

MIDDLE TENNESSEE REGIONAL PLAN

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AREAS 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10

The Middle Tennessee Region is comprised of 40 counties covering Tennessee from the North to the South borders of Tennessee and from the Tennessee River to the Cumberland Plateau. It consists of metropolitan, suburban, urban, and rural areas, which comprises diverse economic conditions across Local



Workforce Development Areas 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. With this broad area of coverage, the growth industry sectors and occupations consist of employment opportunities projected to have the fastest growing number of new jobs added to the economy. In addition, these growth sectors are existing or emerging businesses which are being transformed by technology and innovation and may require new skill sets for workers. With the implementation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the region can focus on providing training in the various levels of skill sets required to efficiently serve the Adult and Youth priority population and those with employment barriers. Many individuals in the priority population have not had the opportunity to advance in high demand occupations due to their specific barriers. With WIOA, the region can support job seekers and workers with access to employment through education and training programs. This will set the participant on a career pathway to increase the prosperity of the participants and fill job vacancies for the employers. Counties for each Local Workforce Development Area are listed below:

LWDA 6	LWDA 7	LWDA 8	LWDA 9	LWDA 10
Bedford	Cannon	Cheatham	Davidson	Giles
Coffee	Clay	Dickson	Rutherford	Hickman
Franklin	DeKalb	Houston	Trousdale	Lawrence
Grundy	Fentress	Humphreys	Wilson	Lewis
Lincoln	Jackson	Montgomery		Marshall
Moore	Macon	Robertson		Mauzy
Warren	Overton	Stewart		Perry
	Pickett	Sumner		Wayne
	Putnam	Williamson		
	Smith			
	Van Buren			
	White			

The Middle Tennessee Council members represent each of the core partners:

- Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth
- Title II – Adult Education and Literacy Act
- Title III – Wagner-Peyser Act
- Title IV – Rehabilitation Act

Additional partners at the meeting were representatives of:

- Economic and Community Development
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

- Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)
- Veterans
- Local Board Member
- Tennessee College of Applied Technology

The list of attendees for the Regional Planning meeting(s):

LWDA 6 -	Gary Morgan, Teresa Smith, Mitch Norton, Karen Smith, Tommy Burns, Tammy Nunley, Diana Hague (6 and 10), Kim Hasty, Ruble Conaster, Pamela Morris (6 and 10), Ivan Jones, Diane Stoker, Lana McAnally, Selina Moore (6 and 10)
LWDA 7 -	Ron Basham, Kim Cobble, Randi Short, Lynda Huddleston, Tim Witt, Linda Suddarth, Rebecca H. Smith, Sean Monday, Cindy Mabery
LWDA 8 -	Marla Rye, Andrea Dillard, Christina Drones (8 and 9), John Alexander (8 and 9), Virginia Talley (8 and 9), Reggie Mudd (8 and 9), Natalie McLimore, Jimmy Johnston, Laura Travis, Freda Herndon, Arrita Summers, John Hatfield
LWDA 9 -	Patrick Combs, Brian Clark, Tanya Evrenson, Chasidy Buchanan, Brenda Head, Ellen Zinkiewicz, Rod DeVore, Joel Blackford, Christina Drones (8 and 9), John Alexander (8 and 9), Virginia Talley (8 and 9), Reggie Mudd (8 and 9), George Phillips, Meisha Henderson
LWDA 10 -	Jan McKeel, Selina Moore (6 and 10), Marcey Taylor, Diane Hague (6 and 10), Pamela Morris (6 and 10), Rick Molder

Regional Planning Council members charged with drafting the regional plan:

Lana McAnally, Cindy Mabery, Randi Short, John Watz, Susie Bourque (regional point of contact), Paige Liggett

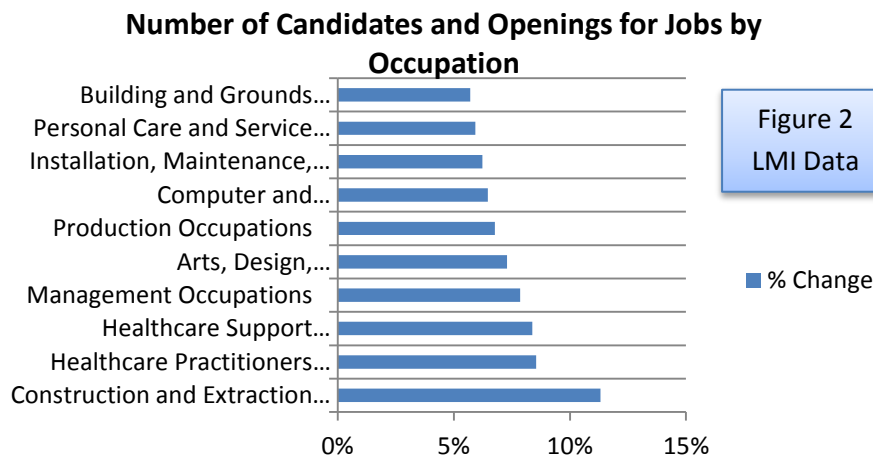
Regional Planning Council committee meeting date(s): November 28, 2016, January 24, 2017, and February 23, 2017.

