

1 **Staff Responses to Commission Work Session Discussion Paper**
2 **Workforce and Economic Development – A TWC Strategy**

3 **Commission Recommendations**

4 To best support economic development growth within the state, the Commission should adopt the
5 following initial strategies to creatively support our growing markets:

- 6 1. TWC should determine the most common and cost-effective economic and workforce
7 development technology solutions and deploy those in a way all boards can access them. The
8 focus should include the types of workforce data employers typically require when making
9 job creation decisions.
- 10 2. TWC should ensure Workforce Solutions partners are positioned as the leading expert about
11 labor market insights with enhanced awareness building and employment projections.
- 12 3. Implement a targeted service delivery model to focus on employers within in-demand
13 industries and career seekers on paths to those jobs.
- 14 4. TWC staff should develop an outreach plan which includes strategies to ensure employers,
15 educational institutions and workforce boards maximize existing resources.

16 **Staff Responses**

- 17 1. **Workforce Development Response to the determination of the most common and cost-**
18 **effective economic and workforce development technology solutions:** TWC has engaged
19 in projects built on the idea of using workforce data to unlock insights for economic
20 development organizations and employers. Discussions with economic development
21 professionals, research analysts, senior leaders from the workforce system, and site selectors
22 from across the country shared that access to reliable, standardized data would provide the
23 foundation for aligning workforce development efforts with economic development.
24 Addressing an employer’s workforce data needs, such as:

- 25 • diversity of workers;
- 26 • educational attainment;
- 27 • job growth;
- 28 • job postings;
- 29 • labor force;
- 30 • occupational employment;
- 31 • skills;
- 32 • talent pipeline;
- 33 • unemployment statistics; and
- 34 • wages.

35 All of the above are necessary for supporting a strong Texas talent market and promoting
36 economic growth throughout the state.

1 TWC has identified common and cost-effective workforce development technology solutions
2 that deliver relevant workforce, demographic, income, and other data trends and projections
3 that are already available to Boards through a usable interface. These tools, [Sites on Texas](#),
4 LinkedIn, and labor market information (LMI) tools and reports, include several workforce
5 data elements employers have identified as needed when making critical employment
6 decisions.

7 Information from TWC-provided tools, such as Sites on Texas, LinkedIn, and other tools and
8 reports published by TWC's Labor Market & Career Information (LMCI) department, will
9 be used to ensure that Boards and their local partners are positioned as local experts to assist
10 employers. Through existing contracts with Sites on Texas and LinkedIn, TWC currently
11 provides user licenses to each of the 28 Boards at no cost. Additionally, these tools are
12 available to several TWC departments.

13 Some of these tools are also in use by:

- 14 • economic development corporations;
- 15 • chambers of commerce; and
- 16 • institutions of higher education.

17 TWC can help ensure the Boards are using these tools as efficiently as possible.

- 18 **2. Workforce Development Response to ensure Workforce Solutions partners are**
19 **positioned as the leading expert about labor market insights with enhanced awareness**
20 **building and employment projections:** Employer engagement must be informed by
21 comprehensive, up-to-date, and relevant labor market information. Effective use of these
22 tools will ensure that Boards have current data and regional trends to support their local
23 employers. This knowledge will enable staff to offer customized workforce development
24 solutions for employers in local in-demand industries or offering target occupations, in
25 addition to WorkInTexas.com job posting assistance.

26 *Labor Market Analysis Training*

27 Training resources and user guides relating to labor market analytics tools and their use are
28 needed for Boards and local partners to inform effective engagement strategies with area
29 industries and employers. The training should include the following:

- 30 • Sites On Texas 3.0 staff training and development of a user's guide and desk aid;
- 31 • LMCI data tools training (focus on local and regional employment projections and
32 supply and demand reports); and
- 33 • Creation of a data user's group that includes peer-to-peer mentoring and technical
34 assistance.

