



Five-year Strategic Plan

May 2023



**PUBLIC SECTOR
CONSULTANTS**

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Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Strategic Plan	5
Goal One: Diversify Funding	6
Goal Two: Strengthen and Increase Relationships with Partners.....	7
Goal Three: Increase Brand Awareness and Recognition	8
Goal Four: Provide Quality Professional Development Opportunities	9
Goal Five: Strengthen Advocacy.....	10
Appendix A: Current Environment	11
Appendix B: Survey	15
Appendix C: Session One Overview	26
Appendix D: Session Two Overview	28
Appendix E: Session Three Summary	32
Appendix F: SWOT Analysis	35
Appendix G: Goals and Accompanying Objectives and Activities	37

Introduction

The Michigan Works! Association is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit membership organization that supports Michigan Works! agencies across the state with advocacy, programming, and services. Michigan Works! Association aspires to realize its mission and vision by providing voice, knowledge, and connection for member agencies.

Vision

We envision a Michigan where collaborative workforce development is an integral component of our state's economic prosperity.

Mission

The Michigan Works! Association will execute this vision by serving as the leading voice in workforce development advocacy, policy, education, and investments.



Leadership changes at Michigan Works! Association, coupled with dramatic shifts in labor market trends resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted a need to reassess the goals, mission, and strategy of the association. Michigan Works! Association contracted with Public Sector Consultants (PSC) to facilitate a comprehensive strategic planning process with stakeholders, including staff, association members, and business leaders. PSC assessed the current environment through a stakeholder engagement strategy that included focus groups, interviews, and surveys. This assessment informed subsequent strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analyses and strategic planning sessions. Summaries of the analyses and sessions can be found in Appendices A–F.

Strategic Plan

The strategic plan identifies overarching goals and objectives that focus Michigan Works! Association's efforts over the next three to five years. Sample activities that the strategic planning committee brainstormed are in Appendix E.

A goal is a desirable outcome that is often broad and long term.

An objective is a measurable action that can be implemented to achieve the overall goal.





Goal One

Diversify Funding

Objective A

Increase external funding by 10 percent annually over the next three to five years

Objective B

Increase fee-for-service revenue by 10 percent annually over the next three to five years

Objective C

Increase membership by 10 percent



Goal Two

Strengthen and Increase Relationships with Partners

Objective A

Increase engagement opportunities for existing members by 5 percent annually over the next three to five years

Objective B

Identify and cultivate new partners and stakeholders



Goal Three

Increase Brand Awareness and Recognition

Objective A

Develop Michigan Works! Association brand standards and resources (internal and external)

Objective B

Create a marketing and communications plan

Goal Four

Provide Quality Professional Development Opportunities

Objective A

Establish a Center of Excellence

Objective B

Develop Michigan Works! Association and Michigan Works! agency leadership skills agency leadership skills

Objective C

Reimagine training and professional development to develop innovative curriculum pathways

Goal Five

Strengthen Advocacy

Objective A

Create a comprehensive state and federal advocacy agenda

Objective B

Identify opportunities to align advocacy efforts with partners/sectors

Objective C

Increase advocacy opportunities and effectiveness for Michigan Works! Association and members

Appendix A: Current Environment

Interviews and Small Group Discussions

Public Sector Consultants (PSC) is assisting the Michigan Works! Association (the Association) with strategic planning efforts. The Association supports local and regional Michigan Works! agencies with professional development, training, and advocacy to help them better serve their workers and employers in their area. On behalf of the Association, PSC conducted 13 30-minute interviews and two one-hour focus groups to collect stakeholders' insights related to how well the Association is serving its members, where the greatest value lies, and how the Association can improve its service offerings. Stakeholders included Michigan Works! Association staff, Michigan Works! regional agency staff, Michigan Works! Association board members, and other key organizational partners who are familiar with the Association's services.

Confirmed Successes

Internal and External Collaboration

All stakeholders shared that the transition to Ryan Hundt as the Association's CEO has been a significantly beneficial change, both for internal staff protocol and maintaining external partnerships. Staff members shared that leadership is open to feedback, communicates often and effectively, and affords flexibility to staff members. Staff and leadership agreed that the Association has a collaborative, helpful staff atmosphere where team members can lean on each other's wide-ranging expertise. Staff described being able to pursue initiatives that align with both their passion and skillset. Both staff members and key organizational partners expressed appreciation for leadership creating more meaningful external partnerships as part of updating and realigning the Association's mission, vision, and goals.

Most interviewees praised the Association's working relationship with the regional agencies and agreed that the Association serves as a dependable advocate that supports Michigan Works! Association agencies. Some interviewees encouraged leadership to continue being intentional about reestablishing the trust that was severed because of previous leadership's actions. Members and key organizational partners alike shared that as trust building continues, the focus should shift to improved service implementation and delivery. One interviewee recommended that the Association challenge its membership when necessary, namely regional agencies, to continue fostering and prioritizing improvement and innovation. Another interviewee shared that many members are newer and more progressive and thus more willing to embrace contemporary supports like strategic planning to reinforce organizational alignment.

Greatest Value to Members

When asked to name what they saw as the greatest value to members in joining the Association, many interviewees (across stakeholder type) emphasized the opportunity for connection and collaboration. One interviewee described the Association as being "one voice" advocating for the collective wishes of Michigan's regional agencies, adding that sharing best practices fosters continual learning and

improvement while maintaining agencies' individuality. Some interviewees stated that opportunities for training, professional development, and networking are some of the highest-value activities that the Association offers. Other interviewees appreciated the direct communication during monthly open-door meetings between regional Michigan Works! agencies and state agencies like the Michigan Departments of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Health and Human Services, and Transportation, as well as other organizations like the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.

A key organizational partner shared that the Association and its regional agencies' thorough understanding of their local job markets—especially the employer bases—is of significant value to both job seekers and employers. The interviewee explained that by establishing the Business Solutions Professional (BSP) training system, the Association developed an infrastructure that aims to organize, connect, and collaborate with employers. A self-sustaining job creation model like BSP is evidence of the Association's proactive programmatic trajectory and its dedication to business resiliency and industry-led collaboration.

Identified Challenges

Wagner-Peyser and Standardizing Michigan Works! Services

The most common and immediate challenge that interviewees highlighted is the pending legislation related to amending the Wagner-Peyser Act, which helped create a nationwide system of public employment offices aimed at improving the functioning of labor markets across the nation by connecting employers and job seekers.¹ The proposed changes would standardize Employment Service offerings for all states and likely reduce funding, which could result in laying off regional agency staff and restructuring how some agencies conduct their work.² Introducing this potential amendment has forced the Association and its regional agencies to react swiftly, developing messaging campaigns and connecting repeatedly with lawmakers to communicate the importance of the unique structure of Michigan Works! and how individuals and businesses have been successfully impacted through the existing model. While some interviewees regarded individuality within regional agencies as a strength, others viewed the disparate organizational makeup and resultant differing internal processes as a potential barrier for centralizing more of the Association's service offerings. Multiple interviewees advocated for case-by-case program/process implementation within regional agencies as needed.