Planning process and opportunity for all local areas to participate:

Each Local Workforce Development Area in the region invited all partners to participate in Middle Tennessee Regional Council meetings. These meetings were held in November and January with participation from core, mandatory, and optional partners. Each question from the PY 2016 Transitional Regional Plan Template was reviewed during the meetings. The Council members discussed each question considering the current approach and the opportunity for regional alignment. Council members were provided an updated draft of the plan prior to the January meeting to address the opportunity for any additional input. During the February meeting, we discussed and addressed any comments or concerns submitted by the public.

Provide a labor market and economic analysis of the workforce development planning region. This shall include an analysis of existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and shall include 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 in-demand sectors have remained relatively constant in the Middle Tennessee Region over the last five years. Most sectors have experienced growth with the following occupations representing the strongest employment: construction, health care, advanced manufacturing, and information technology. Data from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Labor Market Information (LMI), Number of Candidates and Openings for Jobs by Occupation indicates similarities in high growth occupations in each Local Workforce Development Area in the Middle Tennessee Region. A review of the Number of Candidates and Openings for Jobs by Occupation lists the highest ratio of potential candidates in the workforce system seeking employment. Each local area's top ten lists have consistent listings, ultimately



reflecting the in-demand occupations in construction, health care, advanced manufacturing, and information technology for the region. Figure 2 represents the sectors with the highest percentage of change from 2014-2016.

Figure 3 is an extraction from EMSI and provides the number of openings expected by sector and the average hourly earnings in each sector.

Figure 3 – EMSI Data

SOC	Description	2014 Jobs	2024 Jobs	2014 - 2024 Change	Annual Openings	Avg. Hourly Earnings
11-0000	Management Occupations	78,958	92,903	13,945	3,723	\$41.17
13-0000	Business and Financial Operations Occupations	52,015	64,851	12,836	2,727	\$31.29
15-0000	Computer and Mathematical Occupations	23,622	31,336	7,714	1,229	\$33.94
17-0000	Architecture and Engineering Occupations	17,083	19,673	2,590	837	\$33.44
25-0000	Education, Training, and Library Occupations	63,962	71,483	7,521	2,578	\$22.13
27-0000	Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports, and Media Occupations	25,190	30,212	5,022	1,279	\$23.03
29-0000	Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	70,033	91,462	21,429	4,143	\$33.29
31-0000	Healthcare Support Occupations	31,288	40,767	9,479	1,869	\$13.50
35-0000	Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	100,969	123,947	22,978	6,628	\$10.59
37-0000	Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	39,874	45,841	5,967	1,624	\$11.80
39-0000	Personal Care and Service Occupations	37,831	45,750	7,919	1,893	\$11.82
41-0000	Sales and Related Occupations	119,606	138,066	18,460	6,032	\$17.66

43-0000	Office and Administrative Support Occupations	191,759	218,796	27,037	7,539	\$16.96
47-0000	Construction and Extraction Occupations	48,668	53,595	4,927	1,727	\$17.49
49-0000	Installation, Maintenance, and Repair Occupations	51,308	60,173	8,865	2,410	\$20.56
51-0000	Production Occupations	102,211	118,088	15,877	4,692	\$16.59
53-0000	Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	92,957	111,073	18,116	4,597	\$16.02
		1,147,334	1,358,015	210,681	55,526	\$20.45

The review of this data reveals:

1. The largest annual openings are projected in Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations and Healthcare Support Occupations. These Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) codes represent numerous occupations in the healthcare sector, such as Physicians assistants, Radiologic Technologists, EMT, Paramedics, Dental and Medical Assistants.
2. Another occupation with immediate and growing needs that can be targeted from workforce development assets is the construction and extraction occupations. This occupation classification includes Construction Trades Workers, Helpers and Construction Trades and Other Construction and Related Workers.
3. Additionally SOC codes included in the in-demand list with high projections of growth include Computer Programmers, Database Administrators, Advanced Manufacturing Production Workers, Welders and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers.

