

MASSHIRE CENTRAL REGION WORKFORCE BOARD STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT PLANNING SESSION

July 21, 2020

AGENDA

- Welcome and overview
- MCRWB Strategic Background & SWOT
- Review of regional blueprint
- Discussion of local alignment
- Next steps, wrap up

LOCAL BACKGROUND

Who We Are

Mission Statement: The MassHire Central Region Workforce Board (MCRWB) is a public/private partnership, serving needs of both employers and employees. The board collaboratively develops and implements strategies for job readiness and skills advancement, leveraging community resources that promote economic wellness within the region's 38 cities and towns.

The primary role of the MCRWB is to convene civic and business leadership, and utilize their insights to direct public funds aimed at building the skills of the workforce in our area. The MCRWB also oversees the region's One Stop Career Centers (MassHire Career Centers) located in Worcester and Southbridge (henceforth referred to simply as our region's career centers).



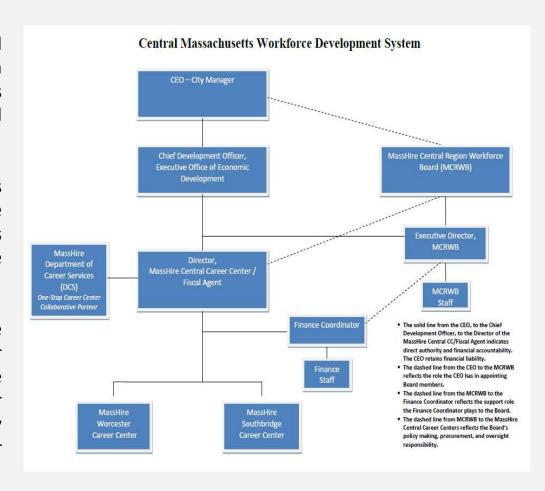
The MCRWB serves the following 38 cities and towns in Central Massachusetts.: Worcester, Auburn, Oxford, Webster, West Boylston, Boylston, Shrewsbury Grafton, Millbury, Sutton, Douglas, Uxbridge, Northbridge, Upton, Northborough, Westborough, Milford, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Blackstone, Southbridge, Charlton, Sturbridge, Leicester, Spencer, Paxton, Holden, Rutland, Dudley, Oakham, New Braintree, Hardwick, North Brookfield, East Brookfield, Brookfield, West Brookfield, and Warren.

How We Operate

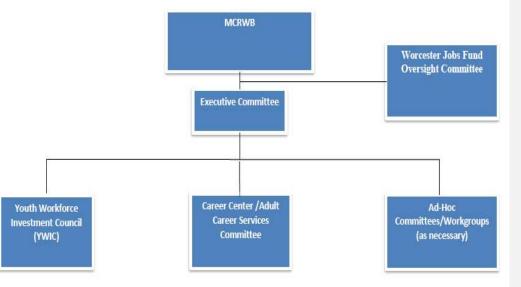
You will notice at the top of the chart that our system is led by a Chief Elected Official (CEO). In our region this position is held by the Worcester City Manager. The CEO holds primary fiduciary responsibility for the entire system and appoints members to the MCRWB.

The MCRWB and the region's career centers operate as separate divisions within the City of Worcester's Executive Office of Economic Development. Both the Career Centers and the MCRWB receive administrative support from the Finance Coordinator and staff.

The MCRWB oversees the policies and performance of the region's two career centers, youth programs, and other initiatives. The Career Center Director manages the operations of the two career centers, located in Worcester and Southbridge, including oversight of the day-to-day efforts of City of Worcester and the State Division of Career Services staff.



MassHire Central Region Workforce Board Committee Chart



- The MCRWB Executive Committee is chaired by the MCRWB Chairperson and is comprised of the Chair, Vice Chair, the two standing committee chairs, the Fiscal Agent, and two at-large members appointed by the MCRWB Chair.
- Ad-Hoc Committees/Workgroups established by the Chair with approval from the board.
- The Worcester Jobs Fund Oversight Committee is housed within the MCRWB fiscally, but the Board does not oversee its work.