Lack of Clarity Around the Michigan Works! Association Brand, Staff Roles, and Staff Capacity

Several interviewees, including staff and organizational partners, suggested continuing to reshape the Association's branding and larger communications efforts, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted how closely many people still associate Michigan Works! with the Unemployment Insurance Agency. Multiple interviewees mentioned the importance of purposeful, nuanced storytelling in the Association's campaigns moving forward to help clarify its value to members, employers, job seekers, and even communities. Accurate name recognition and a better understanding of who the Association serves

¹ U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. n.d. "Wagner-Peyser Act Employment Service Results." *U.S. Department of Labor*. Accessed June 7, 2022. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/performance/results/wagner-peyser>

² National Archives. "Wagner-Peyser Act Staffing: A Proposed Rule by the Employment and Training Administration on 04/20/2022." *Federal Register*. Accessed June 7, 2022. <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2022/04/20/2022-07628/wagner-peyser-act-staffing>

and the available service offerings could better direct outreach efforts and improve training and event participation. Some key organizational partners emphasized the issue of programmatic overlap with postsecondary institutions, namely community colleges, and described competition with those institutions in securing funding. Greater alignment between workforce development organizations and postsecondary institutions could alleviate competition by instead fostering partnerships.

Multiple staff members underscored staff-role overlap as an obstacle; given the Association's limited staff size, more clearly defined roles would help focus and maximize staff time. Several staff members explained that some of their current duties do not reflect their job title or description, which can cause friction, confusion, and even duplication when prioritizing and completing tasks. Some staff shared concerns about not having enough staff capacity to manage necessary administrative and communications duties, and to successfully host large-scale events like the Impact Awards or the Michigan Works! Association's annual conference.

Opportunities for Improvement

Multiple interviewees, across stakeholder type, expressed their support for the strategic planning process currently underway, agreeing that the Association will benefit from collectively reconfirming its vision and mission and aligning its goals to best serve its members. Many spoke about the Association needing to move away from reactive action to proactive action, with mixed feedback on which perspective is its default currently. Staff and board members applauded the effectiveness and collaboration of the Association's six different user groups, but members and other key organizational partners felt the user groups would benefit from a more formal structure and agenda. Some interviewees suggested occasionally incorporating training or professional development opportunities into the user-group meetings.

Stakeholders were mixed in their opinions about the usefulness of networking opportunities provided during the Association's annual conference, though members agreed that the conference could be shortened to two days to better justify the cost to attend, especially for more rural or understaffed regional agencies. One key organizational stakeholder proposed that the Association host networking mixers like those hosted by chambers of commerce to bring all Association stakeholders together more intentionally, as opposed to in siloed activities like user groups, board meetings, or open-door meetings with government agencies.

Advocacy Suggestions and Solutions

Most interviewees confirmed that the Association's advocacy efforts have steadily improved and most also noted that the Association should continue prioritizing advocacy as a cornerstone of its service offerings. One key organizational partner encouraged the Association to consider inviting "the right people" to help advocate on the Association's behalf—they asserted that different perspectives (including business leaders and employees) could help communicate vital, effective messages to legislators. Several interviewees affirmed that the Association's advocacy should focus more aggressively on appropriations and securing funding; one interviewee advised the Association to drill down to specific member needs, as opposed to maintaining a high-level overview, to remain competitive in seeking out new funding streams. They provided a model for this process—identifying a specific group in need; describing a specific action, solution, or goal to address that need; and communicating what gap or barrier is being addressed. They also suggested that the Association and its regional agencies

collaborate more intentionally with adult education organizations to avoid young adult workers slipping through the cracks in either system. Another interviewee mentioned addressing Senate cuts to Governor Whitmer's proposed budget related to American Rescue Plan Act funding, which would reduce apprenticeships and youth employment and training opportunities. One key organizational partner recommended collaborating with Michigan Reconnect and the Michigan New Jobs Training Program to provide their members access to training tools and opportunities.

Important Issues Facing Workforce Development Organizations

In acknowledging that the current talent pool is being impacted by social determinants of health-type barriers, including child care, food insecurity, and transportation, several key organizational partners urged the Association to prioritize considering and addressing these hurdles to better meet the needs of today's workforce. They also recommended exploring ways to engage, train, and support employment for groups that have not been considered or supported previously, including individuals with disabilities, individuals who were formerly incarcerated, and individuals without postsecondary degrees. One interviewee stressed the importance of clearly identifying and marketing which job seekers and employers are eligible for which training opportunities and wraparound supports, stating that the operational differences between regional agencies can make it confusing to know where and how to seek services.

Other interviewees made suggestions for specific training topics to meet rising workforce demands. One interviewee emphasized developing more specific service offerings related to data management, strategic planning, and program implementation. Multiple interviewees spoke along the same lines, urging the Association to invest in training its own staff to become subject matter experts in topics related to staff development, technology, human resources, finance, and marketing and communications. The Association being a leader itself in professionalizing its staff could result in greater engagement in its service offerings. One member stated that hiring events' timing should be responsive to potential employees' schedules and that the employers should represent fields in high demand, including healthcare and manufacturing. Several interviewees shared that job seekers are not only postsecondary recruits or retirees returning to work, but also people in all stages of their careers looking to pivot to a new industry entirely, which is a growing target population following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

Overall, stakeholders' perceptions of the Michigan Works! Association's leadership, collaborative nature, and service offerings were very positive. Interviewees were all satisfied with the Association's trajectory as related to professional development opportunities and advocacy efforts. Though the proposed changes to Wagner-Peyser may alter the structure of the Association's regional agencies, stakeholders suggested many avenues for improvement to better address the needs of Michigan's workforce.

Appendix B: Survey

The Michigan Works! Association (the Association) is in the process of developing a three to five-year strategic plan that will guide the administrative and programmatic direction of the organization. Gathering candid, thoughtful feedback from Association’s board of directors, staff, and other key stakeholders will be key in creating mission, vision, and values statements and a prioritized list of goals and strategies that both builds upon the Association’s accomplishments and highlights its ambitions and aspirations as an organization.

To that end, Public Sector Consultants (PSC) conducted a stakeholder survey to gather broad input, thoughts, and opinions about the Association’s strategic planning, including its mission, vision, and values. The survey allowed for responses inclusive of all stakeholders, such as funders, State of Michigan departmental leadership, policymakers, and each of the Michigan Works! agencies. PSC, with the strategic planning committee, developed questions on what works well, what could be improved, and what is missing in their existing strategic vision.

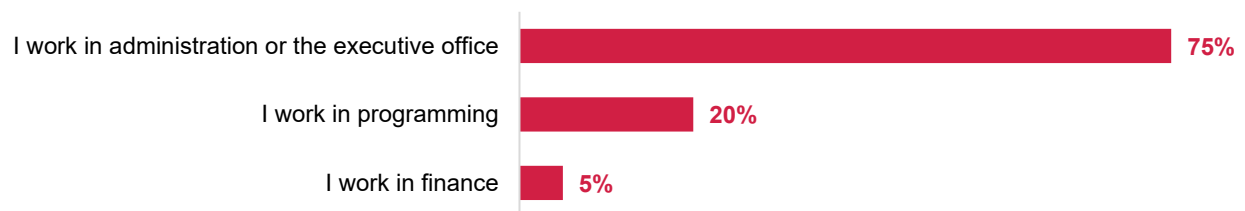
Survey Results

PSC conducted the survey online using Qualtrics and worked with the Association staff to develop email-based survey distribution and a communication plan designed to follow up at specified intervals to encourage responses. In total, 45 stakeholders responded to the survey.