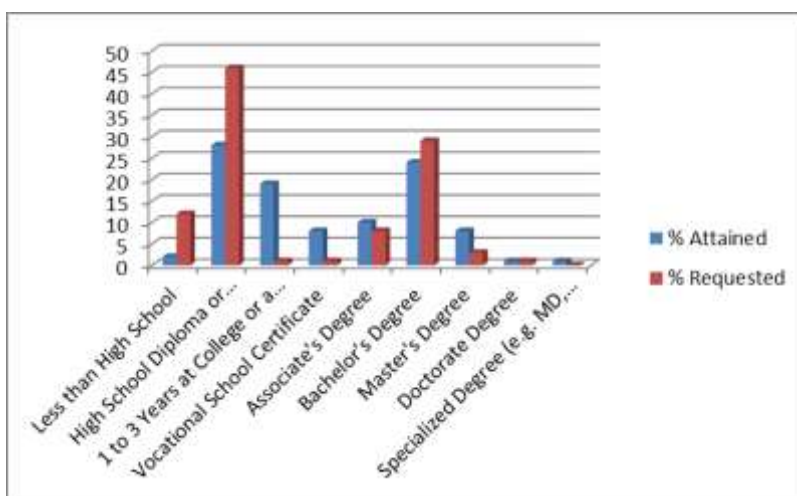
The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Regionally, approximately one-third of the individuals have attained a “High School Diploma”, with the next highest level of education attained having a “Bachelor’s Degree.” This is consistent with the levels attained statewide with the region attaining a slightly lower percentage in “High School Diploma” and slightly lower in the “Bachelor’s Degree” category.

Figure 4 – LMI Data

To increase the prosperity of the participants and employers, the

Middle Tennessee Council will review the data available to assess the needs in the region. A review of the Educational Attainment levels in the region, compared to Education Requested of the specific in-demand jobs, demonstrates where the emphasis on education and training is needed. Comparatively, Figure 4 demonstrates the Education Requested for job openings in



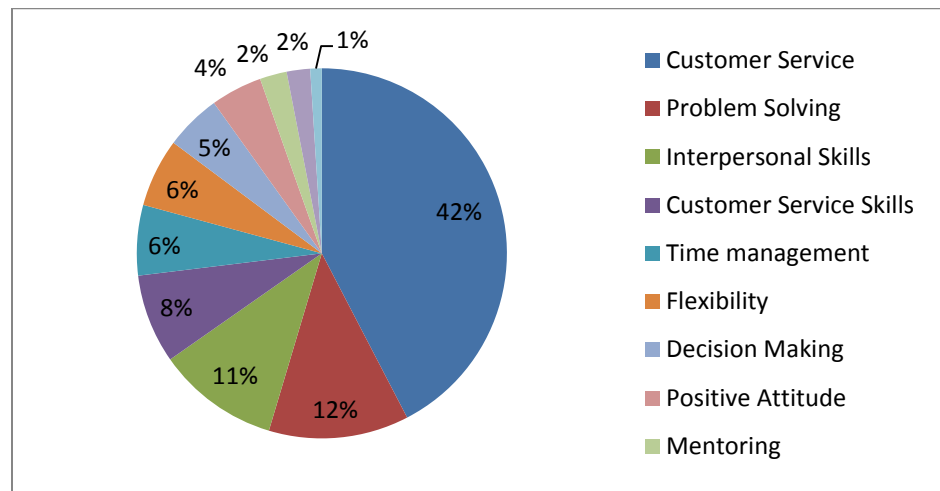
the region with the Education Attainment level by participants in the region. (Please note that the chart only reflects information entered into Jobs4tn.gov by candidates currently looking for jobs in the region.) Participants in the Middle Tennessee Region need at least a High School Diploma or High School Equivalency Diploma. The chart reflects a good percentage of individuals in the region have achieved “1 to 3 Years of College or a Technical School”, and small percentages have attained an “Associate’s Degree.” Although the chart reflects “Bachelor’s Degree” as the second highest education requested, most entry level positions require certification, “1 to 3 Years of College or a Technical School”, or industry recognized short-term training credentials.

In addition to specific education and training needs, or hard skills, the employers place an emphasis on employee soft-skills. Soft skills are the personal abilities and work habits that become an important indicator of how successful an employee may become. These skills are imperative in the workplace to demonstrate to an employer that the employee can use past experiences together with available resources to develop solutions and work as a team. An employee with the desired soft skills will assure that the business is perceived customer friendly and will enhance service outcomes. Through the LMI data from the Tennessee Department of Labor and Workforce Development (TDLWD), a comprehensive listing of all advertised detailed soft skills was combined for the local areas in the Middle Tennessee Region.

The top skills that employers are requesting in our region:

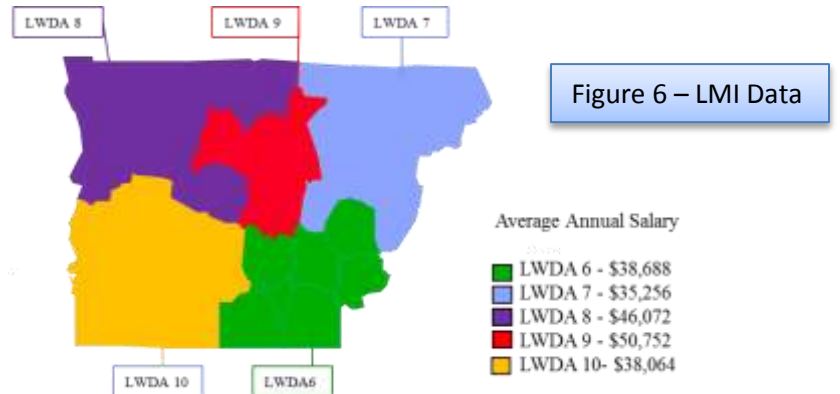
- Customer Service at 42% or 11,430.
- Problem Solving at 12% or 3,303.
- Interpersonal Skills at 11% or 2,877.
- Customer Service Skills at 8% or 2101
- Time Management at 6% or 1,658
- And, Flexibility also at 6% or 1,612

Figure 5 – LMI Data



An analysis of the current employment/unemployment data, labor market trends, education and skills levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment.

