Middle Flint Workforce Development – Area 15

Local Plan
### Acronym Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACS</th>
<th>American Community Survey</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADA</td>
<td>Americans with Disabilities Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEFLA</td>
<td>Adult Education &amp; Family Literacy Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOP</td>
<td>Agricultural Outreach Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASL</td>
<td>American Sign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BER</td>
<td>Benefits Eligibility Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BGLI</td>
<td>Burning Glass Labor Insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLS</td>
<td>Bureau of Labor Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSU</td>
<td>Business Services Unit (housed in GDOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAD</td>
<td>Computer Aided Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Client Assistance Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Corrective Action Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAPI</td>
<td>Customized Apprenticeships &amp; Paid Internships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCR</td>
<td>College &amp; Career Readiness Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCSS</td>
<td>Common Core State Standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDS</td>
<td>Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>Centers for Independent Living</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJCC</td>
<td>Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLEO</td>
<td>Chief Local Elected Official</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNC</td>
<td>Computer Numerical Control Operator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR</td>
<td>Customized Recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Certified Rehabilitation Counselors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRCC</td>
<td>Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification</td>
</tr>
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<td>CRP</td>
<td>Community Rehabilitation Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSB</td>
<td>Community Service Boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSPD</td>
<td>Comprehensive System for Personal Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSPM</td>
<td>Client Services Policy Manual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSU</td>
<td>Constituent Services Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DBHDD</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCA</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Community Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCH</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Community Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCS</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Community Supervision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFCS</td>
<td>Division of Family &amp; Children Services (DHS)</td>
</tr>
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<td>DHS</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Human Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJJ</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOAS</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Administrative Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DOC</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Corrections</td>
</tr>
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<td>DoDD</td>
<td>Division of Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD)</td>
</tr>
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<td>DSU</td>
<td>Designated State Unit</td>
</tr>
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<td>DVOP</td>
<td>Disabled Veteran Outreach Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG</td>
<td>Employ Georgia (GDOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EMSI</td>
<td>Economic Modeling Specialists Intl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERP</td>
<td>Eligibility Review Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>Employment Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESP</td>
<td>Extended Services Plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ETA</td>
<td>Employment &amp; Training Administration (USDOL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIA</td>
<td>Workforce Investment Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIG</td>
<td>Workforce Implementation Guidance Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>WIOA</td>
<td>Workforce Innovation &amp; Opportunity Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOTC</td>
<td>Work Opportunity Tax Credit</td>
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<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>Wagner-Peyser Act/programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSP</td>
<td>TANF Work Support Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YDC</td>
<td>Youth Detention Center</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategic Elements, Governance and Structure

Identification of the Fiscal Agent

Provide an identification of the entity responsible for the disbursal of grant funds described in WIOA § 107(d)(12)(B)(i)(III) as determined by the chief elected official.

Area 15 Fiscal Agent is:

River Valley Regional Commission
Janice West, Workforce Director
Patti Cullen, Executive Director
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
706-256-2910
http://www.rivervalleyrc.org/index.php/workforcehome

Description of Strategic Planning Elements

Provide a description of the strategic planning elements listed below. A complete answer will rely on a variety of data sources and employer input. Also describe how the information was gathered and what partners and employers were consulted.

Regional economic conditions

Provide an analysis of the regional economic conditions including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations; and the employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations. Include the listing of occupations in demand within the region and describe how the list was developed citing source data.

The information listed in this section was provided by Georgia Department of Labor, Burning Glass, Regional Plans, and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Middle Flint Workforce Area 15 consist of the following eight (8) counties in Georgia; Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, and Webster. The area covers 2,700.55 square miles. The area
is entirely rural with Crisp (Cordele) and Sumter (Americus) Counties the two with most population. Cordele and Americus both are large enough to have educational and healthcare infrastructure that is not found elsewhere in the area.

In 2015 the Middle Flint area population was 108,517 which ranked as 19th (last) of the nineteen workforce areas.

Middle Flint Workforce Development Board (WDB) has concerns that several of the growth occupations listed on following pages have low paying wages, usually have no fringe benefits and can be part-time positions. The local WDB seeks to fund training that will lead to employment and self-sufficiency to enhance and enrich the lives of customers in the Middle Flint workforce area.
The civilian labor force for the Middle Flint Workforce Area in Georgia in May 2016 was 40,984, of which 38,475 were employed, 2,509 were unemployed. Middle Flint area counties have consistently had some of the highest unemployment rates within the State. Middle Flint unemployment rate for May 2016 was 6.1% while Georgia’s unemployment rate for the same period was 4.7%. The Middle Flint area in May 2016 is ranked as #2 of the highest unemployment rates for the State workforce development regions.

Average weekly wages for the Middle Flint area for 4th Quarter 2015 was $682 with an average annual wage of $35,464. The averages for the Middle Flint area fall well below the Georgia average weekly wage of $1,002 and an average annual wage of $52,104.

Limited available transportation is also a major concern within the Middle Flint area. Limited availability of any transportation options, including even taxi service, restricts a customer’s ability to have access to services and employment opportunities. Partners make an effort whenever feasible to go out into the rural counties to provide information, assistance and services to assist with transportation issues.

**Existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations**

The Middle Flint area has experience growth in employment openings in Health Care related occupations, Production occupations, Transportation (CDL Truck Drivers) and Warehousing, Retail Trade, and Manufacturing.

Tyson Food located in Vienna, GA has expanded their facility to increase production which increased their employment numbers within the past two years. H2O Water Sports has been hiring to fill employment positions building water craft. Golden Gourmet is building a new facility in Americus which will prepare frozen meals for delivery in and out of the local area.

Top businesses by employment

*ESRI Business Analyst – 2016 Employed Population 16+ by Industry*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle Flint WIOA</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>106,966</td>
<td>4,523,860</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Mining</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation/Utilities</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance/Insurance/Real Estate</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>6.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>42.4%</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

The area has slightly higher than state average employed in Public Administration (7.9%) and Manufacturing (14.7%). There is also a higher than average representation in the area than state average in Agriculture and Mining (5.5% vs. 1.1%) although it is worth noting that even though it is a significantly higher percentage, it is still a relatively low percentage of overall employment.

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total All Industries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39,26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39,80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>540</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

Number of businesses
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>000671</td>
<td>Total Self-Employed and Unpaid Family Workers, All Jobs</td>
<td>4,390</td>
<td>4,570</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
<td>2.03%</td>
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<tr>
<td>110000</td>
<td>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting</td>
<td>3,730</td>
<td>3,410</td>
<td>-320</td>
<td>-8.51%</td>
<td>-4.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>111000</td>
<td>Crop Production</td>
<td>3,030</td>
<td>2,800</td>
<td>-230</td>
<td>-7.68%</td>
<td>-3.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>113000</td>
<td>Forestry and Logging</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-18.35%</td>
<td>-9.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>115000</td>
<td>Support Activities for Agriculture and Forestry</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-7.97%</td>
<td>-4.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>210000</td>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>212000</td>
<td>Mining (except Oil and Gas)</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.44%</td>
<td>2.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220000</td>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-3.63%</td>
<td>-1.83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>230000</td>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
<td>0.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>236000</td>
<td>Construction of Buildings</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-5.15%</td>
<td>-2.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>237000</td>
<td>Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2.33%</td>
<td>-1.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>238000</td>
<td>Specialty Trade Contractors</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.41%</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>310000</td>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>5,360</td>
<td>5,380</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.32%</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>311000</td>
<td>Food Manufacturing</td>
<td>1,570</td>
<td>1,590</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.15%</td>
<td>0.57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>321000</td>
<td>Wood Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.81%</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>322000</td>
<td>Paper Manufacturing</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>323000</td>
<td>Printing and Related Support Activities</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
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<tr>
<td>325000</td>
<td>Chemical Manufacturing</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5.10%</td>
<td>2.52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>326000</td>
<td>Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-10.64%</td>
<td>-5.47%</td>
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<tr>
<td>327000</td>
<td>Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.96%</td>
<td>5.34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>332000</td>
<td>Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>0.91%</td>
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<tr>
<td>333000</td>
<td>Machinery Manufacturing</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.21%</td>
<td>2.08%</td>
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<tr>
<td>334000</td>
<td>Computer and Electronic Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4.35%</td>
<td>2.15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>336000</td>
<td>Transportation Equipment Manufacturing</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>-40</td>
<td>-23.04%</td>
<td>-12.27%</td>
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<tr>
<td>337000</td>
<td>Furniture and Related Product Manufacturing</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.57%</td>
<td>2.75%</td>
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<tr>
<td>339000</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Manufacturing</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>420000</td>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>1,220</td>
<td>1,240</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>0.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>423000</td>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5.02%</td>
<td>2.48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>424000</td>
<td>Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-3.33%</td>
<td>-1.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>425000</td>
<td>Wholesale Electronic Markets and Agents and Brokers</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>440000</td>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>441000</td>
<td>Motor Vehicle and Parts Dealers</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>360</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.08%</td>
<td>0.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>Previous Year</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>1-Year % Change</td>
<td>2-Year % Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>442000</td>
<td>Furniture and Home Furnishings Stores</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-7.69%</td>
<td>-3.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>443000</td>
<td>Electronics and Appliance Stores</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-7.94%</td>
<td>-4.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>444000</td>
<td>Building Material and Garden Equipment and Supplies Dealers</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.04%</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>445000</td>
<td>Food and Beverage Stores</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-0.53%</td>
<td>-0.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>446000</td>
<td>Health and Personal Care Stores</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.97%</td>
<td>1.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>447000</td>
<td>Gasoline Stations</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.47%</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>448000</td>
<td>Clothing and Clothing Accessories Stores</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-6.58%</td>
<td>-3.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>451000</td>
<td>Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>452000</td>
<td>General Merchandise Stores</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,020</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
<td>0.80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>453000</td>
<td>Miscellaneous Store Retailers</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1.89%</td>
<td>-0.95%</td>
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<tr>
<td>454000</td>
<td>Nonstore Retailers</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.09%</td>
<td>4.92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>480000</td>
<td>Transportation and Warehousing</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>482000</td>
<td>Rail Transportation</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3.80%</td>
<td>-1.92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>484000</td>
<td>Truck Transportation</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-2.47%</td>
<td>-1.24%</td>
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<tr>
<td>488000</td>
<td>Support Activities for Transportation</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30.08%</td>
<td>14.05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>491000</td>
<td>Postal Service</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.37%</td>
<td>0.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>493000</td>
<td>Warehousing and Storage</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-9.06%</td>
<td>-4.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>510000</td>
<td>Information</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>511000</td>
<td>Publishing Industries</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-4.08%</td>
<td>-2.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>512000</td>
<td>Motion Picture and Sound Recording Industries</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>515000</td>
<td>Broadcasting (except Internet)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>517000</td>
<td>Telecommunications</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-1.03%</td>
<td>-0.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>519000</td>
<td>Other Information Services</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>520000</td>
<td>Finance and Insurance</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>522000</td>
<td>Credit Intermediation and Related Activities</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-6.87%</td>
<td>-3.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>523000</td>
<td>Securities, Commodity Contracts, and Other Financial Investments and Related Activities</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>524000</td>
<td>Insurance Carriers and Related Activities</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.08%</td>
<td>2.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>530000</td>
<td>Real Estate and Rental and Leasing</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>531000</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-0.63%</td>
<td>-0.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>532000</td>
<td>Rental and Leasing Services</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>540000</td>
<td>Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.13%</td>
<td>1.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>550000</td>
<td>Management of Companies and Enterprises</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>-4.96%</td>
<td>-2.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>560000</td>
<td>Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>561000</td>
<td>Administrative and Support Services</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
<td>4.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SIC Code</td>
<td>Industry Description</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Percent Change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>562000</td>
<td>Waste Management and Remediation Service</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>610000</td>
<td>Educational Services</td>
<td>4,080</td>
<td>4,310</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>5.44%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>620000</td>
<td>Health Care and Social Assistance</td>
<td>4,150</td>
<td>4,320</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>621000</td>
<td>Ambulatory Health Care Services</td>
<td>990</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>4.03%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>622000</td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>1,060</td>
<td>1,080</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.89%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>623000</td>
<td>Nursing and Residential Care Facilities</td>
<td>1,450</td>
<td>1,510</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.28%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>624000</td>
<td>Social Assistance</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7.40%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>710000</td>
<td>Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>711000</td>
<td>Performing Arts, Spectator Sports, and Related Industries</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>713000</td>
<td>Amusement, Gambling, and Recreation Industries</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>720000</td>
<td>Accommodation and Food Services</td>
<td>2,410</td>
<td>2,470</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.54%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>721000</td>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-6.85%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>722000</td>
<td>Food Services and Drinking Places</td>
<td>2,070</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>4.06%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>810000</td>
<td>Other Services (Except Government)</td>
<td>1,320</td>
<td>1,380</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.47%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>811000</td>
<td>Repair and Maintenance</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.66%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>812000</td>
<td>Personal and Laundry Services</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-2.60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>813000</td>
<td>Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional, and Similar Organizations</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4.18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>814000</td>
<td>Private Households</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.71%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>900000</td>
<td>Government</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>3,940</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999100</td>
<td>Federal Government, Excluding Post Office</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-3.20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999200</td>
<td>State Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>1,670</td>
<td>1,690</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>999300</td>
<td>Local Government, Excluding Education and Hospitals</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>2,030</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: GDOL

The numbers of businesses in all industries was expected to grow fractionally from 2013 to 2015, as indicated from the most recent data available from the Georgia Department of Labor. These increases are expected to be less than 1% year to year – really marginal improvements overall. The number of those employed in Agriculture is expected to decline, although that is one of the more robust sectors for the Middle Flint WIOA economy.

Top industry Sectors, (Burning Glass - BGLI)
Most job postings per Burning Glass are in Transportation and warehousing, followed closely by Health Care. Other notable top industry sectors include Public Administration and service related businesses.

Employment needs of employers in those industry sectors and occupations

Workforce Area 15 is largely rural, with educational and skill gaps. Major employment in healthcare related occupations that are in need of nurses, certified nurse assistants, home health workers and other healthcare related employment positions. The area has several hospitals located in the area (Crisp Regional Medical Center, Phoebe Sumter Medical Center, and Flint River Community Hospital), a number of assisted living and nursing home facilities which also need healthcare related occupations.

Manufacturing sectors include occupations in welding, maintenance workers, electrical workers, are needed by companies such as Big Tex Trailers (Crisp County), Weyerhaeuser (Macon County), Norbord (Crisp County), Wescast (Crisp County), etc. Manufacturing has been streamlined through automation which has reduced the number of employees needed. Through the automation process, the employees now require a high skill level to successfully operate equipment and technology. Production related occupations like Tyson Foods need poultry processing workers. H20 and Caravel Boats in Americus manufacture boats. Welders are always needed for local manufactures, including Big Tex Trailers (Crisp County), Solar Panel Installation in Taylor County,
Educational improvement will be a continued focus in the local area by increasing the number of High School graduates, GED attainments, and enrollment in post-secondary educational training. Soft skills improvement is also an area that will be focused on to improve employability and job retention of individuals.

