand for high-skilled workers in many fields is projected to outpace the number of qualified applicants, the MWA will work to support the education and training of individuals in high-skill, high-demand occupations. GSTMW! has identified the career clusters of
 - Advanced Manufacturing,
 - Agriculture,
 - Construction,
 - Energy,
 - Healthcare
 - Information Technology,
 - Education & Business,
 - Transportation & Aviation.

The specific objectives of the MWA demand-driven cluster approach are to ensure 1) employers identify industry demand and vacancies and 2) employers provide direct input into the design of educational program offerings that directly respond to the industry-identified demand and curriculum that addresses occupational skill requirements. The MWA's services and programs align with the industry's need for workers and skills.

GSTMW! has adopted locally, a WIOA Supportive Services Policy that describes the allowable supportive services and outlines the procedure for payment of such services. This policy is available on GSTMW!'s website at www.gstmiworks.org.

GSTMW! is committed to identifying the current and future workforce needs for the region's unique agriculture sector. The MWA will continue to serve the talent development and hiring needs of agribusiness by offering opportunities to build and engage a network of regional partners, including statewide and regional partner agencies, educational and training

institutions, private businesses, foundations, and community organizations to develop new and improved methods of connecting workers and employers.

As an example of industry cluster initiatives, the following is a list and description of local outreach and service options offered through GSTMW!:

Manufacturing Day

GSTMW! promotes the National Manufacturing Day event by encouraging local manufacturing businesses to develop and list their events on www.mfgday.com, as well as encouraging local education partners to visit www.mfgday.com to find events in which to participate.

Talent Tours

GSTMW! offers talent tours that introduce participants to available career paths in their region by offering a behind-the-scenes look into in-demand businesses and industries. Tours are on-site at the employer's business providing hands-on experience. These tours highlight an average day on the job. Talent tours help participants understand employer education and training requirements necessary to secure employment. Impacts include relationship building, establishing a talent pipeline, talent retention, and the opportunity to see real-life applications of coursework.

Ag-Specific Specialized Training

Based on the needs of agribusiness throughout the region, the agency will focus on providing customized training through OJT and Incumbent Worker training opportunities, providing agribusinesses with timely access to information about resources such as the Going Pro Training Funds and will continue to seek out opportunities to collaborate with agency partners to provide current training options related to emerging State requirements in the area of Michigan Safe Food Assessments and Food Safety Modernization Act compliance.

Pesticide Safety Day

GSTMW! has partnered with agricultural employers in the area and provides "Pesticide Safety Day" every year. The sessions include information that is specific to local farmers and employees working in the Agriculture industry. These training sessions are provided in partnership with the Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) and Michigan Conservation Districts. The benefit for participants to attend these sessions is to receive Restricted Use Pesticide (RUP) and Certified Crop Adviser (CCA) credits needed towards pesticide certification requirements.

Greater Flint Health Coalition (GFHC)

GFHC operates the Flint Healthcare Employment Opportunities (FHEO) program. This is designed to assist unemployed and underemployed residents of Flint and Genesee County with obtaining training and employment in the healthcare industry. The FHEO program's partner organizations assist residents with training and education for future healthcare careers by helping participants find sustainable careers while helping meet the needs of local healthcare employers. These training programs include Certified Nurse Assistant, Medical Assistant, Pharmacy Technician, Health Unit Coordinator, Medical Billing and Coding, Registered Nurse, and other high-demand health careers. GSTMW! has identified FHEO as the lead healthcare service provider for the WIOA adult, dislocated workers, and Out-of-School youth services in Genesee County.

Apprentice Readiness

GSTMW! operates an apprentice readiness training program to serve adults and high school students in our six-county regional area. The apprentice readiness training helps build work readiness skills by providing industry-recognized credentials construction trade unions require for individuals to successfully enter a professional trades registered apprenticeship program. The training is designed to ensure potential employees have the skills required for in-demand jobs and that construction trade unions have the professional talent they need to grow and thrive. GSTMW! also works with our CTE partners to provide Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) training, who in turn teach the curriculum, which results in graduating seniors being afforded direct interviews in high-wage, high-demand job opportunities in the construction trades.

Rural Healthcare Collaborative

GSTMW! is partnering with Thumb Community Health Partnership (TCHP) to establish the Thumb Region Health and Human Services Employer-Led Collaborative. The health and human service sector in the mostly rural areas of Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, and Tuscola counties are facing critical workforce challenges including a lack of training and education programs in the local community, difficulty recruiting students to the rural area upon completion of training, and barriers to training. Targeted occupations are Registered Nurses, Sanitarian, Certified Nursing Assistants, Medical Assistants, and outpatient therapists. This group meets periodically and collaborates on best practices and ways of increasing the number of students and individuals who pursue healthcare as a career choice.

8. A description of the design framework for Youth programs in the local area, and how the 14 program elements required in 20 CFR Section 681.460 are to be made available within that framework.

The Michigan Works! system is based on the fundamental premise that for employers to be able to compete successfully in the global marketplace, they need workers with improved skills and an appreciable understanding of what it takes to succeed in viable employment. This requires continuous improvement in educational approaches by our school systems and ongoing improved training by our public and private training providers. Through the Michigan Works! system, we can better match employer needs with training provided to workers.

The goal of the Michigan Works! system is to provide quality services for our customers at every entry point. Co-location, integrated services, and customer focus are priorities of this system. The focus of GSTMW! is to provide information and resources to enable job seekers and employer customers to achieve economic security. Services from the State's major workforce development programs are accessible in a seamless manner with a core set of services that are available free of charge to all who seek them.

GSTMW! system is guided by the following principles:

- Demand-driven focus for services;
- Responsive business services for employers;
- Market awareness through private sector leadership;
- Integrated service delivery structure;

- Maximum use of resources through co-location and shared operating costs;
- Accountability measured by results; and
- Michigan Industry Cluster focused.

In addition, WIOA guides GSTMW! and collaborating partners as we plan, implement, and evaluate the impact the program is having on our youth. Programmatically, we will provide 1) comprehensive services; 2) commitment to the provision of high-quality programs and services by collaborative partners who share a common vision, purpose, and leveraged resources; 3) intensive involvement by caring adults; and 4) provision of follow-up services of sufficient duration and intensity to fulfill participant needs. Examples of workforce initiatives/activities available to youth may include Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates, Young Professionals, MiCOACH, apprenticeships, work experience, on-the-job training, classroom training (ITAs), financial literacy, talent tours, entrepreneurial training, and summer work experience programs.

WIOA youth funds are targeted at young people who are both in and out of school, to assist them in their career and educational development. Types of services funded include training and youth development programs for young people who have left school, as well as after-school services and employment support for youth still in school. Youth with disabilities are highly eligible for these services. All youth with disabilities, ages 16-24, who are not attending school, are eligible for Out-of-School services. Youth with disabilities up to age 21 are eligible for In-School services if they are low-income. In addition, GSTMW! has defined the “Requires Additional Assistance” policy for In-School and Out-of-School youth eligibility criteria. This policy is available on GSTMW!’s website at www.gstmworks.org.