Executive Committee: The Executive Committee is comprised of the MCRWB Chairperson and vice chairperson, Chairs of the two standing committees, the Central Massachusetts Workforce Development Area (WDA) Fiscal Agent, and two additional appointed members. The Executive Committee has many of the same powers as the Board and meets monthly, except for months when the full Board meets.

Youth Workforce Investment Council (YWIC): The YWIC is comprised of youth service providers, community based organizations, private sector businesses, and MCRWB members. The duties of the YWIC include developing the portions MCRWB's Strategic Plan relating to eligible youth, recommending eligible providers of youth services to be awarded contracts, conducting oversight of the MCRWB-funded youth service providers, and coordinating youth activities authorized under WIOA. Meetings are held bi-monthly.

Career Center/Adult Career Pathways Committee: This Committee is comprised of members from the MCRWB, private sector businesses, and community based organizations. This committee is responsible for making recommendations to the MCRWB with respect to the One-Stop Career Center operator, and coordinating other career services offered to adults within the Central Massachusetts Workforce Development Area (WDA). Meetings are held bi-monthly.

MassHire Central Region—Funding Summary, FY 20

		FEDERAL					7 [STATE								
Funding Source	Wagner Peyser	WIOA Title I	DOL Veterans	UI & RESEA	Rapid Response NEG, TAA	WIOA Partners	I	MA One- Stop Allocation	Workforce Training Fund	other state	DESE	Comm Corp.		Other Funding		TOTALS
Program Description	2 funding streams; 10% - used to serve special populations 90% - used for universal services to anyone seeking basic career guidance	3 funding streams to serve specific popu- lations with career guidance/services and access to training; Dislocated work- ers Low income Adults Low income Youth	Disabled Vets Outreach Pro- gram (DVOP)	Provide Unemployment Insurance (UI) walk- in services and appeal hearings Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA)	Assistance for dislocated work- ers affected by major layoffs & Federal Trade Adjustment programs, and National Dislo- cated Worker grant	Funding received from local WIDA partners to support integrated services through the career center, Partners include MA DTA, MRC, SCEP, etc.		Fund One-Stop operations	Administration of WTF program locally	WIOA Performance Incentive funds and spedal State Projeds; MA DOT (building Pathways training) MassHire Branding	Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) Career Pathways adult basic education, and Connecting Activities program for in- school youth.	Spedal projects, induding YouthWorks summer and year-round youth employ- ment programs No YWYR		City of Worc. Jobs Fund to connect resi- dents with living wage jobs and training op- portunities		
FY 20 Amount	\$1,189,783	\$2,479,486	\$205,299	\$369,807	\$388,947	\$113,035		\$329,125	\$95,000	\$27,977	\$138,018	\$773,241		\$200,000		\$6,309,718 (\$1,586,746 C.I.)
FY 19 Amount	\$1,489,679	\$2,690,444	\$208,567	\$488,795	\$142,277	\$94,113		\$335,632	\$95,000	\$124,000	\$163,018	\$802,681		\$246,328		\$6,880,534 (\$1,796,845 C.I.)
FY 18 Amount	\$1,450,604	\$3,140,146	\$196,894	\$186,489	\$233,734	\$143,566		\$318,302	\$95,000	\$0	\$310,264	\$596,065	I	\$177,548	П	\$6,848,612 (\$2.,008,272carry in)
FY 17 Amount	\$1,343,460	\$3,669,940	\$364,986	\$631,443	\$348,571	NA		\$319,952	\$95,000	\$356,625	\$317,380	\$773,461		\$200,000		\$8,420,818 (\$2.318.700 carry in)
FY 16 Amount	\$1,481,877	\$4,054,481	\$374,330	\$1012.558	\$496,848	NA		\$394,422	\$95,000	\$187,000	\$322,480	\$865,360		\$84,800		\$9,018,603 (\$2,168,862carry in)
Funding Utilized by	10% - MCRWB (\$71,931) 90% - Career Center* (\$835,444)	MCRWB t& he Career Center	Career Center	Career Center	Career Center	Career Center		Career Center	MCRWB			MCRWB		MCRWB		
Notes	*State and local staff located at area Career Centers Includes \$258,874 carried in from FY 19	Funds allocated out through subcon- trads to local train- ing vendors; WIOA Youth (\$332,129, WIOA Dislocated Workers, and low income Adults Includes \$231,475 carry in		RESEA founded By the US DOL to help claim- ants return to work faster Through one- one assistance At the career Center. RESEA Carry in -\$314,807	National Dislo- cated Worker Re-entry grant \$230,000 Trade Case Management indudes \$8,349 carry in	Funding negoti- ated through MA Division of Career Ser- vices.; does not indude in-kind support value		Allo cated by Statewide for- mula	\$75,000 sup- ports the MCRWB and \$20,000 supports the MCRWB Youth Coundl	Performance incentives for Vets Gold Award \$12,142 MA DOT build- ing pathways TBA	Approx. \$124,000 of Connecting Activities funds subcontracted to program part- ners; Worcester Public Schools & Bladsstone Valley Ed Foun- dation	\$622,518 for YW and \$150,723 for Learn to Earn project		\$200,000 WJF \$46,328 Carry in From C.O.W.		C.I.—Carry In