**Listing of occupations in demand within the region**

**Top Occupations (BGLI)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (53-3032.00)</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Nurses (29-1141.00)</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Salespersons (41-2021.00)</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers (41-1031.00)</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representatives (43-4051.00)</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses (39-2081.00)</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech-Language Pathologists (29-1127.00)</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products (41-4012.00)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Food Preparation and Serving Workers, Including Fast Food (39-3021.00)</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cashiers (41-2031.00)</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Therapists (29-1123.00)</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeeping, Accounting, and Auditing Clerks (43-3031.00)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BGLI

Top Occupations by far for Area 15 were for truck drivers (1,099) followed distantly by Registered Nurses (390). Overall, the number of top occupations for this smaller region were very limited.

**Top Employers**
The top companies looking for employees focus on trucking companies. It is notable that of ten of the top twenty companies looking for employees are transportation related. Other major employers looking for employees are retail (Dollar General, CVS, and Lowes) and healthcare related companies (Voyage Health, Phoebe Sumter Medical Center and area nursing /personal care facilities, Columbus Regional Health Care).

The Demand Occupations List was created by the Middle Flint Workforce Area 15 based on programs offered at local schools, including South Georgia Technical College in Americus (with their Cordele Campus), Georgia Southwestern University in Americus and Darton College in Cordele.

**Demand Occupations List**

*Middle Flint Workforce Investment Area 15 as of July, 2016*

**Occupation Title**

- Accounting / Accounting Clerks
- Aircraft Structural Repair / Technology
- Automotive Repair / Technology
- Aviation/Avionics Technology
- Commercial Truck Driving
- Construction Occupations
- Correctional Officer / Law Enforcement
- Customer Service Representatives

Requires Staff Approval
Diesel Equipment Repair / Technology
Education / Teachers Specific (Bachelor Degree) *Must be Junior or Senior Academic Status

Electrician / Electronics Technology
Electrical Lineman
Emergency Management / Paramedic Technician Requires Staff Approval
Food Preparation / Food Service Workers Requires Staff Approval
Health Related Occupations
Heavy Equipment Repair / Technology Requires Staff Approval
Home Health / Nurses Assistant Requires Staff Approval
Horticulture/Landscaping Requires Staff Approval
Janitorial / Sanitation Workers Requires Staff Approval
Industrial Electrical Technology
Industrial Maintenance Repair / Technology Requires Staff Approval
Laborer Occupations
Machine Operators / Tenders
Machine Tool Technician / Machinist
Maintenance Repair
Meat/Poultry Workers
Nursing (LPN & RN)
Occupational Therapy
Optometry Assistant
Packaging / Materials Handlers
Pharmacy Technician Requires Staff Approval
Physical Therapy Assistants Requires Staff Approval
Production Workers
Radiology Technology Requires Staff Approval
Respiratory Therapy Requires Staff Approval
Retail / Wholesale Salespersons Requires Staff Approval
Social Work Requires Staff Approval
Surgical Technician / Technology Requires Staff Approval
Welding/Joining Technician / Technology Requires Staff Approval
Manufacturing Occupations

*Training programs/services that are not shown on this list will be considered and approved on a case by case basis contingent on employment opportunities for occupation.

Knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region

Provide an analysis of the knowledge and skills needed to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations.

Top Skills
Top skills required by employers looking for work are focused on customer services (which matches state and local surveys of companies noting the importance of soft skills for employment). Other skills of note revolve around retail based work.

The local area experiences gaps in the education and skill levels need by employers. Employers express they have a difficult time locating individuals for employment positions that have the necessary skills to adequately perform the job duties. Individuals are not job ready when they are hired for employment. As a result of the lack of necessary skills, employers are required to provide more intensive level of training time helping to cultivate the required skills needed to perform the job duties. Soft skills are another area in which local area employers see a need for improvement.

The Georgia High school graduation rate was 78.8% in 2015. The local areas graduation rate 2015 was 81.9 %. Dual enrollment programs with Technical Colleges and Universities have been implemented in many local area high schools to increase the educational levels and skills levels for high students.

Employment needs in in-demand industry sectors and occupations

Commercial Truck driving, manufacturing and health care occupations are in-demand occupations in the local area. WIOA funding is utilized for educational and skills improve through the use of individual
Training Accounts (ITA’s) and On-The-Job Training (OJT) activities to meet the employers’ needs in the region.

**Workforce in the region**

*Provide an analysis of the workforce in the region, including current labor force employment, unemployment data, information on labor market trends and the educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region, including individuals with barriers to employment. List all data sources used to gather this information.*

**Current labor force employment**

**Age of population 15+**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Middle Flint WIOA</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td>20.09%</td>
<td>21.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>14.54%</td>
<td>14.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>12.24%</td>
<td>13.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>12.59%</td>
<td>14.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>14.30%</td>
<td>14.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>12.84%</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>13.40%</td>
<td>10.70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, RVRC Analysis

The age of working population in the Middle Flint WIOA is roughly equivalent to the state average, but it is notable that there are more who are 65+ and likely exiting the workforce.

**Unemployment data**

Unemployment rates, rates over time
The Unemployment Rate over the past 12 months has mirrored those of Georgia and the nation, but is consistently between 1.1 and 1.9% higher. The most recent unemployment rate as of the writing of this report (May, 2016) was 6.1% in the area, 5.0% in Georgia, and 4.5% in the US.

The 10 year unemployment rate has shown that the Middle Flint WIOA suffered even more than the state at the high peak of unemployment from the Great Recession of 2009. Unemployment rate peaked
at 13.1% in 2010 and remained at double digit unemployment through 2014. In this period between 2006 and 2015, the labor force for the region declined by nearly 5,000 people from 45,022 in 2006 to 40,984 in 2015.

*Educational and skill levels of the workforce in the region*

**Educational attainment (ESRI)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Middle Flint WIOA</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>73,993</td>
<td>6,724,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 9th Grade</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th - 12th Grade, No Diploma</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Graduate</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GED/Alternative Credential</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some College, No Degree</td>
<td>19.7%</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Degree</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate/Professional Degree</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ESRI Business Analyst, RVRC Analysis

There are significantly more people without a high school diploma in the Middle Flint WIOA compared to state averages. There are also more with a nothing more than a high school diploma, with fewer that have gone on to professional or bachelor’s degrees. The overall educational rate is lower than state averages, but it may be mitigated by the workforce and employment mix that may not be demanding higher education.

Source: BGLI

Many of the jobs listed require basic high school or vocational education, which is fortunate for an area that does not have as many bachelor or graduate degrees. There are, however, a number of employers
who are looking for some level of higher degree – be it associate’s degree, bachelor’s degree or a few looking for graduate or professional degrees.

At Risk Populations

Teens ages 16 to 19 not attending school and not working

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Georgia, Congressional District 2</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>5,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kids Count – Annie E Cassy Foundation, Georgia Family Connections

Some of the highest at-risk populations are teens who are neither working or in school. Based on Annie E Casey Foundation Kids Count data, this numbered a relatively high 5,000 youth in Congressional District 2, which includes all counties in Area 15, as well as most of Columbus and the southern portion of the WIOA Area 14 (as well as portions of Albany, GA).

Children living in Poverty

![Bar chart showing children in poverty by state and region]

Source: Kids Count – Annie E Casey Foundation, Georgia Family Connections, RVRC Analysis

Another example of at-risk populations is the percent of children living in poverty. The Middle Flint is one of the highest percentages of children living in poverty of any workforce region in the state, with 42.5% of all children living in the area living in poverty. This is significantly higher than State averages as well as those for the region in 2014 data, the most recent available. Disaggregating the data county by
county shows that some counties do have a higher percentage than others of their children living in poverty. This is shown in the difference in county data in Single Parent families shown below.

**Children living in single-parent families**

Source: Kids Count – Annie E Casey Foundation, Georgia Family Connections

Sumter, Webster, and Crisp Counties have the highest percentage of children living in single family households, with half or more of all children in these counties being raised in single family households. This is challenging for a family because one parent would be juggling work, child care, and possibly training or schooling. Schley County is the only community that is consistently below the state average.

**Children living in families where no parent has full-time, year-round employment**
The percentage of children who are growing up in homes where no parent is working full time will take a toll on not only the family income, but the prospects for success. The percentage of children in the Middle Flint WIOA who have no household member working full time is an astonishingly high 15.8% compared to the state average of 8.7% in 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Median Household Income</th>
<th>Middle Flint WIOA</th>
<th>Georgia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2016 Median Household Income</td>
<td>$33,236</td>
<td>$50,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016 Per Capita Income</td>
<td>$17,419</td>
<td>$26,467</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The higher unemployment rates, lower percentage of college degrees, and higher levels of poverty show up in the lower median income ($33,236 for Area 15) and per capita income ($17,419 for the area) than state income ($50,384 and $26,467 respectively).

**Workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region**

Provide an analysis of the workforce development activities (including education and training) in the region, including an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce, and the employment needs of employers in the region.
Employment Services

Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Americus Career Center serves the local area One Stop Center. GDOL Americus Career Center provides career services to individuals seeking Unemployment Insurance (UI), job search and job placement assistance. Individuals deemed ready for employment are assisted with job search and placement by GDOL staff. Individuals deemed in need of further education or in need of training are referred to other partner agencies for assistance.

Veterans’ services are available through the GDOL Americus Career Center to assist veterans and their spouses with career exploration, job search and placements assistance, referrals to educational and training opportunities.

Workforce Development Activities

The Middle Flint area provides an array of WIOA services to include Career Services and Training Services to the following group of adults, dislocated workers and youth. These services are provided through partnerships, Individual Training Accounts (ITA's), On-the-Job Training (OJT), and Work Experience (WE).

Career Services

Career services are including the following items. Career services are provided based on the needs of the customer.

- Outreach, intake, and orientation to services
- Eligibility Determination for assistance
- Assessments of skills levels, aptitude, interest, abilities and supportive service needs
- Career counseling as necessary
- Job search / placement assistance
- Information on Labor Market Information (LMI), demand occupation, education requirements, wages analysis
- Information on Eligible Training Providers List
- Information on supportive services available in area and referral to those services if needed
- Information on filing Unemployment Insurance compensation claims
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments (skill levels, interviewing, evaluation, diagnostic testing
- Counseling (individual or group)
- Development of Individual Employment Plan (IEP)
● Work readiness services including resume development, interviewing skills, attendance punctuality, appropriate dress in the workplace, communication skills, how to conduct a job search etc..
● Financial literacy services which may include developing personal/household budgets, banking services, applying for credit or loans, credit score and analysis, how to maintain credit score, understanding payroll deductions etc..

Career services may be offered by or in coordination with partner agencies, community resources, or WIOA Service Providers.

**Training Services**

Training services are for individuals who need more intensive level of services to obtain employment or have been retained in employment. The following criteria is reviewed to ensure that individuals are in need of training: (1) Individual must meet the WIOA eligibility requirements, (2) determined in need of training services based on an assessment and evaluation, have knowledge and ability to successfully participate in a training service, (3) desired program of training will enable employment opportunities in local area or reasonable commuting distance and (4) meet the qualification requirements for desired training program.

Approved Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) provides information on available providers and programs. ETPL is available via the Internet or other resources.

**WIOA Services**

WIOA services in the local area include comprehensive and specialized assessments of educational and skill levels identify services needed by customers. This includes: Development of Individual Service Strategy (ISS) for youth customers; Development of Individual Employment Plans (IEP) for adults and dislocated workers; Referral to community services and educational and training opportunities or; Case management and service coordination for customers. WIOA funded training activities include: (1) Individual Training Accounts (ITA’s) for individuals seeking educational and occupational skills training available by eligible training providers such as public colleges, Technical Colleges and Universities and private training providers. (2) GED Remediation/Work Readiness and Work Experience which provides basic skills literacy remediation to individuals who lack a high school diploma or GED. Individuals receive instructor led remediation over the four subject areas of the GED examination with the goal of GED attainment. Work Readiness provides soft skills, employability skills, and life skills training to assist individuals with obtaining employment and retention in employment. Work Experience provides a work based learning opportunities where individuals are placed on actual worksites with participating
employers and (3) On-The-Job Training (OJT) offers a work based learning opportunities where individuals are placed with an employer for a designated employment position and training period. Training Agreements are developed to identify job duties and skills to be learned during the training period. Employers are reimbursed 50% - 75% of the participants’ wages during the training period. Individuals are placed in permanent employment upon successful completion of the OJT activity.

**Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services (GVR)**

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services (GVR) provides services to individuals with disabilities. Services include education; work based learning and training services in preparation for employment. Services include counseling, assistive technology, job placements, vocational assessments, medical evaluations, work adjustments, and physical restoration services.

**South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) Adult Education**

SGTC Adult Education provides remediation on basic literacy skills to assist individuals in GED attainment. English as Second Language (ESL) classes are available as well. SGTC has multiple site locations in the area which offer both day and evening classes to accommodate individuals’ schedules. SGTC also offers a GED program for criminal offenders at the local Correctional Institution. The offender program goal is to assist with removing barriers to employment to provide the resources need to affectively transition offenders into the employment or post-secondary education opportunities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Training Services</th>
<th>Description of Service, Requirements and Providers Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Training Accounts (ITA’s)</strong></td>
<td>Individuals that are interested in attending occupational skills training under an Individual Training Account (ITA) with a Georgia approved eligible training provider such as Technical College, public College or University, or private training provider. Program of study must be a locally approved training program which has an expected employment opportunity available upon completion of training. Eligible Training Provider List is available at <a href="http://www.workreadyga.org">www.workreadyga.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Requirements</strong></td>
<td>Individuals must meet income eligibility requirements for Adults (ages 18 – up) and determination of need and suitability for training. Individuals who have been dislocated from their employment (Dislocated Worker) due on employment layoff, business or plant closure, and/or reduction in labor force</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
who are determined to be in need of training to return to employment. Individuals must apply for financial aid if available thru training institution. Training must be completed within 2 years (104 weeks) and cost of training is within local training limits of $5,000 maximum. Individuals interested in attending a 4 year training institution must be a junior or senior academic status to be considered for services. Individuals must be a full-time student (12 or more credit hours per training period).

**Benefits**

Financial assistance with costs of tuition, books, and training related supplies after other forms of financial aid have been applied. Supportive service may be available to assist with costs of attending training such as travel to training etc... Supportive services are paid based on individual's need and daily attendance in training as verified by Attendance Timesheet. Payments are not paid for days not in training, holidays, sick days, or breaks between semesters.

**Local Approved Training Providers**

South Georgia Technical College AND Georgia Southwestern State University (Americus & Cordele Campuses) Must be a Junior or Senior Academic status

**Out of Area Training Providers**

Approved Training Providers which are located outside the Middle Flint eight county area may be approved on a case by case basis. Training Providers must be located within a reasonable commuting travel distance (60 miles) from the individual's residence. Out of area approved Training Providers within commuting distance are Albany Technical College, Darton College, Fort Valley State University, Central Georgia Technical College, Southern Crescent Technical College, Columbus Technical College, Columbus State University, Truck Driver Institute (TDI). Training costs must be within local training limits.