GSTMW! will focus on educational and job training partnerships, which will assist youth when they are seeking employment in the job market, especially youth who are deficient in basic skills and lacking personal skills. GSTMW! believes that if we focus on attaining goals set by the State, we will be successful in the development of training and educational opportunities for youth. Below are lists of goals we will focus on:

- Work with employers, educational institutions, and other community partners to ensure youth are equipped with the skills employers demand;
- Allow private employers to provide input with plans, development, and evaluation of education and training programs, along with participation in the region’s CEAC;
- Review the State monthly performance reports to improve and expand services to our targeted groups;
- Make services available to all eligible persons; and
- Provide workforce development activity in an industry cluster approach.

As is required in WIOA, GSTMW! assures the availability of the following fourteen program elements. In some cases, the service may already be available and simply require an appropriate referral. In other cases, eligibility is determined and WIOA funds are required to provide the service.

1. Tutoring, study skills training, instruction, and evidence-based dropout prevention and recovery strategies which lead to completion of the requirements for a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent or for a recognized post-secondary credential.
2. Alternative secondary school services or dropout recovery services, as appropriate.
3. Paid and unpaid work experiences that have as a component of academic and occupational education, which may include:
 - a. Summer employment opportunities and other employment opportunities throughout the school year;
 - b. Pre-apprenticeship programs;
 - c. Internships and job shadowing; and
 - d. On-the-job training opportunities.
4. Occupational skills training, which shall include priority consideration for training programs that lead to recognized post-secondary credentials that are aligned with in-demand industry sectors or occupations in the local area.
5. Education offered concurrently with and in the same context as workforce preparation activities and training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster.
6. Leadership development opportunities, which may include community service and peer-centered activities encouraging responsibility and other positive social and civic behaviors, as appropriate.
7. Supportive services.
8. Adult mentoring for the period of participation and subsequent follow-up period, for a total of not less than 12 months.
9. Follow-up services for not less than 12 months after exit.
10. Comprehensive guidance and counseling, which may include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and referral, as appropriate.
11. Financial literacy education.
12. Entrepreneurial skills training.
13. Services that provide labor market and employment information about in-demand industry sectors or occupations available in the local area, such as career awareness, career counseling, and career exploration services.
14. Activities that help youth prepare for a transition to post-secondary education and training.

9. A local definition of Part B of Basic Skills Deficiency, which reads “a youth who is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual's family, or in society.”

Low educational functioning levels can be a significant barrier to educational and/or employment success, thus all participants must be assessed to determine any basic skills deficiencies. WIOA defines the term “Basic Skills Deficient” as an individual:

(A) who is a youth, that has English reading, writing, or computing skills at or below the 8th-grade level on a generally accepted standardized test, or

(B) who is a youth or adult, that is unable to compute or solve problems, or read, write, or speak English, at a level necessary to function on the job, in the individual’s family, or in society.

GSTMW! will follow the Federal definition for youth/adults who are basic skills deficient as identified by an assessment score at or below grade level 8.9. GST has developed a local

definition for (Item B) youth who are unable to compute or solve problems. This policy is available on GSTMW! website at www.gstmworks.org.

GSTMW! will use the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) or Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) as a valid and reliable assessment tool and provide reasonable accommodations to youth with disabilities or youth with a language barrier in the assessment process in making this determination.

10. A description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce investment activities in the local area, including activities for youth who are individuals with disabilities, which shall include an identification of successful models of such activities. Further, local areas are to define “requires additional assistance” for In-School and Out-of-School Youth eligibility criterion in their Local Plan.

GSTMW! will provide youth participants with comprehensive services to meet their individual career and educational goals. The 14 WIOA youth elements are made available to all WIOA youth whether through direct services or referrals to partner agencies. Workforce initiatives/activities that are available to youth through GSTMW! include Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates, Young Professionals, MiCOACH, apprenticeships, work experience, OJT, classroom training (ITAs), financial literacy, talent tours, entrepreneurial training, and summer work experience programs.

Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates (JMG)

The Jobs for Michigan’s Graduates program is a state affiliate of the National Jobs for America’s Graduates (JAG) program. The JAG program is a proven model that assists youth at risk of dropping out of high school and those who have already separated from the traditional school system in completing their secondary school degree and preparing them for further education, military, and/or employment. The JAG model teaches career readiness and general life skills through curriculum, hands-on activities, and mentorship. The JMG program aligns with WIOA’s 14 program elements, incorporating aspects of leadership development, supportive services, adult mentoring, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, career exploration, and activities that prepare for transition into post-secondary education. GSTMW! operates both In-School and Out-of-School JMG programs across multiple counties.

Work Experience Programs

GSTMW! offers multiple opportunities for youth participants to gain work readiness soft skills, explore career opportunities and pathways, and gain valuable work experience to prepare them for the next steps on their career pathways. GSTMW! allocates a minimum of 20% of WIOA youth funding to providing work experience opportunities. While these work experience opportunities can take place year-round, GSTMW! may also offer specialized summer work experience programs.

The Young Professionals grant will be used to expand youth work experience within GSTMW! This grant allows greater opportunities for work experience in our MWA area. The Young Professionals grant will provide WIOA-eligible youth ages 18-24 with work readiness training, career exploration, and paid work experience. This grant will use the framework and course competencies from GSTMW’s existing JMG program. In Genesee County, the work-readiness training incorporates soft skills training with several of the WIOA program elements including leadership, career exploration, financial literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and supportive services.

These elements may be provided by GSTMW! staff or by community partners. The goal of the Young Professionals program is career pathway exploration and entry into permanent employment and/or further education.

WIOA youth funds are targeted at young people who are both in and out of school, to assist them in their career and education development. Types of services funded include training and youth development programs for young people who have left school, as well as after-school services and employment support for youth still in school. All youth with disabilities, ages 16-24, who are not attending school, are eligible for Out-of-School services. Youth with disabilities up to age 21 are eligible for in-school services if they are low-income. In addition, GSTMW! has defined the “Requires Additional Assistance” policy for In-School and Out-of-School youth eligibility criteria. This policy is available on GSTMW!’s website at www.gstmworks.org.

Local Definition of “Youth Requiring Additional Assistance”

To assist youth who are most “at risk,” GSTMW! has adopted the following definition of “Youth who require additional assistance.” Youth who have been determined to be low income and have one “at risk factor” from the listing below are considered eligible for services under WIOA youth programs.

Youth “At Risk Factors”:

- Have attended post-secondary training and were unsuccessful in completing it due to academic, financial, or personal reasons;
- Referred to or is being treated by an agency for a substance abuse-related problem;
- Have experienced a recent traumatic event (examples: death of a parent, a parent incarcerated, removed from the place of residency, a victim of abuse, or residing in an abusive environment);
- Have a physical/mental/learning limitation that prohibits an individual from working in certain occupations;
- Lacks the resources to attend training (i.e., no driver’s license or lacks transportation);
- Lacks the resources to attend training due to it being a non-FAFSA eligible training;
- Has been suspended, expelled, or placed on probation during secondary school;
- Has a record of excessive absences as verified by school officials (10 days or more);
- Are deemed at risk of dropping out of school by a school official;
- For each year of secondary education, are at least two-semester credits behind the rate required to graduate from high school;
- Has a history of transient residency, living in multiple communities or attending different schools, because of military, migrant, or family living situations; or
- Is an expectant father in need of training or employment to prepare for upcoming responsibilities.

For Out-of-School program youth between the ages of 18 and 24, the following three barriers may also be considered:

- Have never held a job;
- Have been fired within the 12 months prior to application;

- Have never held a full-time job for more than one year and lack marketable occupational skills to find employment on their own;
- Is a first-generation college student and lacks the guidance to navigate through post-secondary education; or
- Is pursuing a non-traditional career pathway.