Demographics

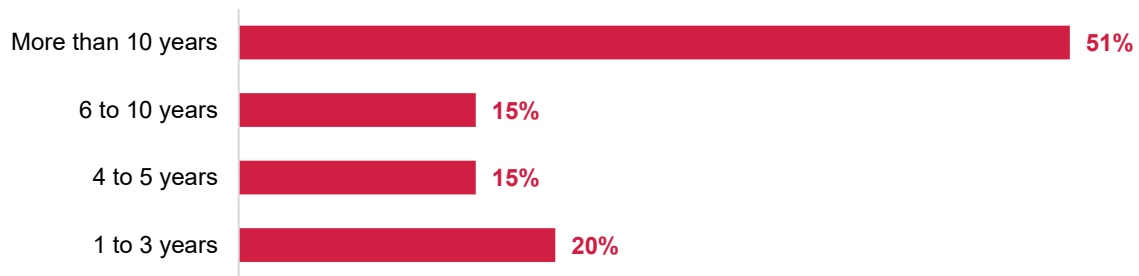
Three-quarters of survey respondents work in administration or the executive office, while 20 percent work in programming (e.g., Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act [WIOA], Partnership, Accountability, Training, Hope [PATH], etc.), and 5 percent work in finance (Exhibit B1). Just over half of respondents have worked at their current organization for more than ten years, while 20 percent have worked for one to three years (Exhibit B2).

EXHIBIT B1. Role of Survey Respondents



N = 40

EXHIBIT B2. Length of Time Worked at Organization



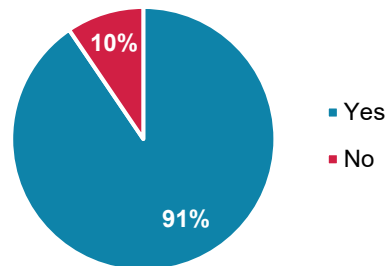
N = 41

Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Professional Development Opportunities

Every survey respondent said that they are familiar with the professional development opportunities offered by the Association, including training courses, webinars, and annual conferences. In addition, 91 percent said that they have participated in those professional development opportunities (Exhibit B3).

EXHIBIT B3. Participation in the Association's Professional Development Opportunities

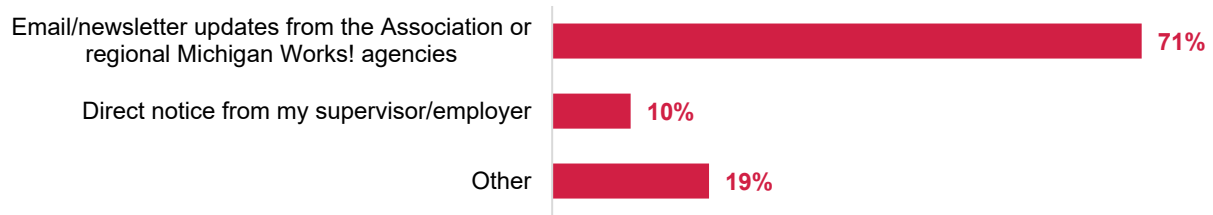


N = 42

Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Most survey respondents (71 percent) heard about these opportunities from communications directly from the Association or regional offices, while 10 percent received direct notice from their employer or supervisor (Exhibit B4). Survey respondents also shared other ways they heard about professional development opportunities, including visiting the Michigan Works! Association website regularly and attending meetings.

EXHIBIT B4. How Respondents Heard About Michigan Works! Association Professional Development Opportunities



N = 42

Almost all of the survey respondents have attended the annual conferences and completed training courses (95 percent and 90 percent, respectively) (Exhibit B5). Another 84 percent have participated in the webinar series. Other opportunities included the user groups and the policy academy.

EXHIBIT B5. Types of Professional Development Opportunities Survey Respondents Participated In

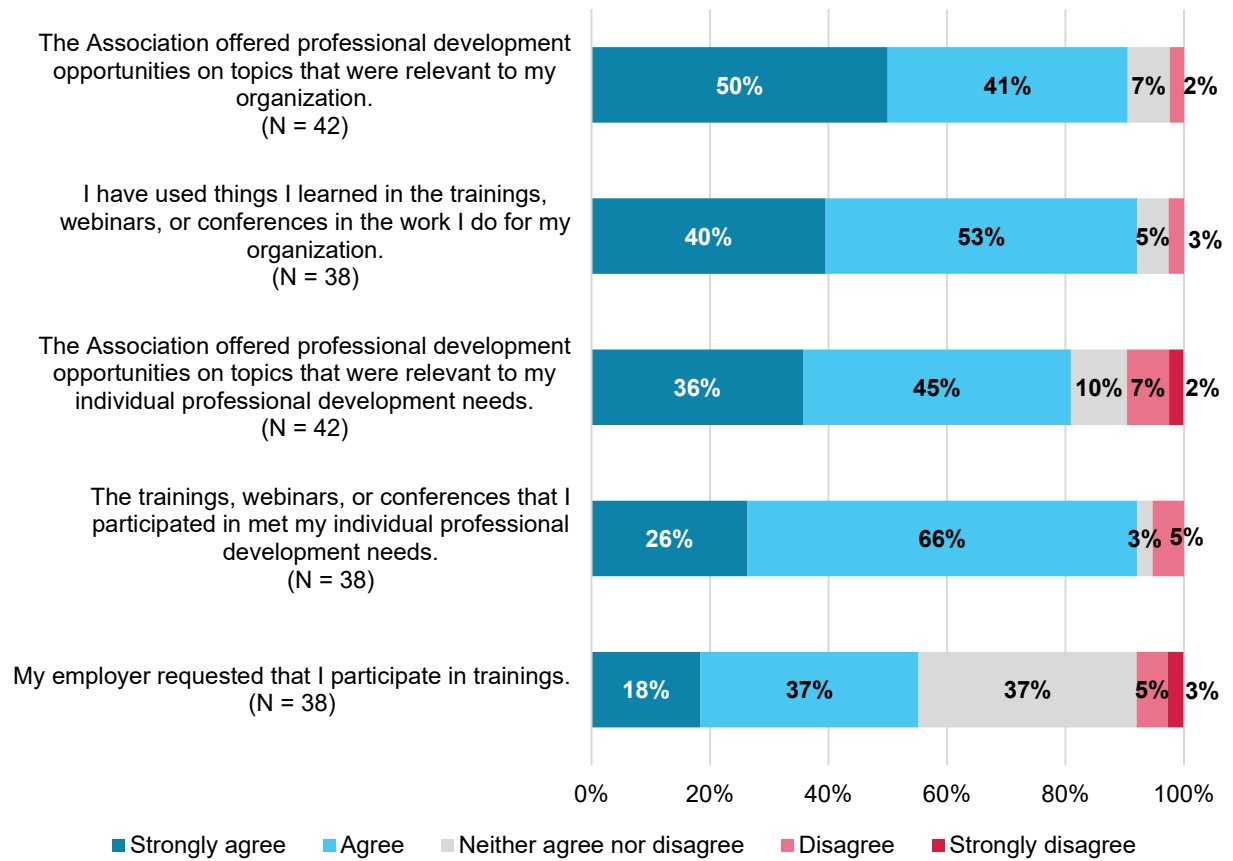


N = 38

Note: Does not total 100 due to respondents being able to select more than one response.

Most survey respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Association offered professional development opportunities on topics that were relevant to their organization (91 percent) and that were relevant to their individual professional development needs (81 percent) (Exhibit B6). In addition, 93 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they have used things they learned in the training, webinars, or conferences in the work they do for their organization. Only a small percentage of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with any of the statements on professional development opportunities (between 2 and 9 percent).