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*Strengths, weaknesses and capacity of such services to address the identified education and skill needs of the workforce*

**Strengths of the Area**

The strengths of the Workforce system in Middle Flint area is the presence of several post-secondary educational resources (South Georgia Technical College, Georgia Southwestern State University and Darton College). A rural area such as the Middle Flint is fortunate to have these resources, and they are a critical part of our overall strategy. We use these resources in part to provide training for a wide range of programs. The WIOA funded GED/Work Readiness/Work Experience activity helps strengths the area by focusing on educational improvement, improve in soft skills training, and providing work experience helps with work based learning opportunities. The South Georgia Technical College Adult Education also offers basic skills literacy improvement training strengthen the educational level. The Middle Flint also operates an On-the-Job (OJT) work based learning activity in area. OJT connects job seeks and employers who have job openings. OJT services have been an ongoing training activity in the
local area for more than 29 years. South Georgia Technical College has developed strong partnerships with business such as John Deere, Caterpillar, Kauffman Tire, Weyerhaeuser, Tyson Foods, and Metro Power. South Georgia Technical College serves as the eastern U.S training site for Caterpillar. Training is available through South Georgia Technical College for these business partnerships. Training through these partnerships leads to employment opportunities with higher rates of pay. South Georgia Technical College also offers the Business Enterprise Center (BEC) is available to assist business to start up use facility space, computers, etc.. as they begin to set up new business in the area. Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Americus Career Center is focusing on new strategies to provide services that extended beyond the idea of being the Unemployment Insurance (UI) office. They are working with area partners and local employers to place customers in the right job fit or helping them assess the training opportunity to build skills with the goal of achieving long term job retention. Another goal of GDOL is to lessen the number of customers that are constant repeaters seeking employment services.

Georgia BEST is being implemented in the WIOA funded training services through Paxen Learning. Paxen staff have become “GeorgiaBEST trainers” and can include this soft skills initiative in addition to their existing Work Readiness activities.

The local area Employer Committee provides a link between core partners and the business community. Provides a venue for local business representatives to identify needs and seek guidance from other community employers who may be faced with the same issues. This group can identify workshops, provide guest speakers on specific subject areas of interest, assist with sponsoring job fairs, and or allows employers to form a peer group for seeking guidance or information sharing.

**Weaknesses of the Area**

Weaknesses of the Workforce system in Middle Flint revolve around a lack of transportation and a lack of employment opportunities. Local area does not have an available mass transit system which could enable individuals to readily attending training and employment opportunities. The area also has high poverty levels which prevents individuals from having personal transportation. Youth Customers, especially youth, do not always have personal transportation and therefore have no options to get to training or employment. Without reliable transportation options, their ability to attend the strong technical and university systems are very limited. This is largely related to the large geographic region with a dispersed population. There is a rural transit system, but it is typically not used because of
scheduling issues and limited availability. The other major issue for the area is the lack of employment opportunities. High unemployment rates combined with lack of opportunity are reflected by the fact there have not been enough new industries. This also means that where there are jobs, they are often low wages. Employers often want to hire individuals with more than high school education and skill level, however, the wage level are not equivalent for those requirements. Individuals who seek post-secondary educational training generally increase their skill level and are able to earn the higher wages. Individuals often are required to commute to employment opportunities with the area or out of the area for better employment opportunities.

The local area lacks available childcare options which are a barrier to employment. During the downturn in the economy, a number of public daycare facilities closed. Americus and Cordele being the two largest cities in the area had the largest number of public daycare center facilities. Some of the more rural counties have limited or no available daycare facilities. Many families have to rely upon family or friends to provide daycare for their children. As this can be an unreliable source of childcare, many families struggle in maintain employment. Public daycare in the local area operates on a Monday – Friday, dayshift only operational hours. This presents challenges for individual that work evenings or weekends.

Capacity

Local area hopes to improve capacity by developing strategies to improve the One Stop services to meet the needs of eligible participants, ensure staff and Service Providers have training to improve the flow of participants through services, implementing best practices, and building effective relationships with area partners. The local area services and training will focus on the following:

- Increasing the number of employers utilizing OJT and/or incumbent services
- Achieving and accurately reporting WIOA Performance measures
- Providing quality educational and training services to meet needs of participants and employers
- Identifying demand occupations and providing services to meet the demand
- Building relationships with Partners to enhance service delivery in area
- Providing training opportunities to Service Providers to ensure best practices are utilized
- Participation with local Employer Committee groups and improving business services
- Expand work based learning opportunities in local area employers with Work Experience activity.
Local area will continue to work with training providers (South Georgia Technical College, Georgia Southwestern State University, Darton College and other providers) to ensure that a wide array of training programs and options are available to customers. Business services is available to local area business/employers through On-the-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience activities. OJT Service Provider will recruit and engage local area employers to participate in OJT services to increase enrollments. The local area has expanded the Work Experience (WE – work based learning) activity to the Adult & Dislocated Workers individuals. Development of employer worksites to expand work based learning for individuals enrolled in Work Experience activities.

Employment needs of employers in the region.

Strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce

Provide a description of the local board’s strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce (including youth and individuals with barriers to employment), including goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.

Vision

The vision of the Middle Flint Workforce Development area provide educational and training opportunities to eligible individuals to increase knowledge and skill levels that can lead to personal self-sufficiency and meeting the needs of business and employers. Collaborate with the businesses and employers to identify their needs and coordinate with area community resources (Technical Colleges, Universities, Colleges, etc...) To align educational, programs of study, and training services to meet those needs. By increasing educational and skills levels, the area seeks to attract new business and industry into the local area to provide more available job opportunities.

Goals relating to the performance accountability measures based on primary indicators of performance in order to support regional economic growth and economic self-sufficiency.
Goals

- Improving educational and skill levels to enable that will provide more job opportunities.
- Provide array of services that is valuable to customers and employers to meet their needs.
- Collaborate with partners, economic development agencies, employers, community resources to develop a workforce system that is responsive to employers and individuals.
- Promote awareness of educational opportunities and occupational skilled trades, demand and growth job sectors to prepare individuals for employment. Utilizing labor market information and data as a tool to make informed decisions.
- Provide work based learning opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment, limited work experience, and improve skill levels.

Improving Educational and Skill Levels

A key element in businesses locating operation in an area is educational and skill levels of the residents in the area. Businesses want to have an available pool of individuals that can readily meet their employment needs.

The local area strives to improve the educational and skill levels that for regional growth and economic development. This includes encouraging individuals to attain a GED if they lack a high school diploma or GED. Promoting continued education thru high education training opportunities which builds educational knowledge and skills.

Provide an array of services that is valuable to meet the needs of customers and employers

The local workforce area works with partner agencies and other community resources to provide a wide array of services in area that will be helpful to both customers and employers. Identifying service needs in the area and then determining which partner agency or community resource can best meet that need.

Collaboration and Coordinator with Partners and Stakeholders

One Stop Partners meetings provide an opportunity for core partners to provide awareness and information on their services, share achievements and success stories, identify gaps in services and
develop strategies to address any new or existing area needs. Efforts are made by partners to do duplicate services that maybe offered thru another agency. Employer Committee groups that are active in the local area is another resource to identify employer needs. Economic development agencies also provide insight into the business and employment opportunities that are available or coming into the area.

Promote Awareness

The local area develops a WIOA Services List which provide information on activities and services available in the area. WIOA Services list are available at the One Stop Center resource area and shared by GDOL staff in their workshops. WIOA Services List is distributed in the area as a marketing resource of information. Core Partners also prompt awareness of their services at the One Stop Center and other venues as well. WIOA and Contractor staff give presentations are various meeting in the area as a method to prompt awareness. Labor Market Information data available thru the Georgia Department of Labor website is another tool that is useful in providing information on occupational skilled trades, demand and growth job sectors. Develop and coordinator marketing strategies and recruitment with business services to enhance knowledge of available services and recruit business to expand work based learning opportunities.

Provide Work Based Learning Opportunities

The local area offers On-The-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience as work based learning activities. OJT offers participating employers wage reimbursements from 50% up to 75% level for hiring WIOA eligible participants. OJT Career Facilitator markets OJT services to the business community to recruit employer participation. Work Experience (WE) is another work based learning opportunity available to eligible participants and interested businesses / employers. Career Facilitator markets Work Experience services to businesses / employers to recruit participation as training worksite. WE Career Facilitator job matches eligible participants to businesses and employers in which the participant has an occupational interest. These efforts provide a hand on learning experience in an actual work environment where the participant has an interest.

Performance Goals
WIOA federally mandates six (6) performance measures for its core programs. Listed below are the six (6) performance measures and methodology:

**Entered Employment Quarter 2**
Measures the percentage of participant who is in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the programs. Youth participants also include the percentage that was in education or training activities during the second quarter after exit.

**Entered Employment Quarter 4**
Measures the percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the programs. Youth participants also include the percentage that was in education or training activities during the fourth quarter after exit.

**Median Earnings Quarter 2**
Measures the median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program.

**Credential Attainment Rate**
Measures the percentage of participants who obtain a recognized post-secondary credential or secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year from exit from the program.

**In-Program Skill Gains**
Measures the percentage of participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving a measurable skill gains, which are defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress toward such a credential or employment.

**Employer Measures** - Definition has not yet been determined by USDOL.

**Strategy for Coordination**
The local area will collaborate with core partners, area employers, community stakeholders, Workforce Development Board members thru various meeting that occur during the year to discuss needs, identify
gaps or other issues, develop strategies etc. to continually work to improve service delivery and accessibility in the local area.

**Strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals.**

_Taking into account the analyses described in previous sections, provide a strategy to coordinate core programs to align resources available to the local area to achieve the strategic vision and goals._

**Description of Strategies and Services**

_Provide a description of the strategies and services that will be used in the local area in order to accomplish the items listed below._

**Engaging Employers**

The Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Americus Career Center as the designated One Stop offers many available services to employers. Employers have access to utilize facility space in the One Stop for interviewing, and testing. Staff can also assist employers with unemployment insurance claims filing, conducting job fairs or any other employment service needs. Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) has implemented a Business Services Unit (BSU) which focuses on an employer directed service delivery strategy. GDOL Business Services Representative (BSR) routinely travel into the area visiting employers, helping them with their employment needs, providing information, connecting employers to other resources or services, serves to strengthen employer partnerships within the area.

GDOL Regional Coordinators partner and work with local, regional and stateside economic developers’ agencies to identify regional needs, providing data, assist employers with hiring or training needs or assisting in the development of customized solutions to region.

Local area Employer Committee groups include memberships of local area employers, WIOA staff/partners, economic developers, and education groups. This group will coordinate and provider labor relative
Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Career Centers located across Georgia provide career and other services to the universal customer. Middle Flint area has one designated One Stop Center which is located at GDOL Americus Career Center located in the eight (8) county area. Customers may access career services at this location or at various access points in the area. Staff will assist the customer and make a determination of the customer’s needs and refer them to the appropriate partner(s) for services. WIOA Services List is available in the One Stop Center locations and other locations within the area. WIOA Services List provides information on current WIOA available services, and contact information for the WIOA Service Provider. Core partners may also provide basic services at the One Stop location or may also use various other partners facilities space available in the area.

The Middle Flint area covers a large rural area which presents travel challenges with individuals being able to access a One Stop Center. Many partners travel out from One Stop Centers into communities in efforts to provide information and some basic levels of service to individuals who may not be able to travel the distance to the nearest One Stop Center. Technological advances also enable customers to access information and services via internet without requiring an onsite visit to a One Stop Center.

Clear Flow of Services between Partners

The area has a One Stop Partners group which meets periodically to share information on services, activities, resources, and coordinate strategies for service delivery. Partner training sessions may be held as needed to provide information and updates to ensure efficient customer flow and referral process is timely. While many services may be available at one location, other services may require a referral to other partner site locations.

Customer referrals are handled in a short timeframe. Referrals may be handled immediately, within the same day of receipt of referral or the Partner will schedule an appointment to accommodate the customer’s schedule.

Plan for Increased Enrollment in Various Programs and Increased Facility Use

The Middle Flint area strives to increase enrollments annually based on funding availability. Partner agencies may co-enroll customer’s to maximize service delivery and share resources. The local area also
looks for new services and training opportunities and to expand current services in a way to increase enrollments. WIOA and Trade Act activities are examples of co-enrollments between programs that the local WIOA utilizes. Facility use may be increased by local planned events uses such workshops, job fairs, employer recruitment/interviewing site, rapid response employee informational meetings, etc.

**System Referrals to Training Services and Use of ITA’s**

Referrals of customers interested in training services such as, but not limited to, basic skills remediation, Individual Training Accounts (ITA’s), and On-The-Job Training (OJT) are made to the designated Service Provider responsible for training activity. WIOA Service Providers also do outreach and recruitment of customers for training services. Providers determine service eligibility, administer assessments, determine needs and abilities and will assist the customer in selecting programs and training providers on State Eligible Training Provider List (ETPL). Provider helps customers apply for training and financial aid assistance (if available) with desired training provider. ITA training obligations and expenditures are tracked during the training activity.

On-The-Job Training (OJT) staff works with employers interested in participating with the OJT training activity by gathering information about available job openings, duties required, educational or skill levels needed for the position, benefits and wage rates. Staff does customer outreach and recruitment for job seekers. OJT staff assesses customer’s work history, skills, career interest and abilities and will job match the customer to an OJT participating employer. OJT Training Agreement is developed for eligible customers to begin OJT training services. Successful OJT training outcomes will result in permanent employment for customer, and employer has a trained employee to meet the needs of their business.

**Identification of Leveraged Resources**

Leveraging of resources allows partners to maximize service delivery by sharing costs which reduce the costs to various funding streams, programs and partners. Shared facility usage between programs and partners can spread the costs of facility, utilities, equipment, staff, supplies, etc. and reduce costs among partners which allow them to serve more customers.
The availability of financial aid funds HOPE or PELL assist with tuition and books fees. Financial aid is applied first towards customer costs of training which reduces the cost to WIOA fund. This allows WIOA funds to be utilized to assist with training related supplies, tools, uniforms, testing fees, and supportive services. Leveraging of these funding streams allows for larger number of customers to be served and provides the support structure that allows customers to attend and be successful in training completions.

Local examples of leveraging resources include but are not limited to:

- South Georgia Technical College provides facility space, utilities, communications, and staff for ITA customers. WIOA covers ITA Case Manager staff costs, equipment, staff supplies and assistance with training costs (not covered by financial aid), and supportive services for WIOA ITA participants.

- Community partners such as Department of Family & Children Services (DFCS), high schools, libraries, City/County buildings, Housing Authority offices provide use of facility space when needed to allow partners to conduct outreach/recruitment efforts, intake, job search assistance, workshops, and assessments to customers in outlying counties where limited transportation options may prevent customers from visiting the One Stop Centers.

- South Georgia Technical College (SGTC), Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), Employer Committee groups and other partners host local area job fairs. SGTC and other community resources are available to provide venue for the facility space, promote event, provide staff to set up and coordinate event. GDOL/Other partners will also promote and market event, provide staff to assist and coordinate event.

**Community Outreach Plan**

The local area provides a broad spectrum of community outreach efforts to include; media, websites, presentations to community, civic, educational, and social services agencies, flyers/brochures, onsite
visits to business and employers, participation with Employer Committee groups, word of mouth, partner referrals, and One Stop Partners meetings.

One Stop centers provide an array of services to universal customers such as veterans, migrant and seasonal farm workers, older workers, offenders, individuals with disabilities, limited English proficiency, and unemployed.

**One Stop Partners & Service Integration**

One Stop Partners and their services are integrated through a process of referrals, co-enrollments among partners, and cost sharing. This integration is critical for the continuity of service to clients.