11. Information regarding any waivers being utilized by the local area, in accordance with any Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD) communicated guidelines or requirements regarding the use of the waiver(s).

GST Michigan Works! is currently not utilizing any local area waivers. GSTMW!

12. A description of how the local board will coordinate relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

GSTMW! has a long history of working with secondary and post-secondary education programs and partners. Our secondary partners work with all seven AJCs to develop strong In-School/younger youth programs for WIOA. Post-secondary partnerships have been ongoing for years. These institutions have created new training programs to meet the needs of our local employers. GSTMW! continues to emphasize apprenticeships and other work-based learning programs.

GSTMW! coordinates secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities through several initiatives. By working with these initiatives, GSTMW! and its partners will coordinate strategies, enhance services, and work to avoid duplication of services.

Career & Educational Advisory Council (CEAC)

GSTMW! coordinates the activities of the state-required CEAC. This advisory group includes representatives from both secondary and post-secondary institutions in our region. Employers, core partners, economic development, STEM, LCAN, the region's assigned state LMI analyst, Talent Development Liaison, and GST staff attend the meetings. The CEAC provides direction and feedback to the WDB in aligning and implementing programs. All partners communicate consistently to collaborate to reach shared goals. Metrics are developed to determine progress in implementing career and educational initiatives. The promotion of apprenticeships, career pathways, and exploration events is a priority for this group.

Early/Middle College

Michigan has a robust Early/Middle College program in which high school students attend for five years and earn both a high school diploma and an associate degree or significant coursework and/or industry certification. State funding for the initiative requires collaboration between the Michigan Department of Education and the LEO. Moreover, at the local level, educators are working with the CEAC to develop a strategic plan for the development of Career and Technical Education based Early/Middle Colleges where there is labor market data that shows a skills gap in the local area. Some programs offered in the region are Diesel Technology, Auto Mechanics, CAD, Culinary Arts, IT, HVAC, Mechatronics, Engineering, Business Management, Agri-Science & Technology (including Horticulture, Animal Science, and Veterinary Science), Criminal Justice, and Health Occupations.

Local College Access Networks (LCAN)

LCANs are community-based college access alliances supported by a team of community and education leaders representing K-12, higher education, the non-profit sector, government, business, and philanthropy. These coalitions are committed to building a college-going culture and dramatically increasing college readiness, participation, and completion rates within their community. LCANs focus on a singular vision to increase the community's post-secondary educational attainment level to 60 percent by the year 2030, to lay the foundation for a vibrant economy, healthy community, and strong workforce equipped to compete in a 21st-century global economy. LCANs primarily coordinate and mobilize college access efforts rather than direct services to students and families. MWA staff are members of the local LCANs in the region. This membership assists in the coordination of programs and activities with education and workforce to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.

Apprentice Readiness

GSTMW! operates an apprentice readiness training program to serve adults and high school students in our six-county regional area. The apprentice readiness training helps build work readiness skills by providing industry-recognized credentials construction trade unions require for individuals to successfully enter a professional trades registered apprenticeship program. The training is designed to ensure potential employees have the skills required for in-demand jobs and that construction trade unions have the professional talent they need to grow and thrive. GSTMW! also works with our CTE partners to provide Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) training, who in turn teach the curriculum, which results in graduating seniors being afforded direct interviews in high-wage, high-demand job opportunities in the construction trades.

Michigan Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (MiSTEM)

GSTMW! collaborates with our partner local networks and Intermediate School Districts to promote careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and to help elevate STEM literacy. Careers in the STEM fields are the fastest-growing careers in the global marketplace; they are also the most in-demand jobs in Michigan. Investing in our local STEM initiatives is beneficial for our local companies as it enables them to participate in preparing today's youth to fill the jobs they have now and in the future. GSTMW! continues to collaborate with partners to leverage assets and resources to help prepare students for present and future jobs.

Career & Technical Education (CTE)

GSTMW! collaborates with local and regional educational partners to promote and enhance CTE programs. GSTMW! works with local-intermediate school districts' CTE programs to offer the Multi-Craft Core Curriculum (MC3) to high school juniors and seniors. The courses provided in the MC3 help establish a career pathway to any of the building trades, from high school to registered apprenticeship programs and beyond. The MC3 program was created to provide high-quality, apprentice-level content to young people interested in construction and prepare them for careers in a high-demand industry. In addition, GSTMW! has partnered with the Genesee County Sheriff's Department I.G.N.I.T.E. program to offer the MC3 training.

Jobs for Michigan's Graduates (JMG)

GSTMW! offers the JMG program. JMG is a state-based affiliate of the National Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) program and is committed to raising graduation and employability rates for Michigan youth. Programming emphasizes completion of a high school diploma or GED and successful transition into employment, post-secondary education, and/or the military. In In PY 2022, JMG achieved a 100% graduation rate with 82% of graduates entering employment, post-secondary education, and/or military service.

Adult Education

GSTMW! works collaboratively with adult education providers in all counties including:

Genesee:

Beecher Community Schools, Mott Community College, Mt. Morris Consolidated Schools, Swartz Creek Community Schools, Westwood Heights Schools, Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD), and Center for Higher Education Achievement (CHEA)

Huron, Lapeer, and Sanilac Counties:

Lapeer ISD and Family Literacy

Shiawassee County:

Baker College and Family Literacy

Tuscola County:

Tuscola ISD, Caro Community Schools, and Family Literacy

Additionally, GSTMW! collaborates with the local area adult learning infrastructure to create a unified strategic approach to increase basic skills and post-secondary educational attainment. Providers of Out-of-School youth WIOA programs will continue to contact all adult education providers in our six counties. Partnerships are already operating with many of the adult education providers.

MiCAREER QUEST

MiCareer Quest is an innovative, hands-on career exploration experience for high school students, teachers, and counselors to learn about today's hottest jobs from working professionals. MiCareerQuest engages students through one-on-one conversations with professionals and hands-on activities that allow students to experience and hopefully spark an interest in, the various careers. GSTMW! held its first event in October of 2019 at the Dort Event Center in Flint. GSTMW's next event will be in October of 2024. GSTMW! also supports local career events sponsored by the local school districts.

TALENT TOURS

GSTMW! offers talent tours to introduce youth, parents, and teachers to available career paths in their region by offering a behind-the-scenes look into in-demand businesses and industries. Tours are on-site at the employer's business providing hands-on experience. These tours highlight an average day on the job. Talent tours help students understand employer education and training requirements necessary to secure employment. Impacts include relationship building, establishing a talent pipeline, talent retention, and the opportunity to see real-life

applications of coursework. Due to COVID, talent tours have been difficult to schedule due to health concerns.

Additionally, GSTMW! continues to engage in One-Stop tours, job fairs, and career exploration events with high school students.

13. A determination of whether the Michigan Works! Agency (MWA) has elected to provide supportive services and needs related payments. The MWAs that elect to provide supportive services to participants during program enrollment must describe the procedure to provide supportive services. The procedure will include the conditions, amounts, duration, and documentation requirements for the provision of supportive services.