The November 2016 unemployment rate for Tennessee was 4.8%, continuing from the October figure. Comparatively, the region is slightly lower at 4.3%. The labor force for the Middle Tennessee Region is 1,329,990. See Figure 7. This still leaves 52,920 individuals unemployed across the 40 counties. Cheatham, Davidson, Maury, Moore, Robertson, Rutherford, Sumner, Williamson, and Wilson counties are all below the region average with unemployment rates of 3.4% to 3.9%, with Williamson County at the lowest in the state at 3.4%. These figures illustrate strength of the economy in the Middle Tennessee Region. In addition, strength of the regional economy is reflected in average wages as seen in Figure 6.



Employment statistics for individuals with barriers still reflect a need for improvement. Although the unemployment rate overall in Tennessee is very good, the unemployment rate for individuals with disabilities lags significantly behind the general labor force. National

figures reflect that only 20% of individuals with disabilities participate in the labor force, whereas individuals without disabilities make up 68.4% of the labor force. This difference equates to a national unemployment rate at 10% for individuals with disabilities. There are 58,744 people with disabilities working in the 40 county region. There are 12,469 people with disabilities who are currently unemployed and looking for work. Additionally, there are 114,457 people with disabilities in middle Tennessee who are not currently in the labor force.

Other groups with barriers include veterans, long-term unemployed, participants with English as a second language, disadvantaged youth, Older Workers, and ex-offenders. Veterans will continue to receive preference in service throughout the Middle Tennessee Region. Specifically, services will include assessing skills obtained while serving in the military and translating those abilities into marketable skills in the civilian labor force. Within the 40 county Middle Tennessee Region, 336,853 individuals are participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as of November 2016. Programs for ex-offenders are in the process of being developed across the region and best practices are being reviewed in order to assess an effective approach for future employment. Many of the long-term unemployed and those with barriers fall into the 15.6% of Middle Tennessee population that are under the poverty rate which equates to 402,782 individuals.

An analysis of workforce development activities, 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.

The automotive, healthcare, warehousing, construction, and transportation industries continue to be the backbone of the Middle Tennessee Region. The region is connected from Alabama to Kentucky and East to West by a series of interstates, railways, and waterways that allow business and industry to be within one day’s drive to over 50% of this nation. Advanced manufacturing continues to grow in the region. Education providers have responded to this increased need with mechatronics and robotics education with one and two year certification in Seimens and Allen Bradley, as well as four year institutions such as Austin Peay State University offering advanced degrees in manufacturing.

Figure 7 – TDOL Data

Area Name	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
REGION	1,329,990	1,277,080	52,920	4.10%
Tennessee	3,188,100	3,036,200	151,900	4.80%
United States	159,486,000	152,085,000	7,400,000	4.60%

Although the Middle Tennessee Region is growing and has strengths, there are challenges/weaknesses that the Regional Council will remain focused on in the future. See Figure 9.

The population of working age adults within the region reflects the national trend. However, in Davidson County the labor force participation rate is 70%, which is higher than the national average. Additionally, with over 250,000 individuals between the ages of 55-64 approaching retirement, the workforce will be stressed by 2020. Local areas will conduct recruitment activities to increase the local workforce and retain the younger workforce in the region.

Workforce program training and support services assists individuals with barriers to employment by providing additional resources to overcome educational and employment barriers. Assistance such as tuition, books and supplies, child care, transportation, mentoring, OJT, Apprenticeship programs, and Incumbent Worker Training enables individuals to focus on educational goals and/or hands-on training that leads to sustainable employment.

The Region benefits from a diverse economy which has contributed to our economic growth over the past 10 years and makes us highly competitive at the national level. This competitive edge is evident through the vast increase in relocation of healthcare and automotive headquarters to the area. Higher education, ranging from one to a four year college and technical education, is spread throughout the region, providing a young workforce with the skills and abilities to meet the needs of industry and business. In 2011, these public institutions within the Middle Tennessee Region awarded 32,802