**Workforce System Efficiency**

The local area strives to operate in an efficient and streamlined manner. Reduced funding levels among partners in recent years has necessitated operating with fewer number of staff members, implement cross training of existing staff, cost effective travel, equipment, and supplies, co-location of partners/providers, and co-enrollment of customers for cost sharing. WIOA has continued to provide consistent customer enrollment numbers with reduced funding levels by using efficient budget management measures. The WDB, partners and community agencies will collectively work towards providing an efficient system that meets the local needs and enhance our area communities.

Local area Demand Occupations List and Project Growth sectors are included in WIOA Plan. Training Opportunities are available in demand occupational areas and sectors which have employment opening and that provide self-sufficient wages.

**Plans to Increase Number of Participants Served**

Funding levels to the local area are an important factor in the determining number of participants that will be served. The local area goal has always been to maximize the number of individuals served each year. Two WIOA Service Providers were be co-located to share a facility in program year 2014, which freed up funds to serve more participants. Co-enrollment of participants between partners/programs can also provide costs sharing which allow additional enrollments.

**Plans for Reducing Supportive Service Costs**
Supportive Services for WIOA participants is an important and needed benefit that enables participants to attend and successfully completed WIOA funded training activities. The eight (8) county local area is mostly rural and has no public transportation systems. Limited city/county transit services and private taxi services are available in limited locations in the local area. These services have limited travel distances, time schedules and charge per trip fees.

Supportive services have historically been provided for assistance with transportation and child care to participants engaged in training activities. Due to the geographic size (2700 square miles) of the area, participants are often required to travel extended distances to training site locations.

Supportive service policy will be implemented to provide assistance with transportation only, with a daily rate range of $10.00 - $14.00 per day. These rates will enable the area to stay within the state mandate support limits.

**Rapid Response Funds Integration**

The local area WIOA staff will coordinate with Governor’s Office of Economic Development, Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) and employer staff to identify and coordinate services to avoid the duplication of services. Integration of services may include, but not limited to, employee information sessions, workshops, intake, claims filing, resume preparation, and connecting employers with job seekers. The local area has held joint sessions with employer meeting, employee information sessions, onsite UI claims filing sessions as a way to provide timely response to event.

**COMPLIANCE**

**Eligible Training Providers List Adult/Youth**

The Middle Flint Workforce Development Board (WDB) will evaluate submitted applications from providers. Applications are available through Georgia Work Ready portal. Applications must include information on training services, costs, duration of training, entrance criteria, performance, financial aid, and accreditation. The Application should also include any current brochures or catalogs for provider.
Applications will be reviewed and evaluated to see if it meets the local areas criteria for consideration of approval. Applications meeting the local established criteria will be presented to the WDB for approval or disapproval at the next planned meeting.

The WIOA Administrative Staff will notify applicants of the WDB decisions on application. Approved Applications will be submitted to the Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDECD) to be included on the state’s Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL).

**Program Efficiency Reducing Administrative Costs**

The Middle Flint Area has always been committed to keeping administrative costs low while operating in an effective and efficient manner. WIOA administrative staff number is lower than most other WIOA areas in the state which reduces administrative costs. River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) provides support to WIOA by lending staff support, facility space, etc.

Staff is required to be efficient with travel, equipment, supplies etc. to reduce costs and stay within budget limitations. All costs are reviewed and approved by the RVRC Executive Director to ensure efficiency and budget compliance.

**Engaging employers in workforce development programs**

*How will the area engage employers in workforce development programs, including small employers and employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations?*

The Middle Flint Area 15 has a long history of engaging employers in workforce development programs based on its 25 continuous years of On-The-Job Training (OJT). Work Experience activity is also available to engage employers. Job Fairs are provided in the local area a business service which aid in employer engagement. Employer Committee groups whose memberships consist of local area business and employers provides employer engagement opportunities with community resources and agencies.

*Employers in in-demand industry sectors and occupations*

The Local area has several in-demand sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, retail and customer-service occupations. WIOA uses the Individual Training Account (ITA) as one activity to train individuals
in healthcare occupations such as nursing, medical assisting, EMT, certified nursing assistants. OJT and ITA services provide training opportunities for manufacturing related occupations.

Supporting a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area

How will the area support a local workforce development system that meets the needs of businesses in the local area? Discuss the area’s workforce services to businesses and how business and organized labor representatives on the Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) contributed to the development of these strategies. Provide a listing of business services available through the area(s) such as employer workshops and assessment and screening of potential employees

Listing of business services available through the area

Business Services available to employers include:

- OJT Services funded by WIOA
- Work Experience funded by WIOA
- Employer Recruitment
- Quick Stop
- Employment Pre-screening
- Facilities availability for testing and assessments
- Rapid Response Services / Layoff Assistance
- Unemployment Insurance Filing
- Tax Credit and Incentive
- Federal Bonding
- Labor Market Information
- Small Business Loans
- Labor Laws Information
- Disabled Accessibility Assessments
How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development?

How will the area better coordinate workforce development programs and economic development? Additionally, identify economic development partners and describe the involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies.

The local WDB membership includes members from the business and economic development sectors. Several WDB members are also members of various chambers of commerce and Employer Committees, Comprehensive Economic Development (CEDS) committee groups. As part of the WDB meetings, WDB members from the economic development sector provide updates on new or expanding businesses in the local area, identify needs of employers, discuss training opportunities, announce job fairs, upcoming workshops, etc.

The WDB understands that economic development is a vital partner in the area and is committed to supporting those partnerships.

Economic development partners:

Economic Development partners for the Middle Flint area are South Georgia Technical College Economic Development staff, local chamber of commerce offices, development authorities, local bankers, small business interests, the Georgia Department of Labor, and GDEcD State Workforce Division. In addition, we work closely with the RVRC to create the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for USEDA.

Involvement of the economic development community in developing strategies:

The GDOL collaborated to share information, and are regular collaborators with the Middle Flint Area. Meetings are attended regularly by Middle Flint WIOA staff.
Strengthening linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs

*How will the area strengthen linkages between the one-stop delivery system and unemployment insurance programs?*

At the One Stop Center, housed within the GDOL Service Center, there is a seamless linkage between the services provided by the One Stop Shop partners and Unemployment Insurance programs. Workshops are offered regularly, and those receiving Unemployment Insurance (UI) are required to attend. Referrals are made to training offered by partners because they are in the One Stop Center. Partners may be invited to participate in various workshops sponsored by GDOL Americus Career Center. Partners services and resources are made available at UI workshops for those individuals seeking additional services or connections to educational and training opportunities available by partners.

**Regional Service Delivery**

Establishment of regional service delivery strategies

*Describe the plans for the establishment of regional service delivery strategies, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements (if applicable).*

The Middle Flint and Lower Chattahoochee Workforce areas have collaborated and shared information on operational processes and procedures, policies etc... used by the two local areas. Due to the geographic distance between these two areas, we do not share the same employers or higher educational training providers. Both local areas do provide some the same basic WIOA funded activities such as On-the-Job Training, Individual Training Accounts (ITA’s) and youth services. The local area anticipates the two areas will continue to collaborate and share information on WIOA services delivery that benefits the region.

Coordination of administrative cost arrangements

*Describe the plans for coordination of administrative cost arrangements including the pooling of funds for administrative costs (if applicable).*

The two local areas have different administrative entity structures and funding allocations. Due to the travel distances between the two local areas, the pooling of funds for administrative costs or sharing of resources are not currently feasible. The local areas would certainly consider coordination in areas where it was deemed appropriate, beneficial and logistically feasible to the region.
Sector Strategy Development –

*Provide a description of the current regional sector strategy development for in-demand industry sectors.*

The two local Workforce Areas selected the Healthcare sector strategy as it was a common sector. Both local areas have a long history of supporting educational and training opportunities with WIOA funding for healthcare related occupations. The region has several high education resources which offer programs of study in healthcare related fields such as nursing, radiology technology, pharmacy technician, etc...

**Partners participating in sector strategy development.**

*Describe the partners that are participating in the sector strategy development.*

**Partners**

Sector partnership will be developed with individuals with knowledge and expertise in the healthcare field such as hospitals, nursing home administrators, high education partners, physical therapy associates, home healthcare providers, Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL), Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation (GVR), Health Departments, and others partners with knowledge in the healthcare sector.

**Meetings**

Sector Strategy training meetings were held in March 2016 by the State Workforce Division staff to provide guidance to the local WIOA areas in implementing sector strategy. The two local areas are currently identifying and talking with healthcare partners to plan a meeting in the fall 2016. Topics for discussion include identify healthcare employment opportunities and needs, evaluating the existing and future educational training opportunities available in the region, identifying gaps, and developing strategies to meet the needs of job seekers, and employers in the healthcare field. Additional meetings will be several times a year and as needed to ensure that the healthcare sector will continue to thrive in the region.

**Research and data used to identify sectors strategies training.**

*Describe the research and the data that was used to identify the sector that was chosen for the sectors strategies training.*

The two local areas (region) reviewed labor market information (LMI) from Georgia Department of Labor, Burning Glass data and data prior WIOA performance and training data and determined that healthcare sector was a common sector between the two local workforce areas. The occupations in healthcare sector have been in demand in both local areas (region) and provide excellent wages and employment retention.

**Outline of the sector strategy**

*Provide a completed outline of the sector strategy for the previously identified sector that includes the following details:*

i. Participating employers;
Participating employers in the healthcare sector will include area hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, physical or rehab therapy and home healthcare agencies.

ii. Target occupations;

Target occupations will include nursing (LPN, RN), radiology, pharmacy technician, certified nursing assistant (CNA), patient care technician, medical assisting, and emergency medicine.

iii. Training programs;

Training programs available in the region include nursing (LPN & RN), radiology technology, pharmacy technology, dental assisting/hygiene, surgical technology, medical assisting, certified nursing assistant (CNA), health records management, and emergency medical technology.

iv. Target Populations

WIOA eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth interested in educational training for careers in the healthcare occupations. Individuals will be required to meet training providers entrance requirements for desired training program and who are determined to be WIOA eligible and in need of educational and training services will be the targeted population.

Plans for future strategy development for future sectors

Describe the plans for future strategy development for future sectors. If applicable, discuss the next sectors to be targeted.

The local areas (region) will focus on the Healthcare sector for PY 16 and PY 17 time period. The region will then review data to select another common shared sector. In March 2016, Manufacturing was the second most common sector shared between the two local areas (region). Once the region is ready to select an additional sector, labor Market Information, Burning Glass and other current local information will be reviewed and presented to the two local area Workforce Development Boards (WDB) to approve the next sector for the region to focus on. Implementation and selection of additional sectors will be based on funding availability.

One-Stop Delivery System

Provide a description of the one-stop delivery system in the local area that includes the items detailed below.

The Middle Flint One Stop system goal is to connect customers, employers, providers/educators and partners to coordinate available services to build an educated and training workforce to meet the
existing employers’ needs and to draw to the area new business and improve employment opportunities in the local area.

The local area objective is to increase educational and employment opportunities, improve referral process, cross training among partners and staff to increase the knowledge levels of available services and expand awareness and marketing of services to businesses and other community resources.

- Provide variety of services to customers
- Facilitate partners meetings and coordination of services
- Report on services and activities of the one-stop
- Staffing of one-stop sites, staff education and training
- Provide career services to customers
- Marketing of services available at one-stop

In addition to partners, other agencies such as, but not limited to, WIOA Service Providers may provide career, educational or training services.

System improvements

Provide a description of how the local board will ensure the continuous improvement of eligible providers of services through the system and ensure that such providers meet the employment needs of local employers, workers and jobseekers.

The local area utilized a competitive procurement process to selected WIOA contractors to provide educational and training opportunities. WIOA contractors are required to follow policies and procedures development to ensure consistent delivery of services. WIOA participant training services is tracked and reported using the State Georgia WorkReady system. Expenditures of Contractors are also tracked and monitored to ensure compliance with local and federal policies. Providers monitoring and performance reporting is another method of ensuring compliance and continued improvement.

Agencies interested in be included on the Georgia Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) must submit an application to the Middle Flint Workforce Development Board (WDB) for consideration of approval and inclusion on the State ETPL. Performance of those approved providers are reviewed and shared with Board members. Providers that do not successfully meet the performance measures requirements maybe removed from local and EPTL based on performance or quality of training provided.
Facilitating access to services

Provide a description of how the local board will facilitate access to services provided through the one-stop delivery system, including in remote areas, through the use of technology and through other means.

The area consists of eight rural counties which covers 5500 square miles. The large geographic area presents challenges with accessibility to One Stop services as transportation availability is a major barrier in the area. The area will have one comprehensive One Stop center located in the largest city and may have additional access locations around the area. The use of available technology is utilized in the area to meet the needs of customers/employer in the large geographic area. Partners with facilities that are located in other counties have made available the use of facility space to address the customer accessibility needs. Public libraries are other resources that can be utilized as meeting location to serve customers in the outlining counties. Several partners are located in the same county in close proximity to the designated One Stop Center where additional facility space usage or access to technology or services may be available if needed.

WIOA and partner agencies also use other various outlets for outreach and recruitment efforts such as local media, social media, internet, and word of mouth, referrals from participants and partner agencies, distribution of flyers, brochures and placement of services delivery in the One Stop Resource Area. WIOA Providers staff participates in local area job fairs and other community event, give presentations and participate in various meetings held in the local area.

Compliance with accessibility laws

Provide a description of how entities within the one-stop delivery system, including one-stop operators and the one-stop partners, will comply with WIOA § 188, if applicable, and applicable provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) regarding the physical and programmatic accessibility of facilities, programs and services, technology and materials for individuals with disabilities. This should include the provision of staff training and support and addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities.

The comprehensive One Stop Operator/Center and partners will be required to comply with WIOA Section 188. Compliance with WIOA Section 188 will be included in all provider contracts and will be
monitored periodically to ensure compliance. Training will be provided to staff as needed to ensure the individuals with disabilities needs are addressed.

Comprehensive One Stop center is equipped with handicapped accessible doorways, restrooms facilities, adjustable computer stations are setup with devices for vision impaired, keyboards, noise cancelling headphones etc.

An Equal Opportunity Officer has been appointed to receive and resolve local grievances and complaints to ensure compliance with WIOA Section 188. The Equal Opportunity tag line will continue to list on advertising, print materials and included in personnel policies.

Equal Opportunity posters are on public display in comprehensive One Stop center and WIOA Contractors locations. Print materials on Equal Opportunity Laws are also available.

**Roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners.**

*Provide a comprehensive description of the roles and resource contributions of the one-stop partners*

Roles and resource contributions are outlined in the table below:

The local area partners include the following:

- River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) Workforce Department – serves as the administrative entity, program oversight and management and WIOA grant recipient
- Georgia Department of Labor Americus Career Center – providers Wagner-Peyser, Trade Act, Unemployment Insurance, Veterans services, Business Services, TOPSTEP, Migrant Season Workers
- South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) – Adult Education, ESL, and post-secondary education
- Georgia Department of Human Resources – representing Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services – representing Vocational Rehabilitation

River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) Workforce Department serves as the WIOA grant fund recipient and administrative entity for oversight of WIOA funded activities and services in the local area. Contracts are awarded based on competitive procurement to agencies for delivery of career and training activities and services. Other partners also provide some basic career services and additional services unique to their agency. Partners also collaborate and coordinate with other local community agencies and resources to enhance available services for the area.