GSTMW! provides supportive services to participants. Supportive services will be made available to enrolled individuals who demonstrate a need that directly correlates with training and/or employment. This need is assessed by a career coach and documented in the participant’s case notes. The MWA’s current Supportive Service Policy is available on GSTMW!’s website at www.gstmworks.org. Although caps are specified in the policy, the CEO of GSTMW! or her designee, may grant waivers for specific supportive service limitations and/or prohibitions. GSTMW! does not offer needs-related payments currently.

Supportive Services may include, but are not limited to:

Transportation Allowance	Federal IRS Rate \$200/week maximum (Private Reimbursement) Bus Buses (Public Transportation)
Automobile Repairs	\$900/12-Month Period
Car Insurance	\$2,000/Lifetime
Interview/Work Clothing	\$500/12 Month Period
Emergency Gas Cards	\$20/day or \$60 per week
Tools	\$2,000 Lifetime
Job Specific Expense	As needed

14. A description of how the local board will coordinate the WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.

Transportation continues to be one of the biggest barriers for many job seekers in our region. GSTMW! collaborates with many organizations throughout the region to address this critical issue. For individuals attempting to use public transportation for employment purposes, transportation can be even more challenging. In most of our counties, the systems are a dial-a-ride service.

Each county has a local bus/transportation system, but it is a local system with no options across the counties. The six counties in Region 6 are served by the following public transit systems:

- Genesee County (Flint Mass Transportation Authority- MTA)
- Huron County (Huron Transit Corporation also known as Thumb Area Transit- TAT)
- Lapeer County (Greater Lapeer Transportation Authority- GLTA)
- Sanilac County (Sanilac Transportation-STC)
- Shiawassee County (Shiawassee Area Transportation Agency-SATA)
- Tuscola County (Thumbody Express)

Genesee County's Mass Transportation Authority (MTA) offers some regularly scheduled bus services throughout the city of Flint, but some of these routes have limited hours of operation and may not reach all parts of the city limits. MTA currently provides limited regional services to Brighton, Great Lakes Crossings, and Howell. Other transportation authorities in the regions (GLTA, TAT, STC, Thumbody, and SATA) provide local bus and curb-to-curb services. Also, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services provides volunteer drivers when extenuating circumstances exist.

GSTMW! has developed a Supportive Services Policy for the local area including the provision for transportation and other appropriate supports. Supportive services are available to assist participants with transportation barriers during their engagement in the program. If after the individual is assessed, support services are deemed necessary to continue career and training services, other resources will be accessed before issuing support through WIOA Title I, or PATH funds.

15. A description of the local per participant funding cap, if applicable.

GSTMW! currently does not have funding caps for participant training, however, training funds are given out as a scholarship-style award. Awards are given based on whether it is long or short-term training. Those awards are determined yearly based on funding level allocations and can change if additional funding becomes available. Classroom and work-based training amounts are dependent on the assessment of the participant by the career coach or BSP. Information on the current education level, desired career path, availability of funding, applicable training and employer demand will determine the funding level for each training plan.

Supportive services caps are listed in question 13 above.

16. A description of plans, assurances, and strategies for maximizing coordination, improving service delivery, and avoiding duplication of Wagner-Peyser Act services and other services provided through the one-stop delivery system.

GSTMW! is continuing its work to renew and develop stronger partnerships to improve service delivery, avoid duplication, enhance service coordination, and share data across programs. GSTMW! promotes the coordination of programs and services so that participants and employers have access to a seamless system of workforce investment activities. Service providers are known throughout the GSTMW! region as part of the Michigan Works! system and not by individual program or contactor name. GSTMW! makes this a requirement in the RFP procurement process and is reinforced through our branding procedures, management meetings, contracts, and strategic plans. It is expected that contractors maximize coordination and work together at every level to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services. Our WP staff work with WIOA and PATH staff to ensure coordination of services. Monthly meetings are held with WP, WIOA,

and PATH staff to discuss strategies for improving and for better coordination of services. GSTMW!’s One-Stop Operator works with all partners and contractors to reinforce these values and to provide support, training, and guidance to ensure that services are provided in a seamless and unduplicated manner.

In addition, GSTMW! consistently meets with community partners to ensure collaboration on projects is occurring to reduce duplication of services whenever possible. Meetings with economic development organizations, adult education providers, local colleges, and other community partners occur regularly.

17. A description of how the local area is planning to deliver employment services in accordance with the Wagner-Peyser Act of 1933, as amended by Title III of the WIOA.

- **The identification of a point of contact (name, address, phone number, email).**

Shakesha Watson GSTMW! 711 North Saginaw Street, Lower Level Flint, MI 48503 P: 810-233-5974 Ext. 510 F: 810-233-3948 swatson@gstmiworks.org	JulAnn Kuenzli GSTMW! 3270 Wilson Street Marlette, MI 48453 P: 989-635-3561 Ext. 230 F: 989-635-2230 jkuenzli@gstmiworks.org
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- **Information regarding service providers.**

Contracted Service Provider	Name of Entity	Type of Entity	Merit Based Entity
Yes	Mott Community College	Public Community College	Yes
No	GSTMW!	Special Unit of Government PA 7	Yes
Yes	Action Management Corp	For Profit	No

- **A description of how Wagner-Peyser funded services will be provided at no cost to employers and job seekers.**

GSTMW! released a Request for Proposal (RFP) in 2021 to competitively bid and select merit-staffed public organizations and private entities as defined by the standards outlined in the CFR. GSTMW!’s next RFP will require all providers to be merit-staffed to align with USDOL’s ruling. Services offered at the employment services offices will be free to all, as stipulated in the RFP. These services are funded with Wagner-Peyser funds and other funding sources and will be provided at no cost to employers and job seekers.

- **An explanation of how labor exchange services will be provided using the three tiers of services: self-services, facilitated services, and staff-assisted services.**

The AJCs are located in high-population or traffic-density areas. Whenever possible, they are located on bus lines or near public transportation. GSTMW! has classrooms, offices, and meeting rooms available at the AJCs on an as-needed basis. Our buildings are fully ADA-accessible. Assistive technology is available for those requesting mobility, hearing, and/or vision assistance.

Job seekers and employers will be greeted in person or on the phone by friendly, helpful staff who will respond to any questions the individual may have. Virtual appointments are also available. Callers are offered the opportunity to come into the AJC and utilize Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC). The caller may also receive instructions on how to access the internet site to utilize PMTC off-site. The following services will be provided directly on-site.

a. Self-services: Each of the seven (7) AJCs is equipped with appropriately configured workstations for customer-directed self-service access to PMTC. Copiers, fax machines, and job boards are also available in each AJC location for self-directed services. All persons entering the AJCs will be encouraged to use the self-service system to the greatest extent possible. Clear and straightforward instructions are available to assist all persons utilizing our resources. Efforts are made to make the process as user-friendly as possible.

b. Facilitated services: Facilitated services will be provided to all customers requiring additional assistance in using any of the self-service tools. Due to the common occurrence of customers' lack of computer familiarity, literacy, disability, lack of system access, or other barrier(s), trained staff assist job seekers and employers in accessing, navigating, and inputting information on the PMTC. Assistance with labor market information and other information and tools available in resource rooms is also provided. Staff also assist customers with transferable skills identification and job matching services.

c. Staff-assisted services: These services will be provided to customers (both job seekers and employers) requiring intensive staff assistance to obtain jobs or employees. Trained staff provide services to job seekers and employers who need extra help beyond self-service and facilitated service to obtain jobs or employees. Services for job seekers may include resume writing classes, mock interviews, and interview technique workshops.