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK



MCRWB Mission

City, State, Fed. Policies/ Regulations

MassHire Values

MCRWB Operating Principles

Regional Blueprint Goals/Strategies

MCRWB
Goals/Strategies

Move Forward

CITY, STATE, FEDERAL POLICIES & REGULATIONS

- The MCRWB is housed administratively within the City of Worcester and follow's City polices (including Human Resources, Procurement, Information Technology)
- The MCRWB also follows State directives through the MA Executive office of Labor and Workforce Development (and the MA Division of Career Services)
- The MCRWB is also the region's designated Local Workforce Development Board established through the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and regulated through the US Dept. of Labor
- The MCRWB is also guided by additional operational policies and procedures
 designated by grant program funders (either public or private, such as the
 Commonwealth Corporation, the MA Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Ed (DESE),
 or the Greater Worcester Community Foundation)

MassHire Values:

COLLABORATION

MassHire believes in the power of partnership and streamlined integration of services to achieve effective and timely results for those we serve.

RESPECT

MassHire is committed to understanding and valuing the diverse, unique requirements and professional goals of the businesses and people we serve.

RELIABILITY

MassHire creates trust and reliability by consistently delivering high quality professional services at each location and in every interaction.

INGENUITY

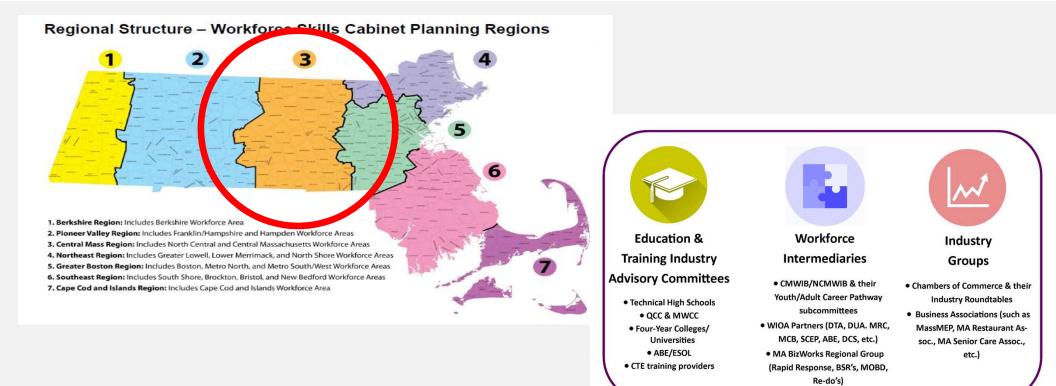
MassHire leverages flexibility, expertise, and knowledge to successfully meet our mission, regardless of new challenges and circumstances.