Currently the One Stop system operates under non-financial agreements which are signed by partners. The agreements (Memorandum of Understanding and Resource Sharing Agreement) identify the partners and roles/responsibilities and contributions.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lead Partner/One-Stop Operator, Other Partners</th>
<th>Major Services Provided by Each Partner</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GDOL Americus Career Center 120 West Church Street Americus, GA 31709 (229) 931-2520</td>
<td>Employment Services  Unemployment Insurance  Veterans Services  Employer Services  Job Referrals  Assessments  Job Search Assistance  Labor Market Information  Resume Preparation  Workshops  Referral to community services  Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker  TOP Step and Federal Bonding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency</td>
<td>Career Counseling  Assessments  Job Development  Case Management  Training Workshops  Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff Available at One Stop or other locations within the area.</td>
<td>WIOA Administrative Entity and Grant Recipient Program oversight and management  Labor Market Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Valley Regional Commission WIOA Administrator 228 West Lamar Street Americus, GA 31709</td>
<td>Outreach and recruitment  Eligibility Determination  Assessments  GED Basic Skills Remediation  Work Experience  Job Search Assistance  Work Readiness Training  Computer Skills Training  Follow-Up Services  Referral to post-secondary education  Resume Preparation  Referral to community resources  Labor Market Information  Supportive Services  Career Counseling  On-The-Job Training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paxen Learning Inc. 301 S. Tripp St. Americus, GA 31705 (229) 931-8990 605 15th Avenue Cordele, GA 31015 (229) 273-4568</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection.

Identify the current One-Stop Operator in the local area(s) and describe how the region/local area is preparing for the competitive process for operator selection. Describe how market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis are being conducted as part of that preparation.

Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Americus Career Center is the current One Stop Center/Operator. In 2000, GDOL was selected by consortium of One Stop partners for the coordination of local area one stop services. Non-financial agreements were development and utilized under the former WIA Law. One Stop center has provided a system of referrals to partners and available services in the local area.

One Stop partners meetings are held annually to collaborate and share information on partners’ services, available resources, identify needs of the area, identify business services needs and develop strategies to provide continuous improvement in services in area.

In June 2016, a meeting of partners was held to discuss the current One Stop services and the now WIOA required competitive procurement for One Stop operator and non-financial agreements for the PY 2016 period. Partners were made aware that WIOA Laws specifies that funding is to be available to support infrastructure for the One Stop center/operator. Discussion include the required One Stop competitive procurement which would require a Request For Proposal (RFP) to be developed and issued during the PY 2016 time period and selection of the comprehensive One Stop Center/Operator be in place no later than July 1, 2017.
As the WIOA Final Regulations were not available at the time of the June 2016 meeting, additional partner meetings will be held to continue further discussions on local area One Stop procurement and services.

*Market research, requests for information and conducting a cost and price analysis*

As the local area is a large geographic rural area, market research was conducted to determine the best location for the One Stop center. Americus being the largest city in the area was selected due to the availability of GDOL facilities and location of many partner offices. Cost analysis will include evaluation of location, costs, size, and any renovations needed.

**Awarding Sub-grants and Contracts**

*Provide a description of the competitive process to be used to award the sub-grants and contracts in the local area for activities carried out under this Title I.*

Middle Flint Area 15 uses the method of competitive procurement process thru a Request for Proposals (RFP) for educational and training services such as but not limited to On-The Job Training (OJT), work based learning, youth services and service coordination/case management. RFP’s are made publicly available and distributed to interested parties upon request. Contracts are awarded based on responses from the RFP process and approval from the Workforce Development Board. The One Stop Operator will be procured during program year 2016. Procurement Policies are included in this plan.

**EEO and Grievance Procedures**

WIOA Program Specialist is the designated Equal Opportunity Officer and Grievance and Complaints Officer for the Middle Flint area. Grievance and Compliant and Equal Opportunity issues must be filed according to local area procedures as outlined in the Grievance Procedures. A full Grievance Procedure has been established by the local board to address issues that may arise with customers, personal or other interested parties. Grievance Procedures is provided as an Attachment.

**Local Boards and Plan Development:**
Local Boards

Provide a description of the local board that includes the components listed below

**MIDDLE FLINT AREA 15 - WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD MEMBERS PY 2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Organization Position</th>
<th>Designation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Janet Teele WDB Chairperson</td>
<td>Ameris Bank</td>
<td>Personal Banker</td>
<td>Private Business Marion County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candace Head</td>
<td>Georgia Department of Labor Business Services Unit Economic Development Coordinator</td>
<td>Business Services Economic Development</td>
<td>UI, Employment Services, Trade Act, and Veteran Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norman Graves</td>
<td>Golden Gourmet Middle Flint COA</td>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>Private Sector Business Sumter County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wally Summers</td>
<td>South Georgia Technical College</td>
<td>Vice President South Georgia Technical College</td>
<td>Adult Literacy Education Economic Development Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Green</td>
<td>Webster County Board of Education</td>
<td>Assistant Principal Webster County Board of Education Area Employment Manager</td>
<td>Education Webster County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doreene Carlisle</td>
<td>Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services</td>
<td>Area Employment Manager</td>
<td>Vocational Rehabilitation Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melinda Posey</td>
<td>Ameris Bank</td>
<td>Consumer Banker</td>
<td>Private Business Taylor County Schley County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen Pollock</td>
<td>Region 8 Department of Human Services</td>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>TANF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willie Patrick</td>
<td>South Georgia News</td>
<td>Owner</td>
<td>Private Business Crisp County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathis Wright Jr.</td>
<td>IBEW 2194</td>
<td>President</td>
<td>Organized Labor Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Mitchell</td>
<td>Magnolia Manor</td>
<td>Administrator</td>
<td>Private Business Sumter County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhonda Holbrook Vice Chairperson</td>
<td>Interfor U.S. Inc.</td>
<td>Human Resources Manager</td>
<td>Private Business Webster County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Fitzgibbons</td>
<td>Crisp Power</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>Private Business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Janet Teele serves as Chairperson of the Middle Flint Area 14 WIOA. Rhonda Holbrook serves as Vice Chair on the Executive Committee.

Identification and appointment process for local boards

Describe how local board members are identified and appointed. Include a description of how the nomination process occurs for adult education and labor representatives. (Proposed § 679.320(g))

The local Workforce Development Board (WDB) members are solicited from area chambers of commerce, payroll and industrial development authorities, business organizations, education agencies, and partner agencies. Board member nominees are presented to the Chief Local Elected Official (CLEO) for consideration and approval. Representatives from Adult Education are nominated by the local Technical Colleges providing adult education services. Nominations for Labor representatives are solicited from business or labor organizations.

New member orientation process

Describe the area’s new member orientation process for board members

New Workforce Development Board (WDB) members are provided orientation information upon appointment to serve on the local WDB. One-on-one sessions or groups sessions may be conducted as
needed. Members are provided information on local WIOA services and activities, By-Laws, meetings, etc.

**Board coordination of Regional Economic Development Activities**

*Describe how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with regional economic development activities carried out in the region (in which the local area is located or planning region).*

Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) includes members from the local/region economic development agencies. These members keep the WIOA staff and WDB updated economic development activities in the local area. WDB meetings regularly include an information sharing segment from the economic development representatives on current or upcoming activities such as new business/industry recruitment, job fairs, business expansions, identified needs of employers, etc. in the local area. Information on WIOA and partners services may also be included as resources to business prospects or existing business and industry.

**Engagement of local board members**

*Describe how local board members are kept engaged and informed*

The local Workforce Development Board (WDB) receives information and updates on WIOA activities and developments at board meetings. Information such as job fair announcements, workshops or training events, committee events, RVRC quarterly newsletters, WIOA participants’ success stories, may also be distributed as a way to keep board members engaged and informed. WIOA Service Contractors may also engage Board members by visiting them when they are in their locations or inviting members to visit their training sites, or be guest speakers or serve as mentors. WIOA Administrative staff, Contractors staff and Board Members are often in attendance at the same community meetings which allows for information sharing and networking opportunities.

**Local Board Committees**

*Provide a description of board committees and their functions.*
Local Workforce Development Board (WDB) currently has an Executive Committee and can appoint other committees as deemed necessary.

Executive Committee may act on behalf of the full board when a quorum is not present at a meeting. Executive Committee may also hold a meeting if a decision or matter needs to be made quickly and time does not allow for full Board meeting to be held.

Additional committees such as proposal review, nominating committee, youth committee, etc. may be appointed as deemed necessary by the Board.

Plan Development

Provide a description of the process by which the plan was developed including the participation of core partners, providers, board members and other community entities. Also describe the process used by the local board to provide a 30 day comment period prior to the submission of the plan including an opportunity for public comment, including comment by representatives of businesses and comment by representatives of labor organizations, representative of education and input into the development of the local plan.

WIOA staff reviewed the draft State Workforce Plan for guidance on development of local and regional plans. Required partners were notified of the State Plan available and encouraged to review the plan for guidance in developing and submission of their agencies activities, services and any other pertinent information to be included local/regional plans. Labor Market Information (LMI) data from the Georgia Department of Labor website, Burning Glass data, Census Bureau data, etc. was collected and utilized in the development of the local/regional plan. Copies of the Plan will be provided to WDB members for review and upon approval of the Plan.

Process to provide a 30 day comment period

Upon approval of the Plan, public notice will be posted on the River Valley Regional Commission website www.rivervalleyrc.org for the 30-day public comment period.

Service Delivery and Training

Expanding Service to Eligible Individuals
Provide a description of how the local board, working with the entities carrying out core programs, will expand access to employment, training, education and supportive services for eligible individuals, particularly eligible individuals with barriers to employment. Include how the local board will facilitate the development of career pathways and co-enrollment, as appropriate, in core programs, and how it will improve access to activities leading to a recognized postsecondary credential, academic or industry-recognized.

The local WDB, staff and partners will work toward expanding access to services for eligible individuals and strive to provide a pipeline of skilled workers to meet the needs of area business and employers. Efforts to improve basic education literacy levels and providing training opportunities that increase skills levels and employability will help attract new business and industry to the local area. One Stop Partners will hold meetings to identify needs, accessibility options and develop strategies to expand outreach and recruitment efforts in the community. An important part of expanding access to services is to develop an effective referral process and cross training among partner’s staff to ensure individuals are directed in the appropriate service or partner agency for assistance. Training needs to include Identifying individuals’ barriers to employment and training as services may need to be provided by multiple partners. Career pathways and co-enrollment have been implemented in many of the WIOA education and training activities. Helping individuals to remove or work around barriers can lead to achieving desired training objectives and outcomes. The attainment of education credentials and/or industry recognized enhances the employment, retention in employment, and increases in wages performance outcomes of WIOA.

Services to Adults and Dislocated Workers

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of adult and dislocated worker employment and training activities in the local area.

The local area and partners collaborate and coordinate to provide a wide array of services to the adult and dislocated worker. Services available include, but not limited to, the following: job search/job placement assistance, comprehensive assessments, various workshops, assistance with Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims, resume training and development, Rapid Response, veterans’ services, federal bonding, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, and Labor Market Information. WIOA funded services include Individual Training Accounts (ITA’s), On-the-Job Training (OJT), GED preparation, Work Readiness training, Work Experience, career guidance, assessments, job search and job placements and referral to other services as deemed appropriate.
Career Services

WIOA does not require any sequence of services. Individuals may receive services in any order to meet their needs.

Career services must be made available and at a minimum, must include the following services:

- Determination of individuals eligibility to receive assistance
- Outreach, Intake, and orientation to the information and other services available
- Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs
- Job search and placement assistance and when needed career counseling
- Provision of workforce and labor market information including job vacancy listings, necessary job skills, information related to local occupations in demand and the earnings, skill requirements and advancement opportunities.
- Provision of referrals and coordination of activities with other programs and services
- Provision of performance information and program cost information on eligible providers of training services
- Provision of information on Unemployment Insurance (UI) claims filing
- Provision of information on available supportive services assistance and referrals to those services
- Assistance in establishing eligibility for financial aid assistance for education and training programs not provided under WIOA, including HOPE and PELL
- Comprehensive and specialized assessments of skill levels
- Development of individual employment plan to identify the employment goals, achievement objectives and appropriate combination of services for the participant to achieve his/her employment goals, including the list of and information regarding the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL)
- Group Counseling
- Individual counseling and mentoring
- Career planning
- Short-term pre-vocational skills, including development of learning skills, communication skills, interviewing skills, punctuality, personal maintenance skills and professional conduct services to prepare individuals for unsubsidized employment or training
- Internships and work experience activities
- Financial literacy

Career services may be provided by core partners or other agencies located in the area, through service providers contracts procured through the WDB

Training Services

Training services are for individuals:

- Meet eligibility requirements for WIOA and unable to secure or retain employment
- Based on assessments, interview and evaluation have been determined to be in need of training services, suitable to successfully engage in the selected training services program
- Selected program or training services that are linked to employment opportunities
Training services available in local area include:

- Individual Training Accounts (ITA) allows training opportunities for State providers and programs listed on the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL). Case Managers will develop and Individual Employment Plan (IEP) to identify training goals, report assessments results, document achieved objectives and report academic progress. Individuals must apply for financial aid assistance available through HOPE and PELL (if available by training provider). WIOA can provide financial assistance with training related costs of tuition, books, and training materials. Individuals may be determined eligible to receive supportive service payments for assistance with transportation if needed to successfully participate in training.

- On-The-Job Training (OJT) is available to eligible individuals to provide work based learning with eligible participating employers. Training Agreement will be developed with employer to identify job duties to be learned, length of training time needed to adequately perform the job. Training limit is limited and takes into consideration individual prior work experience, education and skill levels. The participating employer hires the eligible participant and provides the hands on work experience.

OJT employers are reimbursed for training costs. Reimbursements to employers range from 50% - 75% of the hourly wage rate for the designated training period. Employers from the public, private non-profit or private sector are eligible to engage in OJT services.

- GED Remediation/Work Readiness/Work Experience is available to eligible individuals who lack a high school diploma and in need to obtaining their General Education Diploma (GED). Work Readiness (WR) is incorporated with the GED remediation to enhance participants’ employability options. Work Experience (WE) is a work based learning activities that allow eligible participants to learn hands on employment knowledge and skills. Participants are paid wages during the designated training period. Participants are covered under Workman’s Compensation coverage while on the employers worksite. Employers provide the training and supervision to WE participants while engaged in training.

- Work Experience (WE) provides limited hands on work based learning through subsidized employment in the private, non-profit, or public sector for individuals with barriers to employment such as but not limited to limit or poor work history, sporadic work history, long-term unemployed etc...

- Business services available through the On-the-Job Training and Work Experience activities to provide work-based learning opportunities

Rapid Response Services

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with statewide rapid response activities.
Rapid Response services are available when the local area has received a WARN notice from the State office. Rapid Response services are utilized when an employer has announced a lay-off or company closure. The local area WIOA staff will coordinate with the employer and Georgia Department of Labor Americus Career Center staff to set up employer meetings. The meeting is designed to plan a date and time to meet with employees, identify any special needs, identify education and skill level of employees, collect demographics, determine number to be laid off, identify any other employers (secondary employers) in the area that might be impacted by the layoff that will be impacted, and provide information on available benefits and services.

Local area will provide to impacted employees information of available WIOA services, GDOL services available, local technical colleges and other educational services will be provided to the employees at these meetings. Additional services and or community partners may be requested to participate in the meetings as deemed necessary to meet the needs of the employer and affected employees.

Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) staff may offer various activities and services such as workshops, job search/job placement assistance, unemployment insurance filing claims, job fairs, money management, resume preparation, interviewing skills and other customized workshops as needed.

WIOA staff / Service providers will provide information on training services available such as ITA’s, OJT, and GED Remediation. Individuals interested in WIOA training services will have been referred to the appropriate training providers for further assistance in enrolling in the training services.

Youth Services

Provide a description and assessment of the type and availability of youth workforce development activities in the local area, including activities for youth with disabilities. This description and assessment shall include an identification of successful models of such youth workforce development activities.

The Middle Flint Workforce Development Board (WDB) identified a need in the local area in 2004 for youth. The area had a large number of disengaged out of school youth who lacked either a high school diploma or GED. The youth individuals typically had multiple barriers such as but not limited to; school dropout, single parent/pregnant, basic skills deficiency, offender status, limit or no prior work history,
low income, public assistance recipients, and lacked personal transportation or access to available public transportation services.

The youth were unable to engage in post-secondary education due to high school dropout status and were unable to enter employment because most all local area employers required with a high school diploma or GED for employment. The local WDB saw a unique opportunity and made a strategic move to improve the lives of disengaged youth and also to increase the local area available employment pool of eligible workers. The WDB understood that the implementation of this project would present many challenges. Training provider had to address the participant many barriers before training could be started such as assisting them with locating childcare services, learning to coordinate and resolving transportation problems, working with probation/parole services for offenders, referring participants to housing assistance programs etc. Training Service Provider had many challenges along the way to help assist participants with learning to work around or remove multiple barriers to successfully participate in the training. Often times barriers reoccur or new ones develop during the training period. Effective case management and communication is a vital element with this training activity. Youth often lack the experience or knowledge level to learn to deal with barriers. Provider staff had to help the youth participants to learn how to resolve and work through their own barriers and find community resources.

In 2005, the Youth GED Plus services was implemented in the local area. The goal was to offer a fast track GED remediation to assist participant to obtain their General Education Diploma (GED). Work readiness training as also included in the activity to address soft skills, career guidance, post-secondary educational opportunities, job search techniques, resume development, interviewing skills, appropriate personal hygiene and dress in the workplace, financial literacy etc.. In 2013, Work Experience (WE) was added to provide youth with work based learning activities.

Due to the success of the Youth GED Plus activity, in 2009 GED Plus services for Adults and Dislocated Workers were added.

As of June 2016, 680 individuals have obtained their GED in the local area. Many youth choose to continue their education by enrolling in post-secondary education or entering employment.

The local WDB uses Request for Proposals (RFP) process to competitively procure youth services in the area. The area coordinates with various community partners and resources for the successful implementation of the youth services strategy.
In-school youth services are limited to 25% maximum cap of youth funding availability. Currently the area is focusing youth funds on serving the out of school youth group as area has a large population of disengaged youth. Career and training services are available to youth customers including those with disabilities.

The local area would collaborate and coordinate services for youth with disabilities with the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation agency. WIOA and Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation services have worked together in co-enrolling and coordinating our various services to meet the identified needs of customers.

At this time, there are no schools in the local area which are participating with the Go Build Georgia State initiative. The local area would coordinate and partner with this initiative based on WDB approval and funding availability.

Local area youths include services to ex-offenders assisting them in achieving their GED and then move onto either post-secondary education or employment. The Service Provider staff has developed strong working relationships with the juvenile court system and parole/probation services in the area to assist youth offenders in getting their life back on track and preventing future criminal offenses.

Work-Based Learning Initiatives

Provide a description of how the area will implement initiatives such as incumbent worker training programs, on-the-job training programs, customized training programs, industry and sector strategies, career pathways initiatives, utilization of effective business intermediaries and other business services and strategies designed to meet the needs of employers in the corresponding region in support of the business service strategy.

The Middle Flint area will work with local employers who may request incumbent worker or customized training services. South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) has assisted several local area employers such as Weyerhaeuser, Kauffman Tire, Tyson Foods, John Deere, Caterpillar, etc. with the development of customized training programs. SGTC has a dedicated staff that is committed to assisting the local community employers with developing customized and specialized training. On-The-Job Training (OJT) and Work Experience activities are part of the business services offered in the Middle Flint area.

On-The-Job Training (OJT)
The Middle Flint WIOA area has a long history (29 years) of offering work based learning initiatives through On-The-Job Training (OJT) services. Up until 10 years ago, OJT was the one the of the local areas strongest activity. As the temporary staffing agencies have become a popular option for employers, this has had a negative impact on the local area OJT enrollment number. While employers are required to pay a fee to the staffing agency, they use the services of these agencies a screening mechanism to try out applicants, eliminate workers compensation liability issues and lower the cost for fringe benefits with no commitment for permanent long term employment. OJT Career Facilitators approach the employer from the angle that our services do not cost the employer any fees; OJT can provide assessments and screening services to assist the employer in choosing the right applicant for the job.

Case management services are available during OJT training period and follow-up period to assist the employer and OJT participant to work through and resolved any work related issues. OJT Facilitators market to employers that the employer will receive a training reimbursement check with can assist with their costs of training employees.

Industry recognized credentials are very limited in the local rural area. OJT services has been able to report credentials for several occupations such as but not limited to correctional officers POST certification, Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and Fork Lift operator.

While our OJT enrollment numbers are smaller than they previous were in the past, the Workforce Development Board (WDB) has continued to support and view this work based learning as a needed service in the local area.

**Work Experience**

The Middle Flint area began initially offering the Work Experience component as part of the youth services strategy in 2012. Many of the youth participants had little or no prior work history. Work Experience activity was strategically planned to the follow the Work Readiness activity. The Work Readiness and soft skills information was fresh in their minds. Our first goal was to use the Work Experience activity to provide hands on work based learning activity to gain knowledge and skills of the world of work.
Our second goal was to possibly obtain some permanent employment opportunities for the youth thru the Work Experience activity. The Service Provider staff tried to develop worksites that would normally hire youth workers or develop worksites where the participant had an occupational interest.

Beginning in Program Year (PY 2016), the local area will begin offering the Work Experience to the Adult and Dislocated Workers group in efforts to development permanent employment opportunities for this group as well. Many of the adult and dislocated workers have poor, sporadic work or have been long-term unemployed.

Participant wages and workers compensation liability insurance coverage is provided at no cost to the participating worksite employers. Public, private and governmental agencies are encourages to volunteer and serve as a Work Experience worksite.

**ITAs**

_Provision of ITAs – Provide a description of how training services in WIOA §134 will be provided through the use of ITAs. If contracts for the training services will be used, describe how the use of such contracts will be coordinated with the use of ITAs and how the local board will ensure informed customer choice in the selection of training programs regardless of how the training services are to be provided._

Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) services are available in the local area to eligible adults, dislocated workers and youth. The State Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL) provides information on training programs and providers in the State. The Middle Flint has several ETPL providers in the local area; South Georgia Technical College, Georgia Southwestern State University and Darton College (Cordele campus). The local area also utilizes training providers that are in close proximity to the area as well.

WIOA funds can be used to assist in the costs of attendance training such as assistance with tuition, books, supplies, training related necessities etc. WIOA funds are used after other forms of financial aid (HOPE, PELL, scholarships funds have been applied or are not available.
ITA training programs of study are in growth and/or demand occupations or if documentation can be provided of employment opportunities. Training should lead to the awarding of a certificate, diploma, degree or licensure. Training should lead to earning a self-sufficient wage without the need for public assistance benefits.

Local area has established an ITA training time limit of 2 years of less. Exceptions will be made to the 2 year time limit; if the participant has a valid reason to extend the training period such as courses was not offered by training provider to complete with the time period, health/medical occurrences etc. Training cost is limited to $5,000 (excluding supportive service benefits) per participant.

Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services

Entrepreneurial Skills Training and Microenterprise Services – Provide a description of how the area will coordinate and promote entrepreneurial skills training and micro-enterprise services

Middle Flint area has included an Entrepreneurial module in the GED Plus activity. This module provides information on how to start and operate your own business. The Service Provider invites local entrepreneurs into the class to discuss their business. Entrepreneurial courses are also available in the community by South Georgia Technical College, Georgia Southwestern State University and chambers of commerce. Staff and Service Providers are involved in and attend regularly held meetings with Chambers of Commerce, Employer Committees, community meetings to stay informed of entrepreneurial activities and services in the community.

Coordination with Education Programs

Coordination with Education Programs – Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate education and workforce development activities carried out in the local area with relevant secondary and postsecondary education programs and activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services and avoid duplication of services

Middle Flint Workforce Development Board (WDB) has members from the secondary and post-secondary sectors. These members bring a well of knowledge and resources to the table as WIOA
coordinates with educational programs. TCSG (South Georgia Technical College) and University System of Georgia (USG – Georgia Southwestern State University and Darton College) are very active and involved with the local area. They strive to offer educational programs that are needed in the local area to support business and employers and to attract new business and industry to our rural area. They all have a clear understanding and work diligently to improve the educational levels of our residents is a key element to the growth and prosperity of the area.

South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) has recently been named one of the best two-year colleges in the State for 2016. The SGTC Practical Nursing program is top 5 in Georgia. SGTC began offering free books several years ago and continues to provide this as a way to make college affordable for everyone that wanted to attend. This has provided monumental opportunities for the local area.

South Georgia Technical College (SGTC) has two campuses in the area (Americus and Cordele). They continue to expand courses offering in other counties within the area as well. The SGTC Americus campus offers dormitories for student housing and is one of only two Technical Colleges in Georgia that offer dormitories.

Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) is a four year university located in Americus which offers a wide selection of degree areas. GSW is also considered one of the best affordable four year universities in Georgia. Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) is well known in the state for their Nursing and Education degree programs.

Darton College has a satellite campus located in Cordele. They recently moved into a brand new facility located in the downtown area of Cordele. Darton has been a two year college, but recently announced it was merging with Albany State University (Albany, GA) and will become a four year college soon. The Darton Cordele campus has an excellent Register Nursing program and will soon be adding additional degree areas soon.

WIOA offers ITA funded training opportunities at Darton College, Georgia Southwestern State University and South Georgia Technical College (SGTC). The Middle Flint Area is proud to have these three educational partners in our area.

The area has a number of secondary schools. Two public school districts in the area have the distinct honor of being tied in a rank of 25th in the state for academic excellence.
Supportive Services

Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out under this title in the local area with the provision of transportation, including public transportation, and other appropriate supportive services in the local area. Describe the coordination of transportation and other supportive services regionally, if applicable. Please include the region/local area Supportive Service Policies.

Middle Flint WIOA provides Supportive Service benefits to eligible participants to assist with costs associated with participation in a WIOA funded activity. Staff coordinates with other agencies and community resources to leverage resources to meet the participants’ needs. Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) has limited funds to assist their clients with child care and transportation assistance. Coordination and leverages of resources helps to prevent duplication of services.

Transportation in the rural area prevents barriers to participation in training, employment, and other areas. The area lacks available transportation systems (buses, trains, taxi services etc...) Several cities and counties in the area do operate local vans and small buses which charge a fee for service. These usually have a very limited range of travel and do not operate with any consist hours or pickup/drop-off points. Taxi services are only available in very limited capacity in two the larger cities in the area. Fees for usage are pricey and again have limited travel range and hours of operation.

The Middle Flint WDB has approved supportive service benefits in the local area to assist individuals participate in training. Supportive services may include but are not limited to the following services; transportation, child care, dependent care, and meals. WIOA supportive services are a much needed benefit in the rural area to allow eligible individuals engage in training.

WIOA supportive service funds will be available based on an individual determination of need. Supportive Services Determination of need form is complete for each eligible participants that request assistance with training related costs. Participants are required to identify if they are receiving assistance with supportive services related type payments from any other agency. Participants must be physically attending training classes as verified by an attendance timesheet which is signed by the participant and training Instructor.

Supportive services payments are separate from the ITA training voucher limit of $5,000. Middle Flint area will comply with any federal or state supportive services policies. Middle Flint Supportive Services policy if included with the plan. See Attachment – Local Policy.
Coordination with Core Partners

Description of the Workforce System

Provide a description of the workforce development system in the local area that identifies all relevant programs and how the local board will work with the entities to carry out both core and other workforce development programs to deliver well aligned services in support of the strategies identified in the state plan. This should include programs of study authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.).

The Middle Flint Workforce Development Board, core partners and staff/Service Providers strive to develop and operate an efficient and effective service delivery process that assist individuals receive desired services and assist the needs of local businesses and employers.

Core partners work together towards coordination of services and resources with a goal to have continuous improvement, sharing of resources, improving a referral system, cross training staff, use of technology to operate a streamline system.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Resource Sharing Agreement (RSA) have been developed with core partners to include goals, resources, and responsibilities. See Attachment – Local Policy.

Core partners hold period meetings in meetings to share information, identify needs in the local area, identify resources, develop strategies to meet the identified needs and gaps, provide cross training opportunities. Many of the core partners are also engaged with other community groups such as Family Connections, Employer Committees, Chambers and Development Authorities, Civic groups and use these outlets to share information on available services, identify needs and resources.

Referrals for WIOA services are provided through the designated One Stop center located in Americus. Georgia Department of Labor Americus Career Center has a resource area in which core partners have provided information on their services and contact information. Some core partners to include WIOA, Georgia Department of Labor, and SGTC Adult Education literacy programs are located in the local area.
Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation (GVR) and Experience Works partners do not have permanent locations in the area and travel into the local area at periodic times or use technology to contact with customers.

WIOA funds training activities and services are contracted Service Providers. Individual Training Accounts (ITAs), GED Plus (remediation, work readiness, work experience) and On-the-Job Training (OJT). Outreach, intake, training, case management and follow-up services are provided by these Providers.

Coordination with Wagner-Peyser

Provide a description of plans and strategies for, and assurances concerning, maximizing coordination of services provided by the state employment service under the Wagner-Peyser Act (29U.S.C. 49 et seq.) and services provided in the local area through the one-stop delivery system, to improve service delivery and avoid duplication of services.

The Middle Flint area has one Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Americus Career center in the eight county area. Up until June 2015, the local area had two GDOL locations. With the closing of the GDOL Cordele Career center, it requires the one available center to cover a larger geographic area. GDOL Americus Career Center provides Wagner-Peyser services to include, but not limited to, the following; business services, career guidance, job search/job placement services, testing facilities, assistance with Unemployment Insurance (UI) file and claims review, provide number of various workshops, Rapid Response coordination, federal bonding, TOPPSTEP for veterans and offenders, Veterans services, Work Opportunity Tax Credits, facility space for employers and/or partners, migrant seasonal farm workers, and referrals to WIOA and other partner services. Labor Market Information (LMI) is available through GDOL website. LMI provides a vast array of information on local, region and statewide labor statistics.

GDOL Americus Career Center as the designated comprehensive One Stop has facility space and access to computers, conference room, internet availability that can accommodate use by core partner staff as needed.
GDOL staff make referrals of individuals to WIOA and partner services with enhances the coordination and integration of services delivery in the area. WIOA makes available to GDOL staff and partners the use of facility space as need in various locations in the area.