Employers will be referred to the local Business Solutions Professional (BSP). Employers will discuss their needs with the BSP who will act accordingly. Services for employers may include inputting job orders on PMTC, resume searching/screening, making referrals, scheduling interviews, conducting additional screening, or other services depending on employer need.

All levels of service will be provided at each location. Schedules and calendars of activities are available on GSTMW!'s webpage.

- **A description of the manner in which career services are being delivered.**

All Wagner–Peyser services will be provided at no cost to employers and job seekers at all AJC locations and are accessible to persons with disabilities. Services may be provided through walk-in services, individual appointments (in person or virtually), or workshops. Each of the MWA's AJCs has a resource room or area that contains computers, internet access, copiers, telephones, fax machines, labor market information, printers, UI information, and a variety of job search and career exploration aids. Labor exchange services will be provided according to the three tiers of service as described in ES policies and procedures and the ES Manual.

- **A listing of how many staff at each site will be available to provide services.**

The providers of Employment Services are located at:

Huron County Service Center
Staff: 3

Genesee County Service Center
Staff: 7

Lapeer County Service Center
Staff: 7

Sanilac County Service Center
Staff: 4

Tuscola County Service Center
Staff: 5

Shiawassee County Service Center
Staff: 1

Fenton Service Center
Staff: 1

- **A description of how the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) Work Test will be administered. This description must include an explanation of how the registration of UIA claimants will be conducted and how reporting claimant non-compliance with the “able, available, and seeking work” requirements will be managed.**

The UIA Work Test is administered to claimants to ensure they are “able, available, and seeking work and did not refuse any suitable employment.” The UIA requires unemployment insurance claimants to register on PMTC to be ready and available for work. Completion and activation of a resume or profile in the PMTC meets the registration requirement. Claimants may enter their profile/resume remotely. However, if a claimant chooses to enter the ES registration at a location other than at a GSTMW! AJC, the claimant must still come to an AJC to have the registration verified or call to set up a virtual appointment. GSTMW! staff electronically log the name and social security number of each claimant after ES registration has been verified and transmitted through OSMIS.

In addition, the claimant answers a set of eligibility questions to ensure the person is able, available, and seeking work and has not refused suitable employment. If a compliance issue is discovered, it is reported to UIA through the Michigan Integrated Data Automated System (MiDAS.) This will open an issue for the UI claimant for further investigation. Further, any correspondence received by the MWA, from an employer, which notifies the MWA that a claimant refused an offer of work will be forwarded to the UIA. Employability services are available to UI claimants including job search tools, resume development, interviewing techniques, and career guidance.

- **A description of how the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment requirements will be administered.**

The Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) will send the claimant a letter stating they must contact GSTMW! within 10 business days to schedule an appointment. GSTMW! will hold the RESEA appointment with the claimant within 15 business days after the “Letter Sent Date.”

GSTMW! will be flexible when scheduling in-person or virtual RESEA appointments. A claimant is allowed to reschedule their first RESEA appointment, just once, within 15 days from the “Letter Sent Date.”

If the claimant would benefit from a second RESEA appointment, (which is voluntary), then one will be scheduled within 45 days from the first RESEA appointment. A claimant will be allowed to reschedule their second RESEA appointment, just once within 5 days from their second RESEA appointment.

Once a RESEA Orientation is completed a Re-Employment service must be assigned and completed within 20 days of the Orientation. If the claimant is still receiving unemployment 5 weeks after initial RESEA Orientation they may be selected, for a Mandated Subsequent 2nd RESEA Appointment.

A claimant will not be excused from participating in any RESEA activity or service. A claimant who is a seasonal worker must attend and complete their RESEA.

GSTMW! will document all services and activities in the One-Stop Management Information System (OSMIS) within 48 hours, including scheduling RESEA appointments, failure to attend or completion of a RESEA.

Discovering that a claimant may be unable to work, unavailable to work, has refused any offers of work, or is not seeking work will be reported in the OSMIS within 48 hours.

The RESEA program provides customized services to the UIA claimants deemed most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits. GSTMW! staff will deliver the RESEA activities listed below.

- Orientation to MWA Services;
 - Confirmation of an active profile on PMTC;
 - Assessment of UI eligibility performed in a confidential, personalized setting by WP merit-based staff;
 - Verification of the Monthly Record of Work Search Form;
 - Development of an Individual Service Strategy (ISS);
 - Review specific Labor Market Information (LMI); and
 - Provide at least 2 hours of career and reemployment services.
- **An explanation of how the MWA will participate in a system for clearing labor between the states by accepting and processing interstate and intrastate job orders as a component of the National Labor Exchange System.**

GSTMW! participates in the Michigan component of the National Labor Exchange system by providing access to the Pure Michigan Talent Connect labor exchange system and receiving and forwarding interstate and intrastate job orders to designated LEO staff for processing.

- **An explanation of how the MWA will ensure veterans will be provided access to the same employment services received by the general population. This explanation must include a description of the screening process the MWA uses to refer eligible veterans to Veteran Career Advisors for case management services and how priority of service for veterans and eligible spouses will be applied in the delivery of Wagner-Peyser funded services.**

GSTMW! will ensure services to veterans and eligible spouses of veterans by providing veterans with access to the same employment services received by the universal population. Veterans who require additional intensive services or request to see a veterans' representative, will be

referred to a local veteran career advisor. If the career advisor is unavailable, contact information for the advisor will be provided. In addition, a referral form will be completed and forwarded to the veteran career advisor. Career advisors are State of Michigan employees assigned on a full or part-time basis to an ES office to provide specific workforce development services in addition to those available from ES providers.

Eligible veterans and eligible spouses will take precedence over non-veterans in all One-Stop service centers and all qualified job training programs following the locally developed policy. This assures that veterans and eligible spouses will receive access to resources, services, or training earlier in time, or if resources are limited, the eligible veteran and eligible spouses will receive access to the service or resource instead of a non-veteran. GSTMW! will ensure that ES staff comply with the most recent TEGL(s) and State Policy Issuance(s) regarding "Implementing Priority of Services for Veterans and Eligible Spouses in All Qualified Job Training Programs Funded in Whole or in Part by the USDOL." In addition, GSTMW! will display a notice that informs veterans that they are entitled to priority of service.

GSTMW! staff also administer the Military Service Questionnaire application form to veterans. The information requested on this form is requested voluntarily for the sole purpose of determining the applicant's qualifications to receive services from a State of Michigan veteran career advisor. This information will be kept confidential and will be used only in accordance with the law.

- **An assurance that Migrant and Seasonal Workers (MSWs) will have equitable access to and receive the full range of employment services that are provided to non-MSW customers.**

GSTMW! will ensure that MSWs will be provided with access to the same employment services, benefits, protections, counseling, testing, and job training referral services received by the universal population. An MSW specialist is currently stationed in our Lapeer County AJC office and will travel to our other offices on an as-needed basis. GSTMW! will provide job seekers who are interested in learning more about the kinds of services available to them, with an opportunity to meet one-on-one with an MSW staff person. The ES staff will make a referral to the MSW staff person to ensure these services are met.