EXHIBIT B6. Level of Agreement on Statements Related to Professional Development Opportunities



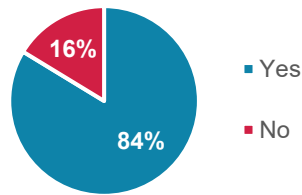
Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Over the next six months, the Association is offering several professional development opportunities, including:

- Michigan Works! Association Policy Academy (cohorts 1, 2)
- Managing Employer Issues Related to Long Haulers Syndrome Following COVID
- Michigan Unemployment Insurance Agency Web Account Management
- Our Community Listens
- Resume Revamp
- Michigan Works! Fiscal Summit
- Essentials of BSP for Career Service
- BSP (cohort 43)

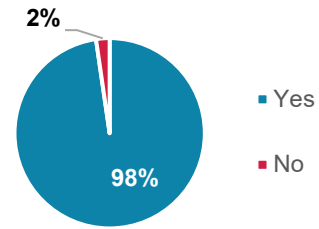
Eighty-four percent of survey respondents indicated those topics are relevant to their individual professional development needs (Exhibit B7), while 98 percent said that they are relevant to the work their organization does (Exhibit B8).

EXHIBIT B7. Future Topics That Are Relevant to Individual Professional Development Needs



N = 43

EXHIBIT B8. Future Topics That Are Relevant to Work Organization Does



N = 43

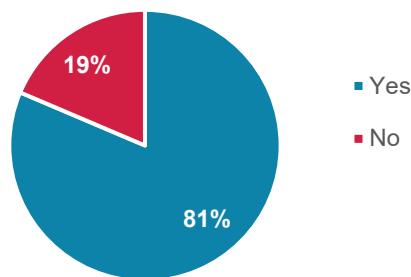
Respondents also provided feedback on additional professional development topics that they would like to see incorporated into future opportunities. Responses varied and included:

- Organizational leadership
- Peer-to-peer learning and best practices
- Building a successful workforce program
- Organizational development and strategy
- Management (including case management, organizational management, and project management)
- Grantwriting
- Social media
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion
- State audits
- Building and managing consortia

Networking Events

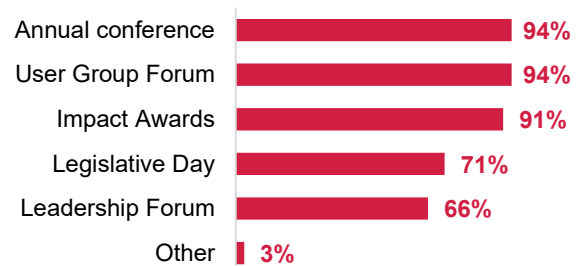
Just over 80 percent of survey respondents are aware of the Association’s networking opportunities (Exhibit B9). Most indicated they are aware of the annual conference, User-group Forum, and Impact Awards (Exhibit B10). Seventy-one percent said they are aware of Legislative Day and 66 percent are aware of the Leadership Forum.

EXHIBIT B9. Awareness of the Association’s Networking Opportunities



N = 43

EXHIBIT B10. Awareness of the Association’s Networking Events



N = 35

Note: Does not total 100 due to respondents being able to select more than one response.

Almost one-third of respondents have attended six or more networking events in the past two years, while another 29 percent have attended three to five, and 27 percent have attended one or two (Exhibit B11). Only 6 percent have not attended any events.

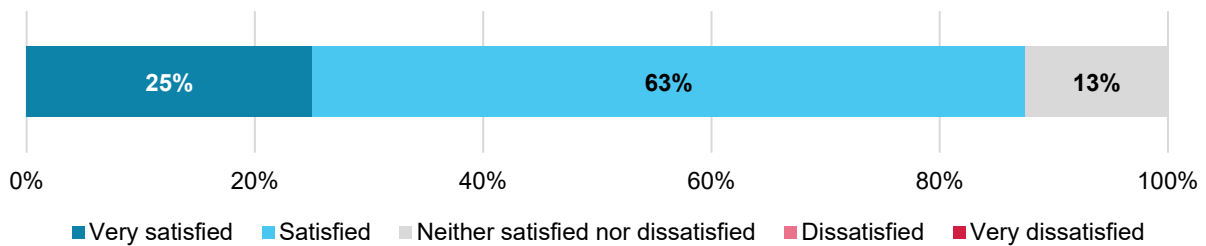
EXHIBIT B11. Attendance for the Association’s Networking Events in the Past Two Years



N = 34

For survey respondents who have attended one or more networking events, they were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the events, including the event time, location, and opportunities for professional, collegial interaction. Eighty-eight percent of respondents said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the events (Exhibit B12). No one responded that they were dissatisfied or extremely dissatisfied.

EXHIBIT B12. Satisfaction with the Association’s Networking Events



N = 32

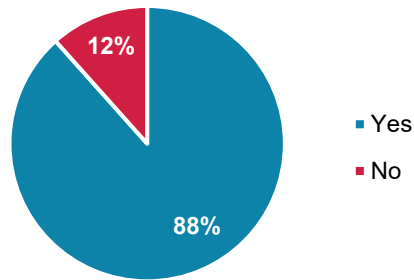
Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Respondents who participated in the User-group Forum and/or the Leadership Forum were asked to provide feedback on what they thought was the most valuable aspect of participating in those events. Most respondents shared that the facilitated discussions on specific issues and practices, the peer-to-peer learning from other the Michigan Works! Association offices, and networking were especially beneficial.

Advocacy Initiatives

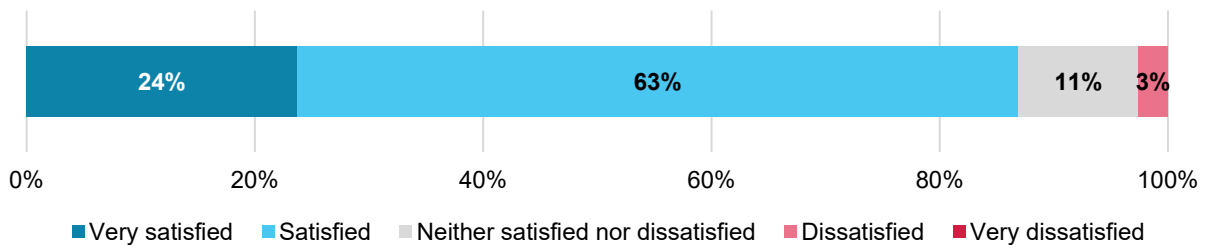
Eighty-eight percent of survey respondents are aware of the Association’s advocacy initiatives (Exhibit B13). Of those who are aware of their efforts, 87 percent said they are satisfied or very satisfied with those efforts (Exhibit B14).

EXHIBIT B13. Awareness of the Association’s Advocacy Efforts



N = 43

EXHIBIT B14. Level of Satisfaction with the Association’s Advocacy Efforts



N = 38

Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Survey respondents then provided feedback on the Association’s advocacy efforts, specifically on what efforts were successful and/or progressed dialogue with policymakers, what topics are currently missing from the advocacy platform, and what topics should be removed or emphasized less.

Respondents shared several efforts that they believe are successful, with the most frequent answer being maintaining funding for, and local control within, Michigan Works! regional agencies, followed by championing beneficial legislative changes that support regional agencies and the Going Pro talent fund. Other responses included closing the professional trades workforce gap, supporting youth work experience, and all of the above. Some respondents shared that they weren’t aware of any specific advocacy efforts promoted by the Association and that the Association has not offered any value to these efforts.