In 2013 Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) developed a Business Services Unit (BSU) to enhance relationships with employers and potential prospected business/employers looking to locate in the area. BSU staff also work with local and regional economic developers to promote growth in the area. They also serve as a resource to employers in their employment recruitment efforts, developing need job fairs, developing with customized training, career expos, GeorgiaBEST initiatives, regional summits and Employer Committees.

**Adult Education**

*Provide a description of how the local board will coordinate workforce development activities carried out in the local area with the provision of adult education and literacy activities under title II in the local area, including a description of how the local board will carry out, consistent with subparagraphs (A) and (B)(i) of section 107(d)(11) and section 232 of the WIOA Law, the review of local applications submitted under title II.*

Adult Education has a target population of more than one million in Georgia. This includes individuals age sixteen and over, without a high school diploma, its equivalency or a lack of English proficiency. This also includes those who have experienced barriers to education or employment.

Adult Education Literacy services are available in the area by local area by South Georgia Technical College (SGTC). SGTC Adult Education offer classes in GED remediation, Basic Skills, and English as a Second Language (ESL). They have a number of locations throughout the area. Adult Education services focus on GED attainment and education services below the post-secondary level that helps to increase the individual’s ability to:

- Read, write and speak English and perform mathematics or other activities necessary for attainment of secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent
- Transition to post-secondary education and training and
- Obtain employment

SGTC Adult Education has a GED program for criminal offenders in Sumter County Correctional Institution to help individuals obtain their GED. Upon release from the facility, staff assists individuals with GED recipients to enter post-secondary education or employment.

SGTC Transition Specialist works closely with GED students to enhance skill development for college by providing information on how to apply for admissions to college, how to apply for financial aid, etc.

Adult Education is working with other state agencies to a statewide Career Pathways initiative. Career Pathways is seeking to increase the number of youth completing high school and attaining post-secondary credentials that translate into value for the labor market.

The Adult Education portion of the WDB partners with many local and state agencies to achieve the goals of improving literacy levels in the area. Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) was created in 1990 and asks a community to establish non-profit collaborative s to promote, support and enhance local community literacy efforts. CLCP works to develop a network to coordinate business, faith-based groups, volunteer, social services, local government, schools, media and other resources within a community to reach, influence, and support individuals who want to improve their education.

SGTC Adult Education is also the designated entity to administer the state GED examination. GED examination testing sites have been established in several locations in the area to include the correctional facilities, and SGTC Americus and Cordele locations.

Middle Flint WIOA and SGTC Adult Education recently partnered in a State sponsored pilot project for Literacy To Work initiative. WIOA Service Providers and SGTC Adult Education share referrals of individuals in need of basic skills remediation and GED attainment.
In addition to WIOA, other core partners also refer individuals in need to basic skills literacy remediation to Adult Education services in the area.

Adult Education is a vital partner in the local area in the efforts to improve the local area education levels and increase GED attainment levels. The increase the number of individuals with GED will promote economic growth and pipeline of available workers eligible to apply for employment.

**Vocational Rehabilitation**

— Provide a description of the cooperative agreement between the local Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation office and the local board which describes efforts made to enhance the provision of services to individuals with disabilities and to other individuals, cross-train staff, provide technical assistance, share information, cooperate in communicating with employers and other efforts at cooperation, collaboration and coordination.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation (GVR) has been a participating partner in the local area One Stop system. GVR previously had a location in our local area. However, this location closed several years ago. GVR staff from other regions travel into the local area as needed for services delivery. GVR assist eligible individuals with permanent physical and mental impairments which interfere with employment.

The GVR team includes Certified Rehabilitation Counselors, Counselor Assistant and other community resources as needed. GVR staff will visit the local area One Stop center to meet with clients face to face. Counselors are also available through email and phones.

GVR provides a wide range of services to help individuals with disabilities prepare for meaningful work. Services are received and arranged for and provided based on an individual’s needs. Length of time to assist individuals prepare for employment is different for each individual.

GVR services include, but are not limited to: medical evaluations, certain physical restoration services, counseling and guidance, Work Adjustment training, on-the job training, supported employment, job
coaching, assistive work technology, work readiness training, post-secondary support, vocational and technical training, school to work transition, deaf/blind services, and referrals to other agencies as needed.

GVR also provides services to employers including the following; identifying qualified pool of candidates for employment positions, jobsite coaching, helping employers identify the right solutions/accommodations for employee to be effective on the job through onsite job assessments, providing technical support and training on those accommodations to ensure long term employment success.

**Performance, ETPL, and Use of Technology**

**Performance Measures**

(Performance Measures for the completion of local area performance negotiations upon receipt of federal guidance.) Provide a description of the local levels of performance negotiated with the Governor and chief elected official pursuant to WIOA § 116(c), to be used to measure the performance of the local area and to be used by the local board for measuring the performance of the local fiscal agent (where appropriate), eligible providers under subtitle B and the one-stop delivery system, in the local area.

The Middle Flint area negotiates annually with the state office for local WIOA performance standards. As of the time of development of this plan, PY 2016 performance levels negotiation have not been completed. Once negotiation have completed, they will be included in the local WIOA Plan.

With the implementation of WIOA, several new performance measures will be added. Additional information and guidance will be forth coming from the federal and state office.

Historically, the Middle Flint area has successfully achieved a “Meeting” or “Exceeding” status for WIOA performance measures outcomes. The Middle Flint area has been a leader in Youth performance measures outcomes, often ranking within the top 5 areas in the State.
In planning local performance negotiations, the local area reviews current and prior performance achievements, average income levels in the area, unemployment rates in the area, serving hard to serve populations, number of local area business/employer layoffs etc..

The State staff and local area staff can review quarterly performance data as a monitoring tools to gage overall local area performance and adjust as needed. The Middle Flint area informs Workforce Development Board (WDB) on local area performance by including this information in WDB meeting packets. This information is also shared with Local Elected Officials (LEO), newsletters, staff reports, Regional Council meetings, RVRC Annual Report, WIOA Contractors and other partners.

One-Stop System Performance and Assessment

— Provide a listing of locally/regionally developed one-stop performance standards and describe the criteria used to develop the performance standards. Describe how the one-stop system and regional service delivery is assessed by the local board.

The Middle Flint Workforce Development Board (WDB) has requested a period One Stop Activity report which provided information number of partner meetings held per year, number of job related workshops held, and number of educational and or job related community events held, number of job fairs that partners held or participated in during the year.

As the local area implements One Stop procurement and selection of Provider during PY 16, the WDB and core partners will define performance standards that will be used to assess the One Stop system.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Resource Sharing Agreements (RSA) identify roles and responsibilities for One Stop partners.

ETPL System

Describe the regional Eligible Training Provider System, including the elements listed below.

a. Provide a description of the public notification to prospective providers.

b. Provide a description of how the board(s) evaluates providers and proposed training programs for initial eligibility, based on (at a minimum) criteria of proven effectiveness, local employer/industry demand, accreditation and customer accessibility.

c. Provide a description of the formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

d. Provide a description of the ongoing process used to update the data on the eligible providers list (exclusive of the state-conducted continued eligibility process).

e. Provide a description of any regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers.

f. Provide a description of the process to track and manage all ITA activity.

g. Provide a description of local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list (including financial and duration limits, out-of-area training, service to out-of-area customers, etc.).

h. Provide a description of how registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL.
Public notification to prospective providers

Middle Flint WDB utilizes a competitive bid process to select WIOA funded contractor services. Public notice of availability for prospective providers is made during bid cycles.

Evaluation of providers and proposed training programs

The local area also utilizes an Eligible Training Provider (ETP) policy which is utilized by the WDB in evaluating providers and proposed training programs. The WDB has established minimum criteria that a training provider needs to meet to be considered for inclusion on the Eligible Training Providers List (ETPL). Applications for consideration that meet the WDB established criteria will be presented to the WDB for consideration and approval. Upon approval by the local WDB, Application will be submitted to the State for inclusion on the ETPL.

Formal appeals process for aggrieved ITA customers and providers of unapproved training programs.

Individuals that are aggrieved ITA customers should contact the River Valley Regional Commission Workforce staff. The individual may be requested to provide supporting documentation to support their request for training in an unapproved ITA program. Documentation may include letters from employers validating employment opportunities in the unapproved program etc. If the staff is unable to resolve the aggrieved customer, then the customer would be required to follow the local area grievance procedures.

Updating the eligible providers list

Middle Flint local area would send to the State office any changes or information on local Eligible Training Providers data.

Regional policies or agreements for ITAs or training providers

Local area has an established ITA training services. ITA training services are available for WIOA eligible individuals who meet the ITA training criteria. ITA training is for specific or demand occupations in local area where an expectation of employment and self-sufficient wages are available. Training must be complete with the ITA time period and with cost limitations. See ITA Policy Attachment.

Process to track and manage all ITA activity

ITA training enrollments are tracked through the State Georgia WorkReady data system (GEO Solutions System). Participant records are maintained and data is reported in the Georgia WorkReady system. Reports on performance and monitoring are utilized to evaluate and follow performance.

Local board policy on use of statewide eligible training provider list

Local WDB allows use of statewide eligible training provider list when the costs is within a reasonable commuting distance of the area and costs is within local establish policy limits.
How registered apprenticeship programs are added to the ETPL

Local WDB will review and approve registered apprenticeship programs for inclusion on the ETPL if they become available in the local area. Currently the local area does not have any registered apprenticeships programs.

Implementation of Technology

— Provide a description of the technology used to enhance customer (participant and business) experience and any additional data analytics used to enhance planning and measure outcomes beyond mandated performance measures.

Service delivery in a rural multi-county local area is challenging. The use of technology could greatly improve access to services. However, Internet availability remains a barrier in the rural area. Many counties still lack access to reliable internet service. Several surveys and studies have been done in the local area looking for ways to improve technology internet availability. The rural area also has locations that have no, poor or limited cellphone reception. The One Stop center offers access to computers and internet services that can be utilized to connect with core partners, job search, and other related resources.

Many partner agencies require that individuals apply for services via the websites to assist with travel and transportation issues. Improving technology in the Middle Flint area will increase access to technology and service delivery area wide.

The Georgia WorkReady data system and Georgia Department of Labor data systems are an important use of technology for reporting, planning and collecting data. WIOA Service Providers use various technologies to administer computerized assessments such as CareerScope, TABE etc.

State Initiatives and Vision

State Branding

Provide a description for how the area will adopt and utilize the state brand.

The Middle Flint area new Workforce system branding identity will be WorkSource Middle Flint. The area will begin utilizing the new branding identity once the area receives further branding information from the State office. It is anticipated that the local branding of WorkSource Middle Flint will be implemented during PY 2016 as One Stop Center(s) are procured, operational and partners move towards implementation of WIOA regulations. The local area branding will be incorporated on signage, printed materials, marketing resources and media outlets.

State Initiatives

Describe how the area will coordinate with WFD state initiatives, including: Go Build Georgia, Operation: Workforce, WorkSmart Georgia and the High Demand Career Initiative.

Go Build Georgia
This state initiative was implemented to increased awareness and knowledge of skilled trade careers in the areas of manufacturing, telecommunications, logistics, construction and energy. This initiative has been directed towards youth through high schools across Georgia. Currently
no high schools in the Middle Flint local area are operating the Go Build Georgia initiative. Middle Flint area would coordinate with this initiative if it was implemented in the local area schools. The local area provides information on this initiative to the out of school youth program participants to bring awareness of the need of skilled workers, wages and refer interested youth toward post-secondary educational training and/or employment opportunities in the skilled trade areas.

**Operation Workforce**
This initiative is aimed to aid Georgia’s veterans. Operation Workforce is an on-line portal for veteran resources and services in Georgia. The web portal provides resources for different state agencies and private organizations that serve veterans. Veterans can view and apply to current employment positions that have been posted specifically for veterans. Veterans and their spouses are given priority of service in the local area and Georgia’s workforce system. Information on available veteran’s services and resources thru One Stop center(s) Veterans representatives as well as partner agencies.

**WorkSmart Georgia**
WorkSmart Georgia is a work-based learning program that promotes such as apprenticeships, on-the-job training and internships to assist companies in developing and implementing customized programs that meet their specific needs. A training model promoted by Georgia WorkSmart is Registered Apprenticeship. Georgia WorkSmart helps organizations create apprenticeship programs that include both curriculum and classroom instruction. Currently the local area does not have any registered apprenticeships activities occurring. As Registered Apprenticeship opportunities become available in the local area information on these opportunities would be made available and interested individuals would be referred as appropriate. The Middle Flint area does provide work based learning activities through the On-The-Job Training (OJT) services in the local area.

**High Demand Career Initiative**
High Demand Career Initiative (HDCI) was implement in Georgia based on private sector need for consistent, training and reliable workforce. HDCI held public meetings around the state and provided an online assessment to collect information about the private sector present and future workforce needs. The information collected identified a range of in-demand and difficult to fill employment positions. An online workforce needs assessment has been developed to provide an avenue for employers to express their workforce needs to the state of Georgia. Middle Flint WIOA staff has participated with HDCI public meetings held in the region. The Middle Flint area offers On-The-Job Training services to assist local area employers with work based training opportunities to assist identified needs of employers with the HDCI state initiative. HDCI will begin focusing on Sector Strategies at planned meetings in 2016.

**Other State Initiatives**
The local area also promotes the use of the Fast Track program, which is an employer-driven training program unique to the State of Georgia. Fast Track leverages quantitative and qualitative data provided through available labor market information and HDCI to identify common workforce needs of multiple employers within a similar industry and region to develop a customized workforce training solution. Once the local area has worked with the employers to identify the specific staffing needs, the employers are able to provide feedback on the specific training elements that are needed or are generally lacking in traditional offerings. The LWDA then works with training providers to develop condensed training programs that meet the needs outlined by the employers and lead to industry-recognized credentials.

With the primary goal to create a unified workforce system, the Governor relocated Title I programs to
Middle Flint WIOA Area Plan  

GDEcD to enhance collaboration, believing that strong workforce development leads to economic development successes. The relocation of Title I programs to GDEcD ensures that leaders of Georgia’s Title I programs have frontline access and collaboration with the Area’s economic development initiatives. The collaborative relationship between local workforce development and economic development activities has resulted in highly successful programs like Georgia WorkSmart and HDCI.

Georgia Pathways to Work will change how organizations support the independence, employment, and career advancement of Georgians with disabilities. This will be accomplished by working with Area-wide initiatives such as Go Build Georgia and HDCI to be responsive to the known market demands for careers in Georgia, as well as supporting employer efforts to more effectively engage Georgians with disabilities. Furthermore, the overall goal of the Georgia Pathways to Work program is to increase the number of youth who achieve competitive, integrated employment through existing and customized pathways. Additionally, this demonstration project will be implemented to increase the average weekly wage and employer benefits of participants in each occupational cluster through successful completion of career pathways.

Special Populations

Describe how the area will provide services to the special populations specified in the state plan, to include ex-offenders, veterans, at-risk youth, long-term unemployed, adult learners and individuals with disabilities. If the region has identified additional target groups, please list.

The Middle Flint WIOA providers and core partners collaborate and coordinate to provide assistance to special populations in the local area. Through the one-stop system referrals can be made to the core partner agencies or community resources that can best serve the needs of the individual. The Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Americus Career Center as the designated One Stop is accessible for individuals with disabilities. One-Stop center have staff onsite to work with veterans and migrant seasonal farm workers. One-Stop center provides information in Spanish and also have bilingual staff available.