- **An explanation of the services and staffing the MWA will use to ensure that MSWs will be provided access to the same employment services, benefits, protections, counseling, testing, and job and training referral services received by the general population. This explanation shall include a description of the referral process to state MSW staff or other appropriate MWA staff.**

GSTMW! is fortunate that a State MSW specialist is located at the Lapeer County AJC to provide services to the MSW population. The individual attempts to reach as many MSWs as possible during the peak season. This specialist is dedicated to working with MSWs and spends the majority of her time conducting outreach to reach those who may not have the means to access the AJC. The specialist will explain all of the services available at the AJC including referrals to employment, training, career counseling, testing and career guidance, and supportive services. This specialist also coordinates between State staff and the ES staff at the AJC on the H2A and H2B referrals process and filling job orders.

The Lapeer Service Center also employs three career coaches who are bilingual and can assist

migrant and seasonal workers with their registration and job search requirements. In addition, GSTMW! has an agreement with Latinx Technology & Community Center for language services.

- **A description of any other planned services or activities for which Wagner-Peyser funds will be utilized.**

GSTMW! staff are fully integrated and knowledgeable in programs. We provide services to job seekers no matter what programs they are eligible for. Wagner Peyser funds will only be used for allowable activities.

18. A description of any navigators being utilized in the local area to provide targeted support and resources to specific groups of individuals with barriers to employment.

GSTMW currently uses our BRN Success Coaches as community resource navigators in the Flint AJC. Key functions of this position include researching, maintaining, and sharing community resource information with participants and staff. The navigator maintains an information resource area with flyers from numerous community agencies meeting needs in the areas of legal, food, transportation, housing, adult education, and others. In addition, free notary services are available enabling clients to complete a key step in applying for utility and other emergency services.

19. A description of how the local board will coordinate WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under WIOA Title II. This description shall include how the local board will carry out the review of local applications submitted under Title II consistent with WIOA Sections 107(d)(11)(A) and (B)(i) and WIOA Section 232.

A representative from Family Literacy is represented on the GST's Workforce Development Board. GSTMW! and the Region 6 Adult Education Committee have been working closely together to coordinate activities between Title I and Title II. A Workforce Development Board member is also a member of Region 6's Adult Education Committee and the CEAC. This individual, along with GSTMW! staff, link the committees for education and literacy activities to workforce investment activities for the region. Additionally, we have worked together on two 107 special program grants allowing adults to train in high-demand careers.

The Genesee Intermediate School District (GISD) is the fiscal agent for funding under Section 107 of the State School Aid Act (Adult Education funds). The GISD has organized an Adult Education Advisory Committee. This committee is charged with setting the metrics, rating proposals, and the review of the local applications submitted for these funds. The GISD releases the RFP for Section 107 funds and determines individual district allocations using metrics. Annually, in Region 6, the Adult Education Committee develops regional goals. GSTMW! staff also sit on the committee.

GSTMW! staff and a committee of the WDB will review all Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) applications submitted. In reviewing and making comments on the applications, the committee will look for coordination between WIOA Title I and Title II activities. This review will be based on the most recent instructions and policy from LEO-WD.

20. Copies of executed cooperative agreements which define how all local service providers, including additional providers, will carry out the requirements for integration of and access to the entire set of services available in the local one-stop delivery system. This includes cooperative agreements (as defined in WIOA Section 107(d)(11)) between the local Workforce Development Board (WDB) or other local entities described in WIOA Section 101(a)(11)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 721(a)(11)(B)) and the local office of a designated State agency or designated State unit administering programs carried out under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 720 *et seq.*) (other than Section 112 or Part C of that Title (29 USC 732, 741) and subject to Section 121(f)) in accordance with Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 721(a)(11)) with respect to efforts that will enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, such as cross training of staff, technical assistance, use and sharing of information, cooperative efforts with employers, and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration, and coordination.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreements have been developed to correspond with requirements outlined by LEO-WD and using the State's boilerplate format. MOUs are used to ensure that the required parameters of service available through our AJCs are available and integrated with partners. The One-Stop partners in the AJCs are State of Michigan staff, such as State VR and veteran's representatives. They are governed by the State of Michigan policies and procedures. All applicable policy issuances will be adhered to at the local One-Stop level.

GSTMW! submitted copies of its MOUs and IFAs to LEO-WD as required.

21. An identification of the entity responsible for the disbursement of grant funds (Grant Recipient).

GSTMW! is established by an interlocal agreement between the counties of Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, Shiawassee, and Tuscola, Michigan. The interlocal agreement describes the purpose, structure, and functions of the GSTMW! This interlocal agreement establishes an Agency Governing Board consisting of two members from each county who are represented in the agreement. The interlocal agreement designates the GSTMW! as the local grant sub-recipient and the local fiscal agent. In addition, the Agency Board on August 7, 2015, passed Resolution #080715-2 naming GSTMW! as the local grant sub-recipient and fiscal agent for the MWA. GSTMW! is a specialized unit of local government.

22. A description of the competitive process that will be used to award the sub-grants and contracts for WIOA Title I activities.

GSTMW! has a local procurement policy that outlines the competitive process used to award grants and contracts, including non-ITA-funded training. GSTMW! following the minimum requirements established in 2 CFR, part 200, has prescribed and implemented procurement standards to ensure fiscal accountability and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse in programs administered under this Act.

All procurement transactions must be conducted in a manner that provides full and open competition. GSTMW! will take all necessary affirmative steps to ensure that minority businesses, women's business enterprises, and small businesses are used when possible.

All programs administered through GSTMW! shall conduct procurement following Policy Issuance 19-30, 19-30 Change 1, and any subsequent issuance. GSTMW!'s procurement policy complies

with the current State-issued procurement policy issuance. GSTMW!'s procurement policy is available on GSTMW!'s website at www.gstmworks.org. The competitive process is outlined in the policy.

23. The local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and CEO(s) to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under WIOA Title I Subtitle B, and the one-stop delivery system in the local area. Local boards are not required to provide or negotiate performance levels for those measures designated by the USDOL as baseline measures as described in Section II.

GSTMW!'s current negotiated performance levels are listed under question #1. At this time our PY 24 and PY 25 goals have not been negotiated.

24. A description of the actions the local board will take toward becoming or remaining a high-performing board, consistent with the factors developed by the State Board. For this section, local boards shall include:

- **Effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the local board will implement to assess their one-stop centers.**

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) is committed to becoming a more effective board, through regular communications, training, regional partnership building, and the selection of appropriate board members. The WDB was established in October of 2015. GSTMW!'s WDB was selected to bring geographic balance and experience in workforce development. In 2019, GSTMW! completed its strategic plan, with an update in 2023. The plan outlines our mission, vision, strategic priorities, and goals. It also outlines our customer standards, as mentioned in question 1. The WDB, Governing Board, and CEO establish subcommittees as needed. GSTMW!'s strategies moving forward are:

- Meet regularly – The WDB meets four times per year. Subcommittees have been developed. There are two established committees: Operations and Executive.
- Orientation Effort - Provide new members with an orientation to the agency, programs, responsibilities, and vision. Development of mentoring between new and old board members.
- Information Sharing - Work on local/regional projects and build regional partnerships; Information sharing through emails, webpage, and partner updates including:
 - Partner updates at WDB meeting given by State Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), MDHHS, Adult ED, CTE, CEAC, and Job Corps;
 - Reports on plans and policy issuances, performance measures, business services, marketing efforts, and financial reports including audits and monitoring; and
 - GSTMW! has representation on various boards throughout the region.
- Each quarter the Governing Board and WDB receive GSTMW!'s *Talent Talk*, a quarterly snapshot newsletter. This is a cost-effective medium for building relationships and maintaining regular contact with the Boards, legislators, organizations, partners, stakeholders, customers, and the public. The *Talent Talk* quarterly snapshot is designed to increase awareness and understanding of the organization's activities and impacts, as well as highlight the success and progress of key initiatives and programs across the agency. *Talent Talk* is distributed at quarterly Board meetings and subsequently published and made available across the organization and region.