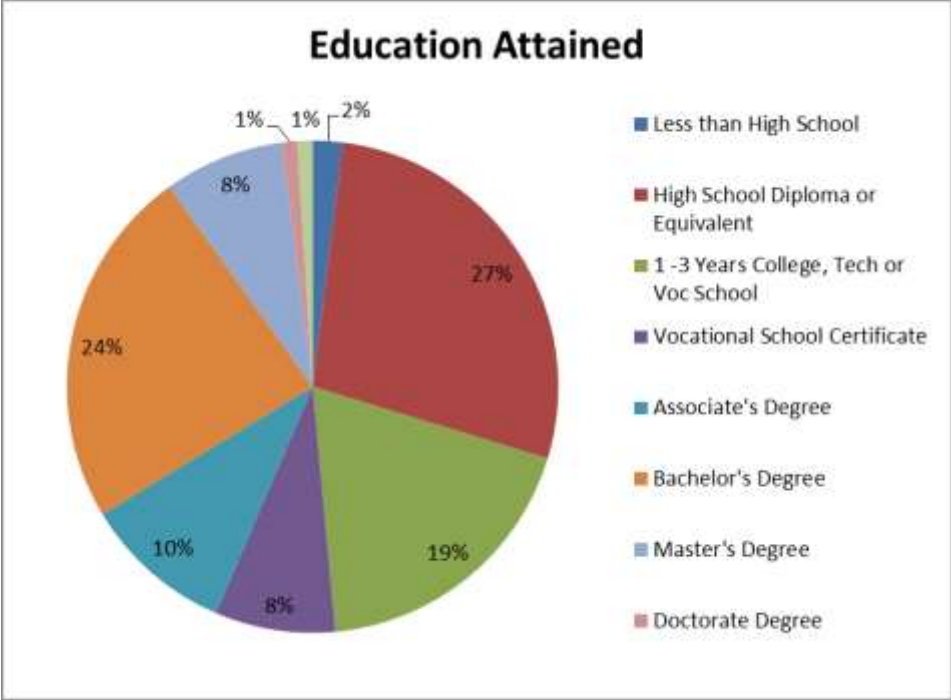


Figure 8

degrees to meet the needs of business, industry, and up-skill the workforce. Advanced manufacturing continues to expand throughout the region, surpassing national growth by close to 10%.

Transportation and logistics, agriculture, retail

trade, and entertainment further diversify the economic base isolating it from threats of sole source sector downfall.

Strategic guidance and coordinated activities between education and training providers will be of premium importance to meeting the workforce needs of employers and to help individuals gain knowledge and skills to land that first, new or better job. Efforts will focus on regional interests to help all customers secure their “best fit” service option. A service delivery process provided to all job seekers will include: 1) administration of a skills assessment for the construction of a service plan; 2) calculated selection of demand driven skill enhancement activities that may include training opportunities within and beyond the classroom; 3) and finally, referral to family sustaining, career based employment.

Figure 9

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional cooperation and interaction/workforce summit • Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) awareness • AJC front line staff • Partner coordination and leveraging of services • Resource sharing • Veteran’s outreach • Geographic location, interstate system • Easy access to training providers • Post-secondary funding opportunities (eg: TNPromise, Wilder-Naifeh, TNReconnect) • Drug Free Workplace Program offered by Partner Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low soft skills of those not attached to workforce • Lower labor participation rate • Lack of transportation especially in rural counties • Need for workforce credentialing for in-demand occupations • Additional partner and staff cross training needed • Not all data is able to share across service programs • Employers not utilizing the Drug Free Workplace Program • Age gap in TN Promise (to be addressed with new legislation)

Describe regional strategies used to facilitate engagement of businesses and other employers, including small employers and in-demand industry sector occupations. Describe methods and services to support the regional workforce system in meeting employer needs. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

Based on the regional labor market and economic conditions analysis available in Tennessee’s WIOA Combined State Plan (PY 2016-PY 2020), the Middle Tennessee Region will focus on the in-demand industry sector occupations and specific employer needs. Each LWDA has a Business Service Team comprised of AJC staff members who represent the various partner programs. Business engagement is led by the Business Service Team, continued relationships with the Chamber of Commerce, and other employer organizations. Collaboration exists with the Economic and Community Development (ECD) jobs base camps. The Council will work with the jobs base camps to utilize the resources established with the more rural communities to ensure all job seekers across the region are positioned to meet employer needs. Outreach to small business and entrepreneurial training will be facilitated by the Middle Tennessee Regional Council, in partnership with the small business administration. Through these engagements, the region can reach out to employers and offer services to provide training in in-demand occupations to address employment needs. Services to employers include, but are not limited to: On-the-job training (OJT), incumbent worker training, apprenticeship programs, entrepreneurial training, customized training, and shared space with employers in the American Jobs Center (AJC). Business needs will further be met by providing Career and Technical Education (CTE) worksites for

students enrolled in a rigorous academic/career pathway as framed by Pathways TN and WIOA ISY and OSY work experience which provides youth with mastery of soft and hard skills desired by employers. Partner programs also offer business engagement through Vocational Rehabilitation business consultants and employment facilitators to assist with the job needs for participants with barriers. Other employer services are offered through SCSEP and TANF to facilitate the transition of participants into employment and to meet employer needs. The majority of Local Workforce Boards are comprised of business leaders from the region and have active members from economic development as well as labor representatives on the Board. Their everyday outreach and experience gives the Regional Council the direction to meet the immediate and long term needs of business based on the labor force and changing conditions. Participation in Workforce 360 roundtable discussions, skill panels, and American Job Centers hosted career and job fairs aligns education, business, and the workforce. Collaborative efforts enhance awareness of local demand and further the development of skill sets desired by business and industry. Business Service teams coordinate these efforts through daily communication and weekly meetings to include regional coordination for special employer needs, especially those of large employers. Labor Education Alignment Program (LEAP) grants in the region have expanded manufacturing, automotive, and healthcare career pathways in the region.