When asked what was currently missing from the advocacy platform, a variety of responses were shared, including:

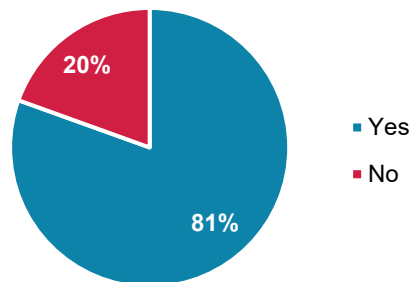
- Focus on attracting and retaining candidates for child-care centers
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
- Ensuring workforce programs are integrated with local agencies
- Removing bureaucracy from operations
- Continued support for H-2B visas to meet seasonal job demands
- WIOA funding sequencing
- Lack of personnel and strategy to engage with key partners

Very few respondents shared what topics they felt should be removed or emphasized less. Those who did provide insight suggested less emphasis on supporting youth work experiences and closing the professional trades workforce gap, stating that all employer gaps should be filled, not just those focusing on the professional trades.

Legislative and Policy Updates

Most survey respondents (81 percent) receive policy updates from the Association (Exhibit B15).

EXHIBIT B15. Survey Respondents Who Receive Policy Updates from the Association

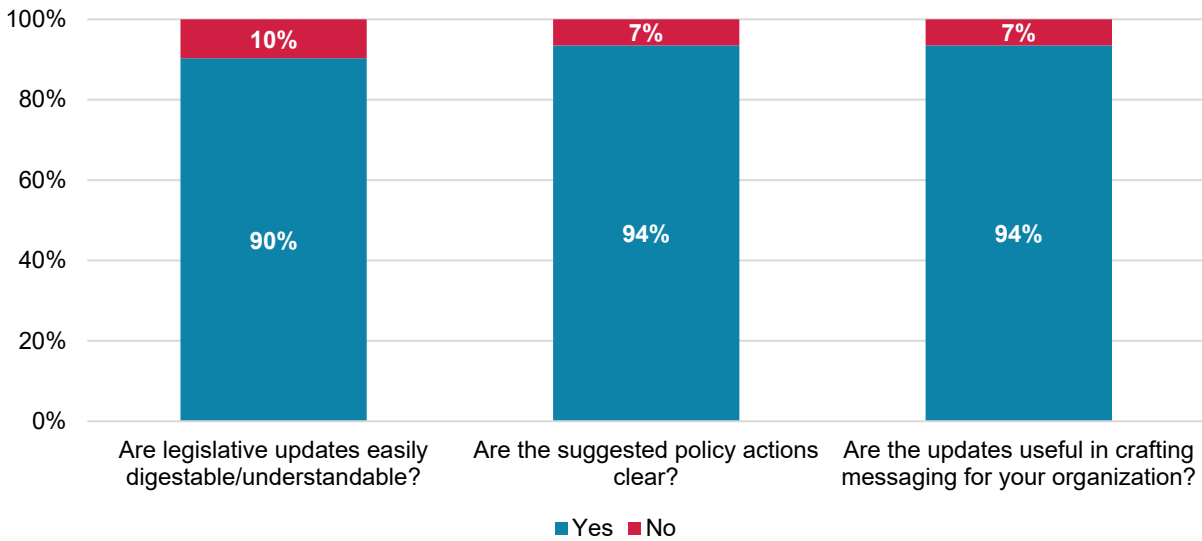


N = 41

Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Of those who do, 90 percent think that the legislative updates are easily digestible/understandable, 94 percent think that the suggested policy actions are clear, and 94 percent think the updates are useful in crafting messaging for their organization (Exhibit B16).

EXHIBIT B16. Agreement with Various Aspects of Policy Updates



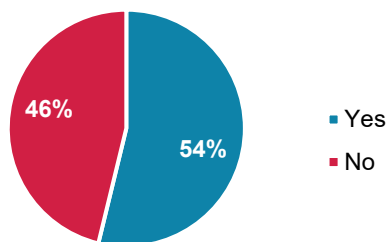
N = 31

Note: Does not total 100 due to rounding.

Data Resources and Reporting

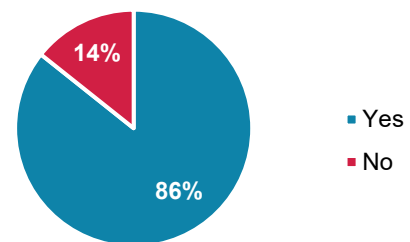
Just over half of survey respondents (54 percent) are aware of the data resources and reporting supports that the Association offers (Exhibit B17). Of those who are aware of the resources and supports, 86 percent have used them (Exhibit B18).

EXHIBIT B17. Awareness of Data Resources or Reporting Supports



N = 39

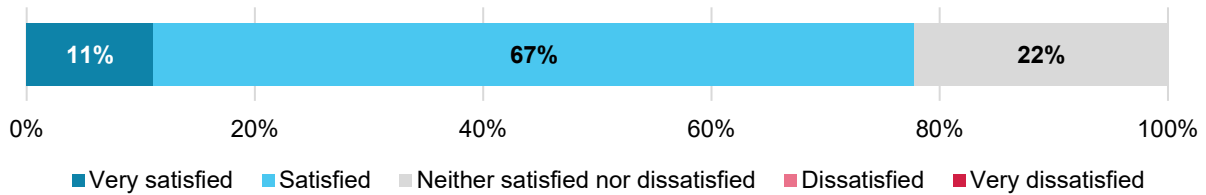
EXHIBIT B18. Use of Data Resources or Reporting Supports



N = 21

In addition, 78 percent of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the accessibility of the data resources (Exhibit B19).

EXHIBIT B19. Level of Satisfaction with the Accessibility of the Data Resources



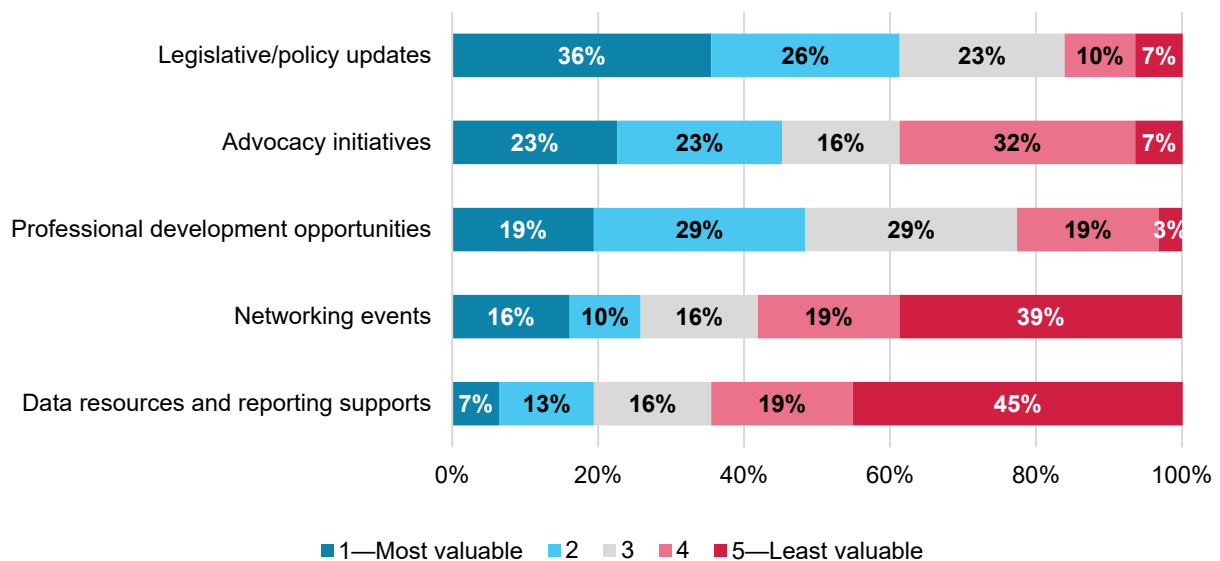
N = 18

Survey respondents then provided feedback on what other services are missing from the data and reporting service offerings. Comments included a center of excellence, timely toolkits, and a statewide dashboard that demonstrates key outcomes and reporting across all regional agencies.