- Provide the WDB with training and technical assistance as needed. Members are offered the opportunity to attend Michigan Works! conferences and workshops, Legislative Day, Impact Awards, and other key statewide conferences.

- **A description of how the local board will allocate one-stop center infrastructure funds.**

One-Stop infrastructure costs are used to support the general operations of the AJCs. One-Stop infrastructure costs will be allocated to the appropriate program and other partners following applicable laws, regulations, and State policy. Also taken into consideration is an equitable and efficient cost allocation, consistent with Federal cost principles, that results in a reasonable cost allocation methodology where infrastructure costs are charged to each program and/or partner in proportion to relative benefits received.

- **A description of the roles and contributions of one-stop partners, including cost allocation.**

Direct “on-site” partner costs will be allocated based on direct full-time equivalents (FTEs). To allocate One-Stop costs based on benefits received to “off-site” partners, off-site partners will contribute based on estimated FTE’s calculated on the number of reported customers served in the region and relative benefits received.

25. A description of how training services outlined in WIOA Section 134 (Adult and Dislocated Worker) will be provided through the use of individual training accounts, including:

- **If contracts for training services will be used.**
- **Coordination between training service contracts and individual training accounts.**
- **How the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided.**

Training services are provided to equip individuals to enter the workforce and retain employment. Under WIOA a program of training services includes a structured regimen that leads to specific outcomes. Contracts for training services will be for work-based learning activities, such as OJT, while an ITA will be established for participants for whom occupational skills training has been determined to be an appropriate training service. A program of training services is one or more courses or classes, or a structured regimen that leads to:

- A recognized post-secondary credential, secondary school diploma, or its equivalent;
- Employment; or
- Measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment.

Training services are available for individuals, who after an interview, evaluation or assessment, and case management, are determined to be unlikely or unable to obtain or retain employment that leads to self-sufficiency or higher wages from previous employment through career services alone. An ITA will be established for participants for whom occupational skills training has been determined to be appropriate. The participant must be determined to need training services and possess the skills and qualifications to successfully participate in the selected program.

Training programs must be on the State’s Eligible Training Provider List (Michigan Training Connect) for participants to utilize an ITA. The training program must be a “stand-alone” training component to qualify as an ITA.

Registered Apprenticeship (RA) programs automatically qualify to be on the list of eligible training providers as long as the RA program remains registered. ITAs can be used to support pre-

apprenticeship training, training tuition for an RA program to the training provider, and work-based training options.

Participants enrolled in WIOA and seeking training services will work directly with their career coach to select a training provider and training program. Training selection will be made and ultimately approved based on informed customer choice.

GSTMW!'s ITA policy is available on its website at www.gstmiworks.org.

26. A description of the process used by the local board, consistent with Section III, to provide a 30-day public comment period prior to submission of the plan, including an opportunity to have input into development of the Local Plan, particularly for representatives of businesses, labor organizations, and education.

A 30-day public comment period was allowed to receive feedback from the community. An electronic version of this plan was available through the GSTMW! website for 30 days after posting. The plan was posted at www.gstmiworks.org on June 18, 2024.

The local board members, required partners, and other interested parties were provided a copy of the plan and encouraged to submit comments and feedback. All comments were taken into consideration for revisions. Copies of the completed plans were available for review at the following offices of GSTMW!:

711 N. Saginaw Street, Suite 300
Flint, MI 48503

3270 Wilson Street
Marlette, MI 48453

The completed plan is maintained at the administrative offices in Marlette and Flint. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the plan was made available in alternate formats as necessary upon request. Persons wishing to comment were able to send comments in writing to:

GSTMW!

Attention: Sharon Bowen

711 North Saginaw Street, Suite 300

Flint, MI 48503

sbowen@gstmiworks.org

27. A description of how one-stop centers are implementing and transitioning to an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by one-stop partners.

Integration of services is ensured through the use of the One-Stop Management Information System (OSMIS). The One-Stop Management Information System is a database system with numerous key features and components. Each component makes use of a single applicant record that contains all of the information about that person. OSMIS is web-based, enabling it to be accessed from any site that has an internet connection. A login process maintains security for the system. Service providers or staff enter customer services into the OSMIS database as they are provided. Data can only be entered by and is only displayed to users who have permission to see and use the information.

Information entered is available immediately after entry. OSMIS tracks all services provided to a claimant regardless of the provider or the provider's location. It is a flexible system that allows for the addition of modules or features with relative ease. Enhancements to the components of OSMIS are implemented continuously to include reporting modifications and to simplify data entry and tracking for all programs. In addition, the customer relations software, PRIME, has been implemented across the local area to assist career coaches and BSPs in delivery and tracking quality services provided to participants and employers.

The State of Michigan is currently developing an integrated, technology-enabled intake and case management information system for programs carried out under WIOA and by the One-Stop partners. GSTMW! has taken part in workgroup opportunities to explore updates to the current data management system and support a statewide system that allows all core partners to utilize one integrated tool. GSTMW! continues to use the current OSMIS system and PRIME.

28. A description of the local priority of service requirements.

GSTMW! has a Priority of Service/Local Adult Income Exemption policy. This policy is available on GSTMW!'s website at www.gstmworks.org.

WIOA requires local areas to establish the criteria and the process by which priority of service will be applied. This policy creates a priority of service procedure for how job seekers from certain populations can access WIOA services and establish priority access to these services. These target populations must first meet the eligibility requirements for the WIOA programs. All staff and service providers must ensure that individuals in the first priority group such as veterans, low-income, federally defined barrier individuals, and dislocated workers, are served annually at a higher percentage for enrollments than priority groups two and three. This priority of service is established in keeping with the requirements of WIOA. Priority of services does not need to be applied until it is determined that the individual needs individualized career or training services.

The individual job seeker must be identified and categorized before enrollment. Priority of service is initiated on the service center level and applies as follows:

Priority of service will be applied through the region in the following order.

1st Priority:

A. Priority will be given to veterans and eligible spouses of veterans who meet veteran status criteria. This is in accordance with the veteran's priority of service;

and/or

B. Individuals with one federally defined barrier to employment. (which must be documented). This is defined in accordance with TEGL 19-16 and subsequent changes.

2nd Priority:

Priority will be given to individuals with multiple locally defined barriers to employment. This may include unemployed or employed individuals who need assistance in gaining self-sufficiency.

3rd Priority:

Priority will be given to individuals who are not defined in the above priority groups but meet adult eligibility and demonstrate extenuating circumstances as approved by GSTMW! administrative staff.

Limited Funds Determination

Priority will be given to residents of Genesee, Huron, Lapeer, Sanilac, Shiawassee, and Tuscola county residents should funding be limited. Funds allocated for youth are not subject to federal priority requirements.

29. A description of how the local board will coordinate workforce investment activities carried out in the local area with statewide Rapid Response (RR) activities.