Describe how the planning region will define and establish regional workforce development service strategies. Describe how the planning region will develop and use cooperative workforce development service delivery agreements. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

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

The Middle Tennessee Regional Council will meet on a quarterly basis to ensure communication among all partners across the region and to assess the region's economic conditions. Utilizing the latest labor market and economic analysis information, the Region will continue to define the employer needs and skill gaps to establish the most effective service strategies. The Regional Council will expand on its successful OJT projects with selected business and industry. Youth who qualify for WIOA funding will also have expanded opportunities for Work Based Learning throughout the region. Along with the core partners and ECD, the educational institutes will play a large role in leveraging the existing assets and programs established by Governor Haslam. Where employer needs cross multiple areas, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be established to streamline services for the participant and enable the employer to receive consistent services.

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

The delivery of workforce activities in the region is delivered through the American Job Center system which is electronically linked through a series of centers throughout the

40 county region. The recent self-assessment of all the primary and affiliate centers has streamlined activities and poised the centers to deliver seamless service to job seekers and employers without duplication. Central intake and single points of contact for employers are just a few of the streamlined efforts within the AJC system. Also, ECD Advisory Committees meet with Chambers of Commerce and Business Teams to review and develop new programs and services to address regional education and training needs.

- *Strategies to address geographic advantages.*

The flexibility of the Mobile Career Coaches allows for service to metropolitan, urban, and rural areas as needed to provide additional resources for employers and participants. The Region is assigned two Mobile Career Coaches to travel throughout the 40 county area. The Council would like to advertise the availability of the Mobile Career Coach to increase the knowledge of the Mobile Career Coaches. Moreover, the central interstate system provides access to multiple workforce areas where participants can access training and education through the high concentration of training providers via the mobile coach. Services are being developed to assist Fort Campbell service men and women to transition into the civilian workforce and stay in the Middle Tennessee Region.

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

Implemented strategies within the region to align education and the workforce with employer needs include: Skills Panels, Regional Workforce Summits among the Middle Tennessee Workforce Boards, Workforce 360 roundtables, Tennessee College of Applied Technology cooperative education, applicable WIOA Youth work experience assignments and LEAP grants.

The Middle Tennessee Region works with out-of-state partners in Kentucky and Alabama to jointly plan economic engagement. The region has the unique ability to recruit a sizeable population of veterans with the location of the Fort Campbell military installation within the region on the TN/KY line. An access point of the AJC has been established on the base to recruit a portion of the 300-450 soldiers a month who are discharged from service to work in Middle Tennessee.

- *Strategies to integrate existing regional planning efforts among core partners.*

The Middle Tennessee Region will collaborate to add consistency to our work based learning, OJT, apprenticeship programs, and externship policies. LEAP grant participants and youth served through the AJC system experience work based learning, and incumbent worker training grants are distributed equitably across our region. The core partners meet quarterly to ensure efforts to assist business and industry are aligned. The Region also has the advantage of four Tennessee Reconnect Communities to provide the additional supports and assistance to individuals going to college.

Describe how the planning region will define and establish administrative cost arrangements, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate, for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

- *Current or proposed resource leveraging agreements.*

Administrative costs will be managed through a MOU between each Local Workforce Development Area within the Middle Tennessee Region. Depending on the specific event which would dictate the need for a shared cost agreement, the arrangement will reflect a proportionate distribution between partners to ensure appropriate leveraging of funds.

- *Establishing a process to evaluate cost sharing arrangements.*

The Middle Tennessee Regional Council will assemble a Fiscal Committee from its members to further define and establish a consistent cost sharing process. Directors of the five Local Workforce Development Areas (LWDAs), along with their individual Workforce Boards and Fiscal Committees, will budget WIOA funding based upon a formula agreed on by the Council members. Funding will be based upon demographics of the local area as well as percentages of WIOA formula funds administered within their respective Area. Since most Local Workforce Boards will have a fiscal sub-committee, the Council will also form a financial advisor sub-group to monitor expenditures of funds.

Describe how the planning region will determine and coordinate supportive services for the region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

- *Whether the provision of supportive services could be enhanced, and if so, how.*

Policies from each LWDA in the Middle Tennessee Region will be reviewed to align services across the region. Joint policies may be drafted between areas, and a listing of supportive services will be consistent across the Region to eliminate participant confusion, pending board approval. In addition, a listing of supportive services offered through each partner program will be gathered for reference and shared. Staff training across partner programs will allow for better coordination and leveraging of services for the participants, particularly for those with barriers to employment.