Overall Satisfaction

Survey respondents were asked to rank various Association services from most valuable to least valuable to themselves and their organization. Thirty-six percent of respondents ranked the legislative/policy updates as the most valuable, followed by advocacy initiatives (23 percent), professional development opportunities (19 percent), networking events (16 percent), and data resources and reporting supports (7 percent) (Exhibit B20).

EXHIBIT B20. Rank Order of the Association’s Services

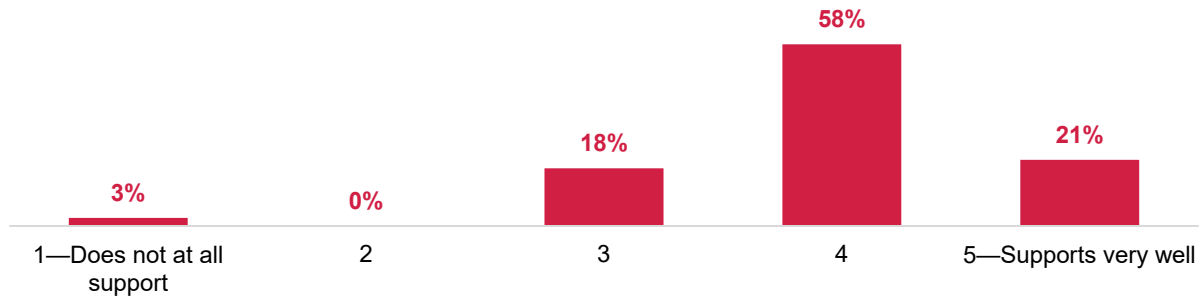


N = 31

Note: Rows do not total 100 due to rounding.

In addition, 79 percent of respondents said that the Association supports their organization in those service areas well (Exhibit B21). Only 3 percent of respondents said that the Association does not support themselves or their organization at all.

EXHIBIT B21. Rating of the Association's Support for Survey Respondent or Their Organization



N = 38

Appendix C: Session One Overview

Wednesday, June 15, 2022 | 10:00 AM–12:00 PM

Strategic Planning Process Overview

After a brief welcome from Ryan Hundt, CEO of Michigan Works! Association (the Association), Julie Durham of Public Sector Consultants (PSC) reviewed the Association's strategic planning process with attendees:

- Session one: Consensus building
- Session two: Prioritizing strategies
- Session three: Creating an action plan

Durham explained that the goal for session one would be to draft a shared consensus-building exercise to help guide action planning.

Reviewing Stakeholder Feedback

Erin Lammers, PSC, provided an overview of the feedback collection process, explaining that PSC conducted 13 30-minute interviews and two one-hour focus groups to collect stakeholders' insights related to how well the Association is serving its members, where the greatest value lies, and how the Association can improve its service offerings. Stakeholders included Association staff, Michigan Works! regional agency staff, Michigan Works! Association board members, and other key organizational partners who are familiar with the Association's services.

Lammers gave a brief presentation of findings from those interviews:

Successes

- Internal and external collaboration
 - Leadership rebuilding trust with organizational partners
 - Sufficient communication between leadership and staff
 - Strong relationships with government agencies
- Greatest value to members
 - Unified advocacy voice
 - Many useful professional development and training opportunities
 - Infrastructure that organizes, connects, and offers collaboration between employers

Challenges

- Proposed Wagner-Peyser Act amendments
 - Standardizing services could be a detriment to staff capacity and service offerings
 - Reactionary rather than proactive response
- Lack of clarity around the Michigan Works! Association's brand
 - People associate the Association with the Unemployment Insurance Agency
 - Competition with postsecondary education institutions
- Lack of clarity around staff roles and capacity
 - Some overlap and duplicative work across tasks

Opportunities for Improvement

- The Association's functions (e.g., annual conference and user groups) could be adapted to be more focused on professional development/training opportunities
- More intentional, aggressive advocacy suggestions and solutions
 - Incorporate people outside the Association to advocate, tell their stories
 - Partner with adult education organizations
- Address important issues facing workforce development organizations
 - Identify which employers/employees are eligible for which supports
 - Further specify training topics to meet workforce demands

Goal Statements

Scott Dzurka then led the group in a consensus-building workshop, where attendees individually brainstormed based on the focus question: "What types of activities should the Michigan Works! Association focus on over the next five years?"

Following initial brainstorming, attendees gathered in small groups to select their six to seven clearest ideas and concisely reframed them into five- to seven-word phrases. In returning to the large group, attendees clustered similar ideas into pairs, then into small groupings.

Following the session, PSC named the groupings, which are listed below:

1. Diversify funding sources
2. Enhance relationship building
3. Improve brand management
4. Establish Center of Excellence and align with professional development offerings
5. Strengthen advocacy efforts

Appendix D: Session Two Overview

Wednesday, September 28, 2022 | 10:00 AM–2:00 PM

Strategic Planning Process Overview

After a brief welcome from Ryan Hundt, CEO of Michigan Works! Association (the Association), Julie Durham of Public Sector Consultants (PSC) reviewed the Association's strategic planning process with attendees:

- Session one: Consensus building
- Session two: Prioritizing strategies
- Session three: Creating an action plan

Durham explained that the aim for session two would be to collaboratively generate objectives and activities to achieve goals identified during the previous session.

Session One Recap and Survey Review

Session One Recap

Erin Lammers, PSC, provided an overview of the findings presented and activities conducted during the first session, which included the following:

- Interview feedback (highlights of the successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement)
- SWOT analysis (highest-voted responses among strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats)
- Goal categories (developed during a consensus-building exercise):
 - Diversify funding sources
 - Enhance relationship building
 - Improve brand management
 - Establish Center of Excellence and align with professional development offerings
 - Strengthen advocacy efforts

Survey Review

Tim Dempsey, PSC, presented findings from the survey sent to Association staff and leadership, regional Michigan Works! agency staff, and others who have attended Michigan Works! Association events; the survey saw a 25 percent response rate. He shared demographic data as well as key takeaways from each of the survey topics: professional development, networking events, advocacy initiatives, legislative and policy updates, and data resources and reporting. Dempsey led a focused conversation where participants noted a key takeaway from survey findings—data collection and distillation/distribution can be improved by the Association and its membership. Improving awareness of the Association's offerings in

this space is a starting point but determining what universal metrics could be utilized by every member agency is important to consider.