Operating Principles:

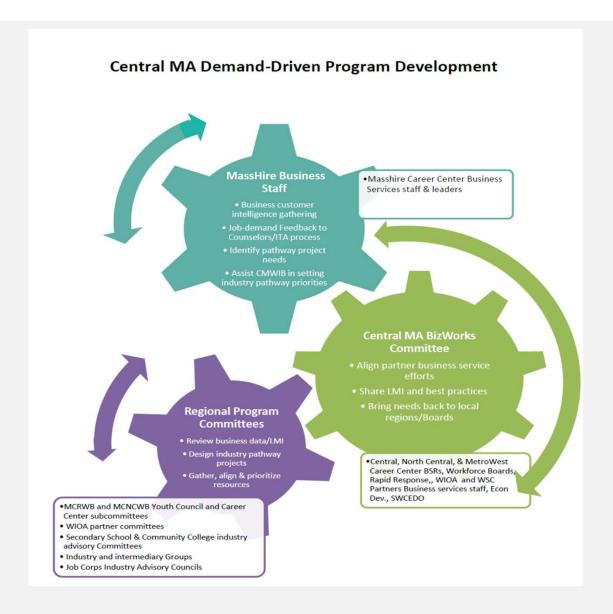
The following operating principles have been established to help guide the manner in which MCRWB staff and members work:

- Integrity: The MCRWB will follow all local, state, and federal rules and regulations and conduct our business with honesty and integrity.
- **Timeliness:** The MCRWB will respond to inquiries from partners and the public in a timely manner and will meet deadlines for reporting and programming.
- **Transparency:** The MCRWB will conduct its business and make decisions in a transparent manner and communicate these actions to members and the public to ensure that the MCRWB is viewed as an honest broker in the community.
- **Inclusivity:** The MCRWB will seek input from a representative sample of the communities we serve when making policy and funding decisions and will seek to convene and connect numerous stakeholders when addressing workforce development issues.
- **Impact:** The MCRWB will seek to utilize its limited resources in a way that maximizes the positive outcomes of our efforts. We will track and monitor our work to measure our impact.
- Innovation: The MCRWB will strive to seek new and creative approaches to meeting workforce development challenges and will aggressively work to gather the resources necessary to implement these new approaches.
- Technologically Savvy: The MCRWB will integrate the use of new technologies to improve its effectiveness and efficiency.
- Relevant: The MCRWB will publically address issues relating to workforce development and strive to be viewed as an authoritative voice in these matters by the community.

REGIONAL BLUEPRINT



The Central MA region consists of the Central MA and North Central MA Workforce Development Areas. The two local workforce development boards, (MCRWB and the MNCWB) our career centers, and our planning team includes representatives from private industry, education, workforce development, and economic development.



The Central MA region integrates the work of several existing committees/groups to be responsive to employer demand, including:

- Workforce Boards & subcommittees
- The MA BizWorks Regional Team
- Partner Committees (including educational advisory groups)

Priority Industries & Occupations

STATE CRITERIA

- High employer demand
- High demand and wages (4+ star ranking)
- Talent gaps (supply-demand ratio)
- Career pathways

REGIONAL CRITERIA

- Employer engagement
- Low barriers to employment
- Alignment w/ population



Priority Industry Clusters

Healthcare & Social Assistance

Multiple OCCUPATIONAL pathways

• CNA, LPN, RN, Pharmacy Tech, Direct Care Worker

Largest employment (20.3%) sector

Wide spectrum of entry level jobs and wage earning potential

Manufacturing

OCCUPATIONS

 CNC Machinist, Quality Control Technician, Production Worker

Fourth largest (11.5%) employment cluster

High employer need (22K+ short term openings), good average wages (\$39K)

Low educational barrier to employment

Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics

OCCUPATIONS

• Commercial Drivers, Diesel Technicians

High employer need and engagement, good average wages (\$34.3K for Class-B; \$53.2K for Diesel Tech)

Low barriers to employment, offers strong pool of candidates

Additional Critical Industry Clusters

Professional and Tech Services

Occupational
Groups:
Software/Web
Developer, Cyber
Security, Biomanufacturing
Technicians

Anticipated growth of STEM fields, including IT and life sciences

High average wage sector – Web Developer -\$59.9K; Biomanufacturing \$44.9K

Construction

Occupational Group: HVAC Mechanics, Apprenticeship Trade Occupations

High employer need, low educational barriers, large pool of candidates

Strong wages – HVAC \$55K; Building Trades \$52.7K

Retail/Hospitality

Combined, these two sectors form region's 2nd largest employment sector (19.5%)