35 *Consultative Business Engagement*

1 Workforce Solutions Office staff throughout the state work daily with Texas' employers to
2 post and fill job openings, connect with area partners, including training providers, and
3 myriad other workforce activities. Staff proposes the creation of a statewide working group
4 to gather best practices and innovative strategies from each of the 28 Boards and to discuss
5 regional opportunities and challenges. The working group will assist TWC staff with the
6 development of a comprehensive service delivery tool kit to be shared as a component of an
7 agency-delivered training. The working group may also assist with development of business
8 engagement standards and policies for Boards and act as an ongoing peer-to-peer support
9 network.

10 **3. Workforce Development Staff Response to a targeted service delivery model:** Texas

11 leads the nation for job creation, adding more jobs in 2022 than any other state and
12 increasing jobs at the fastest rate in the nation, according to the [US Bureau of Labor](#)
13 [Statistics' December State Employment and Unemployment \(Monthly\) News Release](#).
14 However, based on data as well as input from employers, Texas faces a workforce shortage
15 in many in-demand occupations. Data from the Job Openings and Labor Turnover Survey
16 (JOLTS) indicates that Texas has more openings than people to fill them.

17 To best address these issues, TWC, along with workforce Boards and community partners,
18 should regularly and effectively communicate with employers to clearly identify the specific
19 challenges and use the available tools, such as access to and analysis of relevant data, to
20 provide employers and job seekers targeted support. Effective outreach will require an
21 evaluation of existing Board outreach and job referral strategies as well as a training program
22 for outreach staff, to ensure a targeted and effective service delivery model is developed to
23 connect employers with job seekers.

24 **Staff Recommendations (Items 1 – 3):**

25 To best support economic development and growth within the state, staff recommends the
26 Commission consider the following:

- 27 1. Facilitating a data user's group to provide peer-to-peer mentoring and technical
28 assistance in using data - can be accomplished with existing resources
- 29 2. Developing engagement strategies for connecting Boards with their community
30 economic development partners – can be accomplished with existing resources
- 31 3. Developing a training program for assessing employer needs, conducting employer
32 outreach, and job referral/job matching strategies – contract with a vendor to develop
33 and deliver training to all 28 Boards (\$500,000 WIOA SW).
- 34 4. Creating a statewide working group to gather best practices and innovative strategies
35 from each of the 28 Boards and to discuss regional opportunities and challenges. The
36 working group will assist TWC staff with the development of a comprehensive
37 service delivery tool kit to be shared as a component of an agency-delivered training.

1 The working group may also assist with development of business engagement
2 standards and policies for Boards and act as an ongoing peer-to-peer support network
3 – can be accomplished with existing resources.

4 **4. Outreach and Employer Initiatives Response to the development of an outreach plan**
5 **which includes strategies to ensure employers, educational institutions and workforce**
6 **boards maximize existing resources: OEI Staff will:**

- 7 • Increase awareness among Chambers of Commerce and Economic Developers about
8 workforce services through regional collaborations.
- 9 • Develop and deliver a webinar series customized to the regional groups to learn about
10 workforce service opportunities.
- 11 • Continue to establish and maintain relationships with key employers in each region
12 and identify additional employers that may benefit from workforce services and
13 programs, in collaboration with local Boards.
- 14 • Establish regular meetings with Business Service Units to coordinate activities,
15 provide updates, offer training, and address potential challenges and opportunities.

16 **Outreach Campaign Options:**

17 **Option 1: \$10,000**

- 18 • Develop a communications Plan (in house)
- 19 • Design and print promotional collateral (in house)
- 20 • Plan and pitch an earned media campaign (in house)
- 21 • Develop and manage a limited series of informational webinars (in house)

22
23 **Option 2: \$100,000 - \$500,000**

- 24 • All activities listed above plus:
- 25 • Develop and manage an extended series of informational webinars with topics
26 planned on an editorial calendar to promote specific workforce services and
27 employer events monthly (outreach vendor)
- 28 • Design and execute a paid media campaign, positioning workforce boards as
29 the “go to” resource for labor market information; campaign limited in
30 markets and run time (outreach vendor)

31
32 **Option 3: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000**

- 33 • All activities listed above plus:
- 34 • Extend a paid media for a multi-market, multi-channel campaign with
35 extended market and run time; topics planned on an editorial calendar to
36 promote specific services and events monthly (outreach vendor)

37 *Note: Paid media costs will vary by market and time of year.*