The purpose of Rapid Response (RR) is to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, and responding to layoffs and dislocations and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses, and communities to provide economically valuable solutions to businesses and critically important services to workers at the time when they are most needed.

RR is to help laid-off workers quickly transition to new employment. RR acts as both a provider of direct reemployment services and as a facilitator of additional services and resources. RR is the gateway to the workforce system for both dislocated workers and employers and is a component of a demand-driven system.

GSTMW! will take an active role in assisting workers when plant closings/layoffs occur. GSTMW! staff along with the LEO Rapid Response Unit will work closely with the UIA in response to WARN Act notices for employers with mass layoffs or plant closings. Services to be included as part of the RR process are (1) initial RR meeting with the company and union officers (if applicable); (2) worker orientation meetings with employees; (3) establishment and organization of a Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC); (4) layoff aversion IWT (if applicable); (5) State Adjustment Grants (SAGs) as additional increments to a local area's DW formula funding award to meet funding deficits; (6) National Dislocated Worker Grants (DWGs) as another form of assistance to provide to dislocated workers.

30. A description of RR activities.

GSTMW!'s Rapid Response Process and Procedures for Responding to Notifications of Plant Closings, Mass Layoffs, the WIOA Layoff Aversion Strategies and Policy Guidelines for Incumbent Worker Training Programs are available on GSTMW!'s website at www.gstmiworks.org.

A. Initial RR meeting with the company and union officers.

GSTMW!'s RR coordinator or other designated GSTMW! staff will arrange for an initial meeting with the employer. The initial RR meeting shall include GSTMW!'s RR coordinator, the company, union leadership (if applicable), LEO RR staff, and other local partners as necessary such as the UIA, United Way, MDHHS, etc. LEO RR staff will provide overall information from a State perspective as well as gather demographic information about the impacted workforce. GSTMW! will provide information and/or marketing pieces on employment services including Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC), dislocated worker services, and other services available at the local AJC.

B. Worker orientation meeting for employees.

Upon agreement with the company, worker orientation meeting(s) will be scheduled to provide information on the process and available services to the impacted employees. GSTMW! will:

- Confirm the date(s) and time(s) of the worker orientation meeting(s);
- Arrange for the participation of partnering human service agencies and service center staff to present (and disseminate hard copy) information about existing services available to the affected employees;
- Provide informational materials on available services at the AJCs; and
- If the company does not agree to an on-site worker orientation meeting, GSTMW! will schedule one at an alternate location and make every attempt to get the information to the employees within the company, in addition to printed marketing pieces, etc. that outline available services.

LEO RR staff will transmit the request to the UIA for representatives to be present at the worker orientation meeting. If UIA is not able to be present, GSTMW! will direct impacted workers to the UIA's website, including the online claim filing kit (UIA Form 1251) and the online service, Claimant Web Account Manager. GSTMW! will refer all those affected workers with additional questions to the UIA Employee Hotline at (800) 500-0017 or to the Claimant Web Account Manager online services page at www.michigan.gov/uia. In addition, GSTMW! will distribute the Dislocated Worker Survey to impacted workers.

GSTMW! will arrange to have agency staff attend scheduled worker orientations. Generally, a career coach or a program manager will be assigned to explain employment services. Collaboration with other organizations may result in additional presenters based on the worker group and layoff circumstances. The Michigan Works! presentation will include an overview of available activities and services within the AJCs. These meetings include presentations by MWA staff and service providers and provide information on employment services, WIOA-funded career services (basic and individualized), no-cost reemployment workshops, labor market information, PMTC, career assessment services, self-serve resource room, veteran's assistance, TAA (if applicable), training options, OJT, and employer services.

C. Layoff Aversion IWT.

As part of the local RR activities, immediate and on-site contact is made with the employers, representatives of the affected workers, and appropriate members of the community to assess the potential for averting layoffs. This activity is made in consultation with the State and/or local economic development agencies. If it appears that layoff(s) can be averted, a plan is drafted and executed to avoid the layoffs. The sooner the system is aware of a potential layoff(s), the more interventions can be used to avert the layoff(s).

Early warning systems are necessary to ensure a timely response to worker dislocations. Layoffs can be identified in a variety of ways, including but not limited to, discussions with employer representatives or employees, meetings with organized labor, increased unemployment insurance claims, press attention, a WARN Act notice, or a Trade Act petition. Systems are in place to regularly and proactively monitor all these notification channels.

An early warning network can be effective when:

- County and local economic development organizations serve as points of contact;

- Public, nonprofit, and private partners share at-risk businesses to economic development;
- Economic development coordinates the assessment and delivery of services; and
- Private – bankers, accountants, and turnaround consultants.

A critical aspect of our outreach to the employer and business community is assessing the health of a company's employment issues. This assessment is part of the business solutions professional process. All members of the GSTMW! business services team are BSP certified and can proactively assist employers to assess issues that are of concern to them. If employee layoff appears to be imminent, necessary community partners, including economic development agencies and education will be brought together to determine if a plan can be developed to assist the company in averting any layoffs.

The activities that are included as part of a layoff aversion include but are not limited to:

- Prefeasibility studies;
- Success planning/loan programs;
- Data collection;
- Employee training (OJT);
- IWT*; and/or
- Technical assistance.

*IWT may be identified as an option during the development of a layoff aversion plan. GSTMW! may fund IWT if it is used as an approved local strategic plan. The State's Going Pro Training Fund may provide the availability of grant funds to support other incumbent worker training needs.

GSTMW!'s full IWT policy is available on its website at www.gstmiworks.org.

D/E. State Adjustment Grants (SAGs) and National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWGs)

State Adjustment Grants (SAGS) and National Dislocated Worker Grants (NDWG) are additional reinforcements to local area's dislocated worker formula funding awards to meet documented funding deficits. GSTMW! may request additional funding through SAG or NDWG as circumstances in our region warrant. GSTMW! will continuously monitor expenditures and obligations of WIOA dislocated worker funds and seek out additional funds, as necessary. GSTMW! will follow the SAG application process outlined in the SAG policy issuance for a single or multiple dislocation event. GSTMW! will seek NDWG discretionary grants awarded by the Secretary of Labor as specific circumstances of dislocation occur. GSTMW! through coordination efforts with the LEO, will identify such needs for both funding grants. As such, GSTMW! will have all the critical information to date regarding the local circumstances which would activate the requests for these additional funding sources. The application and project design will be directly coordinated with the assistance of LEO-WD.

F. Joint Adjustment Committee (JAC)

JAC may be formed by mutual consent of the company and union (if applicable) in situations where at least fifty employees are being laid off and there are at least 60 days after the RR meeting before layoffs are completed. JAC may be established with LEO support. GSTMW!'s role in JAC participation would be to meet with the partnering agencies on an ongoing basis throughout the period until layoffs are complete to coordinate/arrange/schedule services

specific to the needs of the impacted workers. Such services would assist them in becoming re-employed as quickly as possible.

Below is the person who is primarily responsible for the Joint Adjustment Committees, State Adjustment Grants (SAGs), and National Dislocated Worker Grants.

Cindy Thornthwaite, Business Services Manager

GSTMW!

711 N. Saginaw Street

Flint, MI 48503

Phone: 810-233-5974 Ext. 352

Email: cthornthwaite@gstmiworks.org

The Regional and Local Plan were available for review and comments from June 18, 2024 through July 18, 2024.