Low educational barriers, multiple industry pathways

Education

Region's 3rd largest employment sector (12.7%)

Strong wages with average sector wage \$64K

Priority Occupations

The top occupations or occupational groups in which the region is facing the most significant employee shortages:

- Occupational Group 1: Health Occupations
 - Certified Nursing Assistant, LPN, RN, Pharmacy Tech and Direct Care Worker
- Occupational Group 2: Manufacturing Occupations
 - CNC Machinist, Quality Control Technician, Production Worker
- Occupation Group 3: Transportation, Warehousing and Logistics Occupations
 - Commercial Drivers; Diesel Technicians; Auto Tech
- Occupational Group 4: Professional and Technical Occupations
 - Software/Web Developer, Cyber Security, Bio-manufacturing Technicians
- Occupational Group 5: Construction Occupations
 - HVAC Mechanics, Apprenticeship Trade Occupations, including Welding

REGIONAL Blueprint Goals

GOALS	STRATEGIES	PROGRESS		
	Convene Partnership leaders twice annually	Successfully established – continued work in process		
Goal I:Align and coordinate regional Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development	 Interconnect existing workforce structures (including Workforce Development Boards & committees, BizWorks regional team, WIOA Partners, School advisory groups, etc. 	Blueprint process integrated into existing WDB & Committees, as well as WIOA Partnerships and Regional BizWorks team integrated (with inclusion of Metro South/West); Blueprint/WDB's now integrated into school programming decisions and regional grant projects		
systems.	 Collect business service performance and outcome data from all stakeholders to create a comprehensive regional "dashboard" report 	Beta testing on data from career center system has begun; information by industry for business utilization, vacancy rate, supply/demand remains a challenge. Dashboard of WSC partner effort remains a challenge due to data sharing concerns and procedures.		

GOALS	STRATEGIES	PROGRESS
	Create a real-time regional Mass BizWorks "response-team" to serve as the connection between businesses in need and system partners	Regional online business services staff network established (via Slack platform) – utilization has been a challenge
Goal 2: Provide industry with a training system responsive to workforce needs	Integrate business need feedback into regional Youth Council, Career Center, and partner program development processes	WIOA Partners, area schools, and WDB's utilizing regional blueprint as guide to program development
	Implement MA EOLWD Recruitment Solutions Initiative (RSI) referral process at all of the region's MassHire Career Centers	RSI successfully implemented in Central region, however, staff vacancies have limited it's impact

GOALS	STRATEGIES	PROGRESS
	• Increase exposure to soft skills in high schools, colleges, training programs and career centers through the creation and expanded access to career readiness training materials	Working with Commonwealth Corporation on Signal Success WIOA Youth pilot; Increasing capacity for soft skills training through the regional manufacturing consortium
Goal 3: Improve the foundational and work readiness/soft skills of our region's labor force	 Increase career awareness activities in the region's high schools 	Working with schools through Connecting Activities (including Worcester Public Schools – Opportunity Fairs; North Central Manufacturing education summit, North Central Youth Job Fair with the Leominster/Fitchburg Boys and Girls Club etc.)
	Build stronger foundational computer skills for residents (both youth and adults)	Establishing Coding for Elementary School working group; Conducted Apprenti employer outreach; expansion of high school IT programs in Milford & Worcester

GOALS	STRATEGIES	PROGRESS
	 Establish regional baseline measures for priority industries/ occupation goals and set target goals, including: Decrease vacancy rate Increase the number of CTE program placements Improve the supply/demand ratio Increase the business utilization percentage rate for MassHire BizWorks-affiliated partner services Improve career center/WIOA Partner performance (number of businesses served, job orders, job referrals, and hiring) 	Creation of baseline measures for CTE completion in manufacturing has been identified, however this has not yet been completed by the other two consortia; a source for vacancy rate, utilization rate, supply/demand ratio data has not been identified
Goal 4: Close the skills gap for priority industries and	• Expand Career Technical Education (CTE), both day and evening, for priority industries/occupations	Expansion in all three fields (plus additional occupational priority areas) has been accomplished
occupations	Increase exposure in secondary education to high priority industries	Alignment through Connecting Activities is a work in progress
	Expand incumbent worker career advancement and Registered Apprenticeships for priority industries	Apprenticeship discussions begun in health and manufacturing, and established for diesel technicians; WTFP for incumbent workers continues
	Increase contextualized ABE and ESOL programming that trains for high priority industries	Accomplished through DESE IET programming and manufacturing consortium
	Expand articulation agreements between education and training institutions for priority industries/occupations	Articulation agreements mapped out but not yet established where gaps exist August 27, 2020