Ex-offenders can be served through services available through the One-Stop center with federal bonding and TOPPSTEP services. Ex-offenders can be referred to the appropriate WIOA Service Providers and core partners for additional assistance with education or employment opportunities. WIOA Service Providers have partnered with parole/probation agencies and juvenile court system to serve ex-offenders with educational and training opportunities.

Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation (GVR) is the core partner that serves individuals with disabilities. WIOA Service Providers and other core partners coordinate and collaborate with GVR to serve individuals with disabilities.

At Risk youth outreach and recruitment efforts are made through local school systems, juvenile court system, parole and probation agencies, DFCS, and other community agencies. The Middle Flint WIOA has operated an out of school youth activity which was targeted to dropouts that needed to obtain their GED. Many of the youth served through this activity are individuals with multiple barriers to such as but not limited to: basic skills deficient, dropouts, single parent/pregnant, public assistance recipients, limited or poor work history, and offenders.
Long-term unemployed individuals outreach and recruitment efforts are coordinated by GDOL staff that work with Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits and claims. They refer long-term unemployment individuals to WIOA for assistance with educational or training opportunities that can assist them with returning back to employment. Referrals are also made to other core partners or community resources as appropriate.

Low income individuals or recipients of DHS Public Assistance benefits are a priority of service for WIOA. Service Providers coordinate with DFCS to identify and recruit individuals receiving public assistance benefits through TANF and SNAP. WIOA Service Providers have conducted outreach and recruitment efforts with local DFCS offices to provide information on available WIOA services to assist their clients.

**Priority of Service**

*Describe how the region will identify and administer the state’s priority of service policy. Identify if the region will add target populations in addition to one’s specified by state and federal policy.*

The Middle Flint area gives priority of services to low income individual, public assistance recipients and Veterans and Eligible Spouses. These priorities of service align with the state’s priorities. Individuals are identified for priority of service upon applying to WIOA and other services, outreach and recruitment events, and other point of access to One Stop services. Training services funded under WIOA will be given to residents of the eight (8) county service area that meet the WIOA eligibility requirements.

The WDB is located between two major state military bases, with significant number of veterans retiring and returning to the area. Ft. Benning in Columbus and Warner Robbins Air Force Base are both within xx miles of the GDOL or satellite one-stop shop locations in the region. It is critical for the area to adequately serve this population of veterans and eligible spouses.

Veterans and eligible spouses will receive priority of services as defined by local policy. GDOL Career Centers have a Veterans Representative on staff that helps to coordinate services and remains available to provide support and assistance to Veterans/eligible spouses.

Veterans/eligible spouses are provided information on available services which may include staff assisted or self-service as appropriate. Individuals seeking training services will be referred to appropriate training provider for services.

Priority of services requires that eligible covered veterans/eligible spouse must be served prior to non-covered individuals.

*The income levels shown in the following table apply to WIOA eligibility and reporting in federal program years 2015-2016, or until another update occurs.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Size</td>
<td>Metropolitan Areas</td>
<td>Nonmetropolitan Areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5,940</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td>For each over 8 Add:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,508</td>
<td>2,490</td>
</tr>
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</table>
POLICY TITLE: ITA (Individual Training Account)

POLICY NUMBER: 11

An individual who has been determined eligible for WIOA intensive training services may select a provider from the State approved eligible listing after consultation with a WIOA Case Manager.

Funds are to be limited as follows:

1. Actual expenses up to $5,000 in training cost, excluding support payments, may be expended for each participant for up to 2.5 years (130 weeks) of training.

If the cost of training exceeds fund limitations guidelines, case managers should assist in developing a financial plan to cover total costs of training. Customers shall not be required to apply for or access student loans, or incur personal debt as a condition of participation.

The following policies will be utilized to establish local parameters for service.

1. Training must be in a demand or growth occupation for employment opportunities.

2. Training must result in an employment wage sufficient to attain self-sufficiency without the aid of public assistance.

3. Training must be for at least 12 credit hours per week. Exceptions to this policy must be approved, in writing, on a case by case basis.

4. Programs cannot exceed 130 weeks (2.5 years). The two (2) years is calculated from the beginning date of training and is consecutive, excluding mandatory school breaks and holidays. Exceptions to this policy may be approved on a case-by-case basis and requested in writing and include evidence that other financial support is not available during the extended training period.
5. In general, all training programs must be within a reasonable commute of the Middle Flint area. Out-of-area training that is not within commuting distance to the Middle Flint area may be approved on a case by case basis. All approved training must be located with the contiguous United States.

6. All applicants should apply for the PELL Grant and/or HOPE Grant/Scholarship program, if eligible. Depending on the need and availability of WIOA funding, PELL and HOPE funds may be combined with WIOA funds to cover total training cost.

7. Funding may be provided for college level and post baccalaureate instruction only if all of the following conditions have been met:

   a) Customers must be accepted into a certificate or diploma program, and the course of study must be occupation specific (i.e. radiological technician, registered nurse, etc.).

   No funds shall be provided for general academic programs (i.e. General Studies ),

   b) Total course study shall take no longer than 130 weeks (2.5 years) to complete.

   c.) Customers shall receive a certificate or degree upon completion.

Customers must demonstrate that they have the financial resources to attend long term training.

8. Continuing Education and other similar courses may be allowed only if the following conditions apply:

   a) The client must have a specific occupational goal.

   b) The client has a work history or educational background which relates to the occupational goal.

   c) The client must present evidence as to how the proposed training will increase their employment marketability.

9. Funding may be utilized for expenses related to training, including but not limited to the following: books, tuition and fees, supplies, tools, uniforms and required shoes, certification, licensing, testing fees, and drug testing for entrance to training.
10. Customers accepted by a training institution must be considered program-ready. Customers who need to take developmental or provisional classes will be considered for funding after they have completed these class requirements.

11. WIOA funds will not be used for payment of late fees caused by customer error or delay. The Customer will be responsible for these items, as they are responsible for other fines and penalties.

ALLOWABLE ITA COSTS

1. Tuition and Fees – charges will be made in accordance with the training provider's catalog or price list, less any HOPE or other funds available. Fees may include any necessary licensing, certification fees, physical exams or drug tests related to the trainee's program of study. Out-of-State tuition is not an allowable charge.

2. Book Charges – includes books and reference materials such as dictionaries and thesauruses required for program of study. Materials such as magazines, newspapers, and leisure reading materials are not allowed. HOPE books allowances should be deducted from the charges prior to WIOA billing.

3. Program Related Supplies – includes all supplies other than books required for training program of study. This may include uniforms, lab smocks/jackets, tools, training kits, protective safety gear (such as safety glasses, shoes, gloves, welding helmets), blood pressure cuffs, nursing name pins, nursing shoes, name ID tags and, other like items. Any supply items which do not appear to be training related must be supported by a written signed statement from the instructor that the supplies are required for the course.

4. Consumable Supplies – includes items other than training program related supplies which are not required for a course, but are generally needed for school attendance. These include but are not limit to, pens, pencils, paper, folders, binders, tapes, notebooks, computer disks, disks covers, rulers, protractors, pencil lead, markers/highlighters, erasers, index cards, etc.

Consumable supplies are limited to $25.00 per quarter or semester. For students taking more than 12 credit hours of training per week, up to $35.00 per quarter or semester may be expended for supplies based on each student's individual needs.
5. **Test Fees** – training program related test fees will be paid on a one-time basis.

Tests that have several levels of certification will require the trainee to choose one test.
Test examinations are to enhance employment opportunities of trainees. Approved test fees include aviation program test, Nursing reviews, state board certifications and licenses, computer information systems certifications, welding/fabricating certifications, etc.

**UNALLOWABLE ITA COSTS**

6. **Unallowable Items** - WIOA funds will not be used to reimburse for items that are not necessary or required for training such as but not limited to the following non-course related items:

- Umbrellas
- Back packs
- Jewelry
- Toiletry items
- Leisure reading materials
- School / Fraternity merchandise
- Videos / Music
- Greeting cards/ Stationary
- Book or Tote bags
- Watches/Clocks
- Carts
- Food and beverages
- Clothing
- Computer software / games
- Eating and drinking utensils
- Caps / Hats

1. **Late Fees, fines, and penalties** – are not allowable or reimbursable if they are due to trainee error or delay.

**OTHER COSTS**

Training related costs not described above which are considered by the provider to be reasonable and necessary will be reviewed/considered by the RVRC on a case by case basis.
Training providers will be notified in the event an item’s cost allowability is questioned by the RVRC. Costs billed on training provider invoices which are determined to be unallowable will be deducted and the trainee will be responsible for that payment.
Purpose
Supportive services will be provided to qualifying adults, dislocated workers and youth participant(s) active in in-school or out-of-school classroom type training.

Policy
WIOA participants may receive a flat rate supportive services provided a minimum of 3 hours per day of attendance is met. Participant timesheet is required to verify attendance in training activity.

Initial classroom training period rate will be $10.00 per day. Remediation needed after the initial classroom training period will be at $10.00 per day rate.

Support Service Flat Rate:

Transportation $10.00 per day
Skills Tutor / Remediation Activity $10.00 per day

1. Participant timesheet is required to verify attendance in training activity. Timesheet must be signed by participant and designated staff person.

2. Payments will not be made for sick days, absences, or holidays.

3. Participants utilizing a transportation provider where a fee is charged can choose the option to receive supportive services and be responsible to pay the transportation provider or can elect to have the WIOA service provider directly pay fees to the
transportation provider. Payments to training provider may not exceed the daily supportive service payment.

4. Supportive service payments may not be made if they are currently being provided by another agency.
Middle Flint Workforce Development Board

POLICY TITLE : Supportive Services ITA Date Effective: 07-01-2016
POLICY NUMBER 9 Approved by: WDB 12-2015

Needs Related Payments will not be provided by the Middle Flint WIOA Area.

The need for Supportive service benefits will be determined on an individual basis. The Supportive Services Determination of Need form will be utilized to determine an individual need for supportive services.

Individuals must be in need of supportive services in order to participate in the WIOA funded training activity and are unable to obtain supportive services from another program, agency or resource.

A. Support payments will be provided to qualifying customers (Adults, Dislocated Workers, Youth) in classroom and/or occupational skills training activities such but not limited to: Individual Training Accounts (ITA’s), GED, remediation of basic skills literacy, or other classroom training components.

B. Those in On-The-Job (OJT) or other projects where wages are paid will not qualify for supportive service payments in items 1-5 but may qualify for payments for items such as uniforms, specialty shoes, etc. listed below.

C. Payments made to qualifying adults, dislocated workers and youth are in the following flat rates. However, WIOA clients must be enrolled on a full-time (12 credit hours or more) and attend a minimum of one hour (1.0 ) hours per day to receive a payment for that day. Class attendance will be documented by a client timesheet.

Participants enrolled in less than 12 credit hours may receive supportive service payments if valid circumstance exists such as but not limited to last semester in training and less than 12 credit hours are needed to complete training, available classes are not made available by Training Provider class schedule for semester period which allows the participant to meet the 12 hour requirement, etc. Participant records must document reason if less than 12 credit hours are taken.
In the event that a participant has to take an on-line class due to that is the only method schedule availability by training site, a participant must be enrolled in sufficient number of courses which allow for the participant to attend the training site for classroom instruction for a minimum of one and one hour (1.0) per day.

**Daily Supportive Service Benefits**

**Transportation Assistance**

**Mileage Scale Payment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miles Range</th>
<th>Payment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 15 Round Trip Miles</td>
<td>$10.00 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 – 35 Round Trip Miles</td>
<td>$12.00 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – Plus Round Trip Miles</td>
<td>$14.00 per day</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WIOA participants are only eligible to receive Supportive Service payments from WIOA provided that no other agency is providing the same benefit to participant. **No duplication of benefits is allowed.**

**General Policies for Support Payments**

1. Clients must attend class a minimum of one (1.0) hour per training day in order to receive the payment for that day, not to include time spent for breaks and/or lunch.

2. Payments will not be pro-rated for fewer than 1.0 hour of training attendance, nor will payments be made for sick days or holidays.

3. Participants who are in their last quarter/semester of training who need less than the required full-time (12 or more) credit hours to complete training will be allowed to receive supportive service payments for less than 1.0 hour of attendance per day. Counseling notes should be documented in records to indicate that participant is in final quarter/semester of training.

4. Clients must be making satisfactory progress (a minimum of 2.50 on a 4.0 scale or a Minimum of C on an A, B, C, D, F grade scale) and cooperating with in structural process to continue to receive the support payments.
Other Types of Training Items:

Training related expenses such as medical examinations, immunizations, vaccinations, uniforms, tools, and supplies are considered training related costs and are included under ITA training cost limitations.

5. Medical examinations and/or shots for areas of training that require such are reimbursable to contractors and/or clients by RVRC WIOA and/or approved Contractor staff. A written form must be sent to the RVRC WIOA and/or approved Contractor staff stating the requirement, the name of the client and client’s social security number.

6. Uniforms, shoes and other occupational-specific equipment may be provided for clients when such items are required for training and/or condition of employment. A written form must be sent to the RVRC WIOA and/or approved Contractor staff stating the requirement, the name of the client and client’s social security number.

The cost of a maximum of two sets of uniforms and one set of tools, shoes and/or other occupational-specific items will be reimbursed. Three written quotes must be provided on any items which cost $1000.00 or more. The lowest bid will be accepted unless Provider is under State Purchasing Agreements. Receipts for all purchases are required. Amounts may be limited based on funding availability. Additionally, if needed as a requirement for employment, a confirmation with the employer that the client has been offered the job and is required to have specific items for employment purposes.

HOPE Grant, HOPE Scholarship and PELL Grant will be applied first to cover the cost of tuition and fees. HOPE Book Voucher if eligible will be applied first towards books costs. Clients not eligible for HOPE Grant/Scholarship, who are eligible for PELL, PELL grant funds would be applied first towards tuition and fees.

PELL grant funds in excess of cost for tuition related fees, books and supplies will be retained by the client for day-to-day living expenses; Trainees may also receive WIOA support payments, if otherwise eligible to defray the costs associated with their training.

WIOA funds will be applied as the last resource for Tuition, books, and supplies fees.

7. Clients may receive support payments for the period of the approved training subject to any restrictions previously stated and based on funding availability.

8. If WIOA clients agree to utilize transportation to and from training which is offered by training providers for which a fee is charged, the client will be responsible for paying the provider directly.

9. Support payments will be paid directly to clients based on a two week pay period or a minimum of once per month. Clients’ timesheets will be provided to track daily attendance in training. The client and Instructors will be required to sign and date timesheets.
10. Case Managers will use the MFWIB Supportive Services Determination form to document client need for supportive service payments. This form should be updated each semester or earlier if client needs change. A copy of Supportive Services Determination form and client timesheets are to be maintained in the client’s records. The support dollar rate amount must be entered into the Georgia Workforce System (GWS) data base in the appropriate section identifying supportive needs for client.

11. Case Managers will use the MFWIB Supportive Services Determination Form to document client need for supportive service payments. This form should be updated each quarter/semester or earlier if client needs change. A copy of Supportive Services Determination form and client timesheets are to be maintained in the client’s records. The support dollar rate amount must be entered into the WIOA VOS data base in the appropriate section identifying supportive needs for client.