- *What organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services.*

WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth, TANF, Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) programs are authorized by their governing policies to expend funding for supportive services as needed. In addition to core partner support services, staff at AJC are cognizant of area specific organizations that may provide supportive services such as Human Resource Agencies, Community Based Organizations (CBO), and Outreach Programs. AJC staff is cross trained to ensure

funding is leveraged and not duplicated while assuring individuals receive authorized and effective services to eliminate employment and/or skill upgrade barriers.

- *Establishing a process to promote coordination of supportive services delivery.*

Customers are co-enrolled in a variety of programs to leverage resources. For instance, a participant could receive WIOA funding for travel, TANF assistance for child care, and VR supplied workplace equipment due to a disability. After the initial intake and assessment process, AJC staff has a referral network which allows eligible customers who have a remaining need(s) to receive support to assist in eliminating barriers.

Outline regional transportation issues related to workforce development and ways the region will address needs identified. Include a description and/or map of the regional commuting patterns. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

- *Whether the provision of transportation services could be enhanced, and if so, how.*

Transportation for participants in rural areas, and for those with barriers, will continue to be a challenge. The Council intends to use available modes of transportation while researching potential new options. Efforts and studies conducted by the Department of Transportation through Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Rural Planning Organizations establishes long-term and short-term funding priorities for transportation needs. In addition, the Regional Transportation Authority in Middle Tennessee operates in several of the region’s counties. These options leave many areas with limited transportation choices. A listing of all transportation resources in the area will be shared within the Region. As necessary, the Region will develop cooperative agreements when there is a demonstrated need for participant transportation.

The Middle Tennessee Region has a variety of state and federal highway systems crossing the area as well as rail and inland waterways suitable for heavy barge traffic. This has allowed Middle Tennessee to prosper by providing flexible delivery options for business and industry as they transport goods across North America and worldwide. *Business Magazine* has named Tennessee as a top state for business growth, and the existing transportation system is an essential component of this.

- *What organizations currently provide or could provide transportation services.*

The public transportation systems in Clarksville and Nashville, the numerous Park and Ride connections across the Interstates of 65, 24 and 40, the Upper and Mid Cumberland Human Resource Agency systems, South Central Area Transit System, as well as some railway systems, create a network of pathways for commuting and business goods delivery. Transportation services for customers requiring assistance to work and/or

Figure 10– US Census “On-the-Map”



training is coordinated among AJC partners and the primary enrollment agency is responsible for transportation coordination. Figure 10 depicts the number of people who live and work in the region, those that live and work outside the region, as well as those living outside the region but working inside the region.

- *Establishing a process to promote coordination of transportation supportive service delivery.*

A myriad of organizations at the state level, including the Department of Transportation, the Greater Nashville Regional Council, Jobs Based Camps, and rural planning organizations continue to monitor growth and usage to maintain a functioning transportation plan in order to advocate road construction and networks to keep pace with growth. Current studies are evaluating a rail and mass transit bus service throughout Middle Tennessee.

Describe strategies and services the planning region will employ to align and coordinate workforce development programs/services with regional ECD Regions and providers. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

- *Current economic development organizations engaged in regional planning.*

Tennessee Economic Community Development (TECD) and regional workforce programs are critical components of local economic growth. Departmental relationships are strengthened through coordination of strategic planning; use of economic data in workforce development decision making; and recognition that workforce development programs contribute greatly to the pipeline of skilled workers. Staff serve on TECD boards/councils, and TECD is well represented on local boards and committees. Staff participate in Workforce 360 meetings led by TECD with individual employers.

- *Education and training providers involved with economic development.*

The Middle Tennessee Region conducted a Regional Workforce Board Summit to align and educate the Local Workforce Development Boards to immediate and future workforce and economic development issues. Board members, and members of the Tennessee Board of Regents and Tennessee Higher Education Commission, received thorough briefings from the Administrator of Workforce Services, the Assistant Commissioner for State Economic Development, the State Workforce Board, the Boyd Center for Business and Economic Research, and the Center for Labor Markets and Policy. The first of its kind within the state, this gathering of regional partners poised the Middle Tennessee Region to be on the cutting edge of economic activity. These briefings provided information needed to understand the 'state of the region', its challenges and growth potential, as well as factors to consider for future workforce challenges in the state and the region.

Adult Education provides pre-employment testing, basic skills upgrade, High School Equivalency classes with integrated soft skills training, English as Second Language classes, financial literacy classes, and additional services on/off site for employers throughout the region. TCATs and Community Colleges also offer Customized Special

noncredit training when appropriate, such as certificates in PLC, Robotics, Electricity, and Truck Driver training as requested by employers. Vocation Rehabilitation provides customized soft skill training for employer needs.