Central MA Workforce Consortia

A sector-based "one-door" approach to connect employers with workforce development partners



Regional Blueprint Revision 2021-2022

New demographic, labor pool or talent pipeline considerations that will have an impact on labor supply:

In addition to the original blueprint's regional context, we've determined new emphasis should be placed upon the following areas that negatively affect the available labor force in our region;

- People working in low-wage low advancement jobs (i.e.., assisting people working in "dead end jobs" develop the tools and skills necessary to move up and out of the cycle of poverty)
- People hesitant to move off of public supports due to the "cliff effect" supporting people as they give up public assistance to enter/re-enter the workforce.
- People from families that lack college education; while there are numerous opportunities to exit poverty through jobs that only require middle skills (less than a four-year degree) the need for an Associate's Degree or higher often serves as a significant barrier to earning a living wage. The challenge of helping more people attain college degrees is made more difficult by a variety of factors, not the least of which is that the very idea of attending college seems beyond their reach. Helping them see themselves as a successful college graduate is therefore part of the needed solution.

Have there been any developments related to business and industry that will have an impact on workforce demand in your region? New employers, policies/regulations, etc.

We have seen continued growth in automated services delivery in a variety of industries, including retail, manufacturing, and distribution. Additionally, communication and service delivery through the use of smart phones continues to advance.

Additionally, it would appear the COVID-19 pandemic will have a significant impact economically upon our region (see Appendix H).

New Priority Industries and Occupations

No changes are being requested to the region's priority industries; however, after reviewing labor market data and speaking with employers and training partners we are adding in additional trades within two of our three priority sectors and one of our critical sectors;

- Welding is added to our manufacturing priority industry sector
- Automotive technician is added to our transportation/logistics/warehousing priority industry sector
- Culinary is added to our retail/hospitality critical industry sector.

List 3 to 5 priority occupations or occupational groups by SOC code (4-8 digit, as necessary).

No changes to our priority occupation groups are being requested.

COVID-19 IMPACT

How have your priority industries been impacted by COVID-19?

- Our manufacturing sector has largely stayed the same as many companies kept up or switched production to needed supplies/equipment, however the pandemic and increased benefits has exacerbated staffing shortages that existed before this crisis.
- The need for frontline allied health staff (certified nurses, phlebotomy techs, home health aides) has worsened the staff shortage, and many training programs have also had to cease operations during the outbreak, decreasing potential new staff.
- The transportation/logistics/warehousing sector has likewise stayed active as an industry during the pandemic and has continued hiring logistics, warehousing, and commercial drivers.

At this time, what do you envision to be the top 3-5 priority occupations impacted by COVID 19?

 Food Preparation and Serving Related (including hospitality workers), Construction, Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance, Management – general office and Office & Administrative Support.

What education/training programs in your region are still available and able to retrain the unemployed population for job openings in your region?

- The Career Centers are offering access to online career preparation classes through such organizations as Goodwill (LearnFree courses), as well as discounted educational courses through EdEx, Coursera, Worcester Night Life, Quinsigamond Community College (QCC), and Mount Wachusett Community College, as well as Fitchburg State and Worcester State.
- Additionally, there are a number of career technical training related to our priority occupations that are still being offered in healthcare, manufacturing, and CDL.

What are the overall top 3 challenges you anticipate in FY21 facing in deploying training solutions?

- Large upheaval of front line staff that will not have a job to go back that are not job seeking in the short term and not sure where to go following the end of restrictions

 — i.e., what field to go into
- State resources for training may be significantly reduced due to the pandemic's drastic impact on state revenue
- Smaller training providers may no longer be operating and many of the remaining programs may only be operating online, limiting accessibility for our higher need populations

What are the largest challenges that you anticipate jobseekers in your region will face in attempting to return back to work?