Gap Analysis

Scott Dzurka, PSC, reviewed this session's prework results with the group, who were asked to identify gaps in each of the established goal areas. PSC shared the following results, with the number of votes indicated after each phrase in parentheses:

- Diversify funding
 - Competition with other workforce organizations, including the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity—Workforce Development (LEO-WD), for grant funds (5)
 - Association staff has limited experience applying for and securing grant or foundation funds (3)
 - Nonprogrammatic role should be maintained (1)
 - Lack of prior direct grant management or grants being awarded (1)
- Relationship building
 - Need to enhance and improve relationship with leadership from LEO executive and governor's team (5)
 - Perception of the Michigan Works! Association based on previous leadership (1)
 - Chambers of commerce and trade associations need to bring their membership to the table to understand how to leverage the resources available through Michigan Works! to reach a broader audience (1)
 - Greater union participation should be encouraged (1)
 - Other entities, including the Michigan Economic Development Corporation and the Michigan College Access Network, also starting to have talent focuses; need to bring them to the table to leverage resources more effectively and encourage collaboration, not competition (1)
- Brand management
 - Need the Association to develop an identity/brand as the state's go-to workforce thought leader (5)
 - Showcase how Michigan Works! is active in local communities for the purpose of developing talent pipelines for the benefit of the individual needing career guidance and support (5)
 - Build greater awareness that Michigan Works! has had past success working with smaller employers and is not just for larger organizations (3)
 - The Association is a behind-the-scenes group, and that is okay (1)
 - Need to look at marketing and branding through a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens to ensure that the Association is not missing opportunities to connect with all segments of the population and workforce (1)
- Professional development
 - Perception that training offered by the Association is only for Michigan Works! staff (4)
 - Provide a better understanding of the outcomes and benefits of professional development for the organization (3)

- It would be helpful to look for opportunities for continuing education credit opportunities for trainings to encourage engagement and attendance (1)
- Transparent reporting out annually about what trainings have had best attendance and engagement rate to help guide further training development opportunities (1)
- Strengthen advocacy
 - Still building relationships with state legislators to influence investment in workforce programs (5)
 - Need to present the role Michigan Works! plays to the new state legislators immediately after they take office (5)
 - The Association should increase its role in providing information on legislation and the policymaking landscape (1)
 - Provide training for key Association staff about how to best prepare for meeting and engaging with state legislators—not all Association leadership staff have experience working with state legislators (1)

Dzurka led a focused conversation where participants identified two main topics to address further from the gap analysis exercise—better establishing the role of local Michigan Works! regional agencies and rethinking some competitors as potential partners. The regional agencies could benefit from a clearer public sense of their purpose, roles, and effectiveness. In addition, since so many organizations have identified talent as a top priority, it makes more sense to be creative and work collaboratively with them to address workforce needs than be entrenched in the competitor mindset.

Review Goal Statements

After reviewing the gap analysis results as a group, Dzurka facilitated a discussion about developing objectives and activities to achieve the established goals. Dzurka first highlighted the differences between vision, mission, goal, objective, and activity, as well as their purpose and placement within strategic planning. He then reviewed the goal statements PSC developed based on the goal categories the group created during the first session:

1. Diversify our funding sources to build self-sustaining funding models for the Association and its members
2. Enhance our relationships among current and potential partners to showcase our effective services and build stronger partnerships
3. Create branding and messaging that clearly communicates the role and vitality of the Association and network of agencies
4. Establish a Center of Excellence for the dissemination of best practices in support of local programming and align it with professional development offerings
5. Strengthen our reputation within the advocacy community to become the source of workforce development policy creation and expertise

Round Robin Brainstorm: Generating Activities

After Dzurka confirmed the group's consensus with and acceptance of the statements, he led the group in a round robin brainstorm. He asked participants to generate activities for each of the five goals based on the focus question, “What activities can we do in the next three years to reach this goal?”

He split participants into smaller groups—each one started with a different goal. He asked each group to list five to seven responses to the discussion question, then move on to the next goal. Participants were asked to star/upvote existing ideas they supported, then add their own ideas. Once participants returned to the goal they began with, Dzurka asked each group to categorize ideas into up to three themes and present them.

Appendix E: Session Three Summary

Wednesday, December 14, 2022 | 10:00 AM–3:00 PM

Strategic Planning Process Overview

After a brief welcome from Ryan Hundt, CEO of Michigan Works! Association (the Association), Julie Durham of Public Sector Consultants (PSC) reviewed the Association's strategic planning process with attendees:

- Session one: Consensus building
- Session two: Prioritizing strategies
- Session three: Creating an action plan

Durham explained that the aim for session three would be to discern the measurable actions that will begin to build momentum behind each strategic direction for the first year.

Session Two Recap

Durham, PSC, provided an overview of the findings presented and activities conducted during the second session. She reminded the group about the activities conducted so far and how the findings from those activities helped to inform updates to the goal statements.

Information Collection

- Session one review: interview feedback, SWOT analysis, goal categories (developed during a consensus-building exercise)
- Survey review: key takeaways in professional development, networking events, advocacy initiatives, legislative and policy updates, and data resources and reporting
- Gap analysis review: missing elements from goal categories

Goal Statements

Durham reminded the group how they walked through the different elements of a strategic plan and agreed on the updated goal categories/statements.

- Focused conversation about developing objectives and activities to achieve the established goals
- Definition review of vision, mission, goal, objective, and activity
- Group consensus on updated goal statements

Goal statements:

1. Diversify funding sources
2. Enhance relationship building

3. Improve brand management
4. Establish Center of Excellence and align with professional development offerings
5. Strengthen advocacy efforts

Mission and Vision Workshop

Durham and Tim Dempsey, PSC, facilitated a discussion about mission and vision. They walked participants through the different elements of a strategic plan and who is responsible for which pieces. Durham and Dempsey shared the Association's current mission and vision and asked participants to evaluate whether the current language reflects the organization's priorities and goals. They then led the group in an exercise to draft a new mission and vision. Participants brainstormed individually, then shared in their small groups, then worked together to combine similar ideas into cohesive mission and vision statements.

Review Strategic Goals and Objectives

Durham reviewed the updated goal statements and objectives with the group. She then led a focused conversation asking whether the statements align with the newly drafted mission and vision. She closed the conversation by asking participants what the Association should prioritize for implementation. The top five ranked objectives were:

1. Diversify our funding sources to build self-sustaining funding models for the Association and its members
2. Enhance our relationships among current and potential partners to showcase our effective services and build stronger partnerships
3. Create branding and messaging that clearly communicates the role and vitality of the Michigan Works! Association and network of agencies
4. Establish a Center of Excellence for the dissemination of best practices in support of local programming and align it with professional development offerings
5. Strengthen our reputation within the advocacy community to become the source of workforce development policy creation and expertise

Strategic Plan Prioritization and Implementation

Durham and Dempsey explained the timeline development process, sharing that activity and task prioritization is key. They demonstrated a year-long action plan and a 90-day action plan for the first quarter. Durham and Dempsey asked participants to consider identify success indicators that are measurable—they also suggested thinking about how often they should be measured and who is accountable for measuring and reporting those successes. PSC then facilitated an activity asking participants to develop activities and tasks that can be completed over the next six months to achieve an example prioritized objective.