- *Current businesses involved with economic development organizations.*

The Local Boards have aligned economic development in the region to recruit companies such as Dal Tile, Hankook Tire, Nissan, General Motors, Academy Sports and Outdoors, Ficoso, Marcum Technologies Incubator (assisting new and startup companies), Bridgestone North America, Magneti Marelli, and Calsonic. These and other recently recruited businesses are involved with economic development organizations.

- *Targeted businesses from emerging sectors/industries.*

The Middle Tennessee Region will focus on targeting construction, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and information technology industries, such as Beretta, Hospital Corporation of America, Cummins Filtration, Landmark Ceramics, Transtar Dacco, Lyft, National HealthCare Corporation, and the Bank of New York Mellon.

Describe how the planning region will establish an agreement concerning how the planning region will collectively achieve and report on the established performance accountability measures described in WIOA Section 116(c), for local areas and the planning region. [WIOA Sec. 106(c)]

- *The process to be used for determining regional performance goals.*

Each Local Workforce Development Area within the region will have negotiated goals for performance outcomes. The Council will review historical outcomes for each area to analyze and establish baseline information for performance goals. Quarterly evaluations of performance outcomes will be reviewed and each area will be required to achieve their portion of the goal. Through the Regional MOU, a description of the area's responsibility will be described. Based on quarterly outcomes, best practices may be established and shared across the region to improve areas of lesser performance. It will be necessary to work collectively and consistently with participants to maintain the outcomes for the region.

Describe how the planning region will coordinate with area secondary education, community colleges and universities to align strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services. [proposed 20 CFR 679.540(b)]

Regional partners will continue to foster relationships between workforce development, post-secondary, and secondary educational systems to ensure system alignment and layered credentialing of programs to satisfy employer needs and provide job seekers portable demand-driven skills. Resource leveraging will offer students the best support structure for success. Local WIOA standing committees, councils, and board members will serve on educational advisory committees and boards to enhance services and

avoid duplication. Real time data and historical business performance will be referenced to identify workplace soft and hard skills and competencies necessary to attain a sustainable wage. Coordination between state departments and regional areas will work in support of an integrated service delivery model. Functional teams across co-located partner staff will provide conveniently located in-demand occupational training for participants.

Describe how the planning region will address workforce development issues specifically related to its: cities and/or towns, suburban areas, and rural areas. [proposed 20 CFR 679.540(b)]

Part of the responsibilities of ECD jobs base camps is to reach out to the rural counties to incorporate additional workforce service strategies in hard to serve areas. The Governor's Rural Task Force has identified areas in our Region that are rural and are not receiving the same economic success that non-rural areas are experiencing. The Rural Task Force Report will be a tool the Region can use to enhance and actively participate alongside of the 18 government and non-government agencies to address this weakness. Working with the Chambers and the ECD partners, we will identify the unique needs of the more rural areas of the region. In order to serve employers and participants in areas away from the comprehensive or affiliate sites, the region will utilize the AJC network as the primary conduit for workforce development activities within the region. Access points will be created in libraries, public spaces, and profit or non-profit employment sites. In addition, the mobile Career Coaches will be positioned at needed locations. Job fairs will be offered as needed to address the local employer and participant accessibility needs.

Describe how the planning region will connect any regional targeted populations to occupational demands including individuals with barriers to employment. [proposed 20 CFR 679.540(b)] This should include but is not limited to at-risk youth, TANF recipients, SNAP E&T participants, Vocational Rehabilitation participants, and ex-offenders.

Customer flow services and programs are available at any entry point where the customer, including an at-risk youth, TANF participant, SNAP recipient, Vocational Rehabilitation client, and/or ex-offender may interact with the workforce system. Use of electronic services through regional and local website linkages will expand customer awareness of services across the region and promote employer interest and involvement. Use of Tennessee's JOBS4TN site is available for all customers who will experience American Job Centers' seamless, service-driven facilities operated by a dedicated, sensitive, and professional team. Customers will have knowledge of and access to demand-driven occupational training online, through the traditional classroom, or by direct participation in work based learning, and/or on-the-job training. The Middle Tennessee Region provides outreach to the inmate population in the form of onsite job centers for job readiness in the White and Maury County Jails, and through Hi-SET classes offered in multiple correctional facilities. The Montgomery County AJC Business Service team is working with the Tennessee Prison Outreach Ministry re-entry center to

prepare inmates 6-9 prior to release to find employment. There is one common youth contractor in areas 7, 8, and 9 that conducts outreach and recruitment activities for youth in, or transitioned out of, foster care. From 2015-2016, LWDA-10 established a Tennessee Career Center (now American Job Center) inside the Maury County Jail. During this time, 200 inmates received career center services and 43 received their High School Equivalency. Of those inmates, only 7% (or 14 people) reoffended, whereas, of the general jail population that did not receive career center services reoffended at a 75% rate. To get a more accurate recidivism rate takes several years and that information was not available as of yet.

The Regional Council and its partners in workforce and economic development stand poised to meet the needs of business and industry in Middle Tennessee by providing a flexible and highly educated workforce.