- Emotional insecurity fear of making career change in this uncertain time and the need for counseling support in making career direction decisions and referral for wrap-around services
- Change in economy and shift away from in-person retail and service delivery, causing some jobs to no longer be available....secondary economic downturn following pandemic relief due to closures, housing defaults, etc.
- Financial insecurity limited resources available for training or for taking time away from work to go into training
- Child care services being available as they look to re-enter the workplace especially for single heads of households
- Transportation this was already an area that was a challenge, especially in the less populated portions of our region, and it may be made worse with the potential for reduced availability of public transportation and ridesharing services

LOCAL PLANNING & ALIGNMENT

SWOT DISCUSSION

Strengths

- Ample and engaged education/training partners at K-12, higher ed, and community level
- Active and supportive industry partnerships, inc. Chambers, MassMEP, healthcare, etc.
- Strong connections to State workforce systems
- Previously developed tools re: equitable access
- Diversity of industries

Weaknesses

- · Lacking in private funding sources & flexible funding sources
- Limited ability to influence State/Fed policies affecting workforce, i.e.., healthcare reimbursement rates
- Limited number of career tech training instructors
- Limited access to resources to people outside of the City
- COVID related effects not fully known & unpredictable
- Healthcare clinical sites lacking worsened by COVID
- Digital divide among regional residents

Opportunities

- New State online services being developed
- State desire to expand career technical instruction
- Regional Career Center Operator Process
- Anticipated increase in Federal funding in FY 22 due to current unemployment rate
- Increased remote work opportunities
- Desire/need for business financial literacy technical supports
- Ability to work with new partners to address goals through technology
- Changes to HIB and other Federal worker visa programs may foster greater employer engagement, especially for IT fields

Threats

- Continued Federal cuts
- Potentially massive state cuts
- Federal and State pandemic loan repayments
- Unequal opportunity to access technology

Goals	Local Strategies	Outcome/ Deliverable	MCRWB Committee				
Goal I:Align and coordinate regional Education, Workforce Development, and Economic Development systems.	Continue to align services/programming with input from City partners	WJF Funding; leveraged resources/services for City residents	Executive Committee				
Goal 2: Provide industry with a training system responsive to workforce needs	Seek expanded online services to businesses	New e-tools to support businesses – VJF, JobGet, other	Career Center/ Adult Career Pathways				
Goal 3: Improve the foundational and work readiness/soft skills of our region's labor force	 Update career pathway maps for priority occupations Develop education/training inventory maps for priority occupations Develop/promote employer-school support online clearinghouse Support workplace skills training for older job seekers/incumbent workers (inc.WTFP direct access program promotion) 	 Updated career pathway maps Training inventory maps Employer support database established 	 Youth Workforce Investment Council Career center/adult career pathways 				
Goal 4: Close the skills gap for priority industries and occupations	 Develop demographic/psychographic analysis approach for priority occ's. Expand the pool of available qualified CTE instructors Seek additional funding for priority occ's (esp. through private sources) Work with employers to help diversify workforce 	Three new funding sources to defray CTE are accessed	 CC/ACP Committee CC/ACP Committee Executive Committee 				

Goals	Local Strategies	Outcome/ Deliverable	MCRWB Committee
Ensure equitable access for all of the region's residents	 Conduct a review Board and Program Policies and Practices Update regional demographic activity report and review results with all subcommittees – make recommendations to the full Board Provide Board and Program Partner Staff with relevant training regarding equitable service access (such as implicit bias training) 	 Each committee issues a report outlining review findings and recommendations by Oct. 31, 2020 (then annual review at a min.) Each committee issues a report of initial data review findings and recommendations by Oct. 31, 2020 (then annual review at a min.) Staff training completed by Dec. 31, 2020 (then ongoing annually) 	Executive Committee, Youth Workforce Investment Council, CC/Adult Career Pathways
??			

NEXT STEPS

- Refine/finalize local goals and strategies
- Presentation to full Board (August 20th)
- Develop MCRWB Committee work plans
- Follow through implementation