EXHIBIT E1. Session Three Plan Prioritization and Implementation Brainstorm

Goal #3	Q1 2023 (January–May)	Q2 2023 (April–June)
Objective 1: Create a comprehensive state and federal advocacy agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create state/federal agenda (Ryan) • Advocacy 101 training (Ryan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify advocacy support needs (Kim) • Identify mentors (Ryan)
Objective 3: Increase advocacy opportunities and effectiveness for Michigan Works! Association members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New legislative outreach (Ryan) • Legislative day toolkit (Ryan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create in-district engagement strategy (Ryan)

Goal #3	Q1 2023 (January–May)	Q2 2023 (April–June)
Objective 1: Increase external funding by X percent over the next three to five years Objective 2: Create a marketing and communications plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish audiences (internal, staff activity) (Gracie) • Refine organizational pillars (Gracie) • Establish audience goals/strategies (Gracie) • Create request for proposals for communications plan • External support partner (Ryan) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revamp existing survey (Kim) • Develop survey by group (Kim) • Distribute survey (Kim) • Analyze survey results (Kim) • Focus group at User-group Forum (Gracie)
	Q3 2023 (July–September)	Q4 2023 (October–December)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a result distribution strategy (Kim) • Plan creation (Gracie) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in followers and expanding reach (diversity) • Increased employer engagement • Cohesive stories, understanding of the Association’s services • Increase attendance at training/conferences

Appendix F: SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis

Scott Dzurka, Public Sector Consultants (PSC), reviewed the results of the Michigan Works Association (the Association) SWOT analysis to help understand both the internal and external factors that could impact the organization's ability to achieve its vision. Attendees completed the exercise ahead of the session. PSC shared the following results, with the number of votes indicated after each phrase in parentheses and the bolded phrases describing key points emphasized by the group during the session:

Strengths

- **New, strong leadership and engagement from the CEO (13)**
- **Very strong in policy interpretation and policy history (12)**
- **Staff development opportunities (12)**
- Knowledgeable staff (11)
- Responsive to system requests in many areas (training/advocacy/program assistance) (8)
- Staff has a good reputation (6)
- Effective communication (6)
- User groups that offer opportunities for best-practice sharing (5)
- Partnerships with other statewide associations (Michigan Chamber, Michigan Manufacturers Association, etc.) (5)
- Strong partnership with State workforce team (3)
- Provides a single source for all questions about the system (3)
- Provides a single voice for advocacy (2)
- Building sponsorship (2)
- Viewed as a trusted adviser to the business customers being served (1)
- Includes strong private-sector voice (1)
- Association staff have well-defined roles (1)

Weaknesses

- **Statewide branding is weak (8)**
- Dependent on revenue from outside sources (7)
- **The Association is narrowly focused on Michigan Works! rather than positioning itself as a statewide leader in all things workforce development (7)**
- **The Association is not respected by other statewide organizations due to historical challenges (7)**
- Needs stronger partnerships with statewide education, healthcare, and economic development organizations (5)
- Does not use its private-sector influence enough (5)
- Would like to see stronger staff and expertise in advocacy, external relations, and legislative relations (4)
- The Association is short staffed (3)
- Many staff are new and do not come from workforce development backgrounds, which can lead to a lack of historical perspective and program expertise (2)
- Clients do not fully understand services available and benefits to their organization (1)
- Communication efforts need structure (1)

Threats

- As of recently, Wagner-Peyser (15)
- **Labor and Economic Opportunity-Workforce Development (LEO-WD) not funding capacity building (13)**
- **Lack of engagement from LEO-WD with the Association (13)**
- **Other organizations (Detroit Regional Chamber, Talent 2025) leading the way in the workforce space (8)**
- LEO-WD taking training in-house, continue to step across the line to things that were historically the Association's territory (7)
- Falling birth rate + more people retiring = fewer people = continued low unemployment = less need for Michigan Works! support (6)
- Recessionary economy could have major impact on funding (5)
- Not able to meet employer demands for talent (3)
- Other companies are offering similar trainings at a lower cost (2)
- Commercial clients do not trust "government handouts" that benefit other businesses (1)

Opportunities

- Create a "Workforce Center of Excellence" with library of speakers on various workforce topics (13)
- Apply for foundation funds that could benefit the whole system (12)
- **Strengthen relationships/credibility with policymakers: local, state, federal (12)**
- **Greater advocacy and voice in Lansing and in Washington, D.C. (7)**
- **Position the Association as the thought leader for all workforce development efforts across Michigan (7)**
- Develop strong partnerships with private sector (5)
- Expanding membership to other organizations, not just the 16 the Michigan Works! Associations (5)
- The Association can advocate for the workforce system at a national level—telling the story and highlighting Michigan (3)
- The Association is eligible for multiple workforce development grants (3)
- The Association should host more workshops, target smaller enterprise through local Chambers of Commerce (1)
- The Association's nonprofit status makes it eligible for other funding sources that many Michigan Works! agencies are not eligible for (1)

Appendix G: Goals and Accompanying Objectives and Activities

Goal #1: Diversify Funding	Increase external funding by 10 percent annually over the next three to five years	Identify innovative sponsorship packages for non-Michigan Works! partners
		Create a grant strategy aligned with Michigan Works! Association programming, including government, public, and private grant opportunities
		Establish an individual and corporate annual giving campaign
	Increase fee-for-service revenue by 10 percent annually over the next three to five years	Market training and professional development opportunities beyond the Michigan Works! System
		Establish cooperative service and purchase agreements, including fee structure to meet member needs, examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal services • Grant management • Data warehousing
	Increase membership by 10 percent	Create and implement an associate membership marketing plan
Create tiered membership levels with corresponding access and benefits		
Goal #2: Strengthen and Increase Relationships with Partners	Increase engagement opportunities for existing members by 5 percent annually over the next three to five years	Host consistent partner networking meetings , e.g., past breakfast meetings
		Facilitate regular events for key stakeholders to discuss current workforce issues
		Tailor engagement activities to topical stakeholder groups
	Identify and cultivate new partners and stakeholders	Actively engage in sponsorships and memberships with other stakeholders and partners
		Identify and regularly communicate with experts in the workforce development sector to inform engagement strategies and topics
		Create a plan to identify and engage with new partners

Goal #3: Increase Brand Awareness and Recognition	Develop Michigan Works! Association brand standards and resources (internal and external)	Develop a uniform marketing toolkit for members (external)
		Strategize branding for multiple audiences
		Review, revamp, and create branding kit —brand colors, taglines, logos, etc. (internal)
	Create a marketing and communications plan	Establish annual marketing campaign and goals
		Engage and leverage membership user groups
		Collect and share corporate stories of success interacting with workforce development sector
Goal #4: Provide Quality Professional Development Opportunities	Establish a Center of Excellence (ECE)	Establish an ECE advisory group
		Collect and highlight best practices in the sector, including in governance, organizational models, programming, and data management
		Develop a repository of local policies and resources to share across membership
		Create a dashboard summarizing members' work and impact
	Develop Michigan Works! Association and Michigan Works! agency leadership skills	Provide certification programs for board members, executive leaders, and staff
		Establish a director mentorship program
	Reimagine training and professional development to develop innovative curriculum pathways	Recruit a diverse oversight group of subject matter experts to inform training, professional development, and best-practice initiatives
		Convene a workforce development leadership symposium
Align training across all the Michigan Works Association activities, including annual conferences		
Goal #5: Strengthen Advocacy	Create a comprehensive state and federal advocacy agenda	Provide regular opportunities for members to share policy priorities
		Regularly monitor state and federal policy and budget initiatives and sector impacts
	Identify opportunities to align advocacy efforts with partners/sectors	Build and maintain relationships with strategic partners , including LEO
		Participate in networking events, workgroups , etc. in other sectors
		Facilitate regular events for stakeholders to discuss current workforce issues, ex. Workforce association roundtables
	Increase advocacy opportunities and effectiveness for the Michigan Works! Association and members	Increase frequency of strategic communications with policymakers, including coordinating and supporting legislative engagement activities for members
		Provide regional and statewide specific data and materials (brief books) to members to assist its advocacy efforts
		Provide Advocacy 101 trainings to members



Five-year Strategic Plan

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