

**Prosperity Region 8 Regional WIOA Plan**  
**Michigan Works! Southwest and Kinexus**

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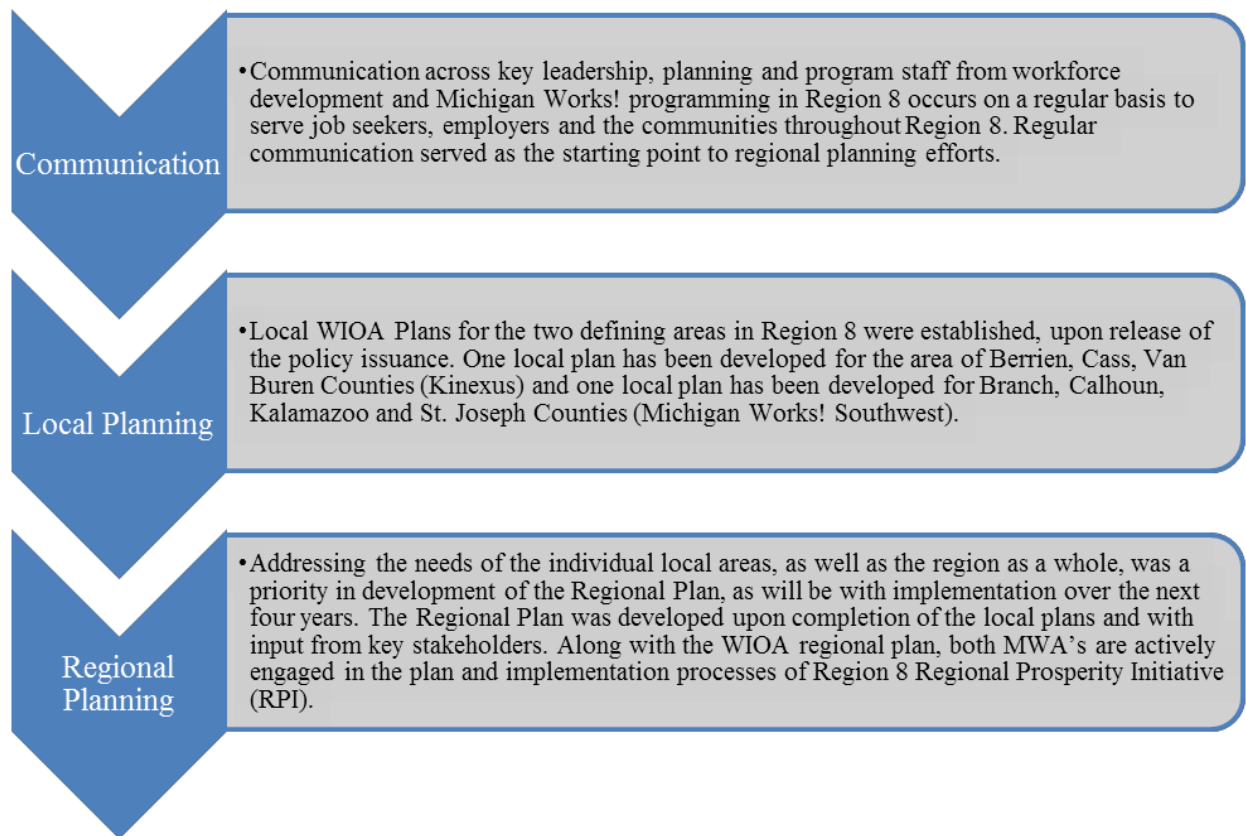
**1. Planning**

**A description of the planning process undertaken to produce the regional plan, including a description of how all local areas were afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process.**

Kinexus provides economic, community, and workforce development services inclusive of Michigan Works! programming to Berrien, Cass and Van Buren Counties and Michigan Works! Southwest provides workforce development services and Michigan Works! programming to Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Counties. Between these two organizations, all seven counties in Prosperity Region 8 are represented in the Region 8 WIOA Regional Plan.

Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest provide customer services that align with the needs of both job seekers and employers based upon labor market data and established best practices. Central to these services are the combined efforts of the two Michigan Works! agencies to provide aligned customer centric services in which all job seekers and employers receive the appropriate service in a timely manner.

**Overview of the Region 8 Planning and Review Process:**



Leadership, planning and program staff from Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest communicate regularly to best serve the region in the area of workforce development, as well as partnering with education and economic development entities throughout the region; and

compilation of the plan was done through the same channels used for this existing model of communication and planning for Region 8.

Local WIOA Plans, as guided by policy requirements, were then developed for the Michigan Works! Southwest area, as well as for the Kinexus area. At the midpoint review, the local plans continue to serve as a four-year blue print that will align service delivery strategies and support the state's vision and strategic operational goals. The Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest Local Plans set forth the strategy to:

- Direct investments in economic, education, and workforce training programs that meet the current and future needs of industry sectors within Region 8. The investments will ensure that all individuals, including youth and those with barriers to employment, have the in-demand skills that our employers need to be competitive in the global economy;
- Apply job-driven strategies in the one-stop system; and
- Enable economic, education, and workforce partners to build a skilled workforce through innovation and alignment of, employment, training, and education programs.

The proposed Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest Local Plans include the following required elements:

- Analysis of local labor market data and economic conditions including a description of the Workforce Development Boards' strategic vision and goals for preparing an educated and skilled workforce, as well as an analysis of expected levels of performance for Adult, Dislocated Worker, Youth, Adult Education and Literacy, and Wagner-Peyser, as described in the WIOA. The following are the baseline measures reviewed:
  - WIOA Title I – Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth
    - Measurable Skills Gain
    - Effectiveness in Serving Employers
  - WIOA Title II – Adult Education and Literacy
    - Employment Second Quarter After Exit
    - Employment Fourth Quarter After Exit
    - Median Earnings
    - Credential Attainment Rate
    - Effectiveness in Serving Employers
  - WIOA Title III – Wagner-Peyser
    - Effectiveness in Serving Employers
  - WIOA Title IV – Vocational Rehabilitation

- A description of each Workforce Development Boards' strategy to align local resources, required partners, and entities that carry out core programs to achieve the strategic vision and goals.
- A description of the strategies and services that will be used to facilitate engagement of employers in workforce development programs and improve coordination between workforce development programs and economic development partners.
- A description of the one-stop delivery system.
- A description of coordination of WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with the provision of transportation and other appropriate supportive services in the local area.
- A description of how both Workforce Development Boards will coordinate relevant secondary and post-secondary education programs and activities with education and workforce investment activities to coordinate strategies, enhance services, and avoid duplication of services.
- A description of coordination of WIOA Title I workforce investment activities with adult education and literacy activities under the WIOA Title II.
- A description of training services in Region 8.
- A description of the actions the Workforce Development Boards will take toward becoming or remaining high-performing boards, including effectiveness and continuous improvement criteria the board will implement to assess their one-stop centers, a description of the allocation of one-stop center infrastructure funds and a description of the roles and contributions of one-stop partners, including cost allocation.

Upon development, as well as at the time of the required mid-cycle modification, of the Local WIOA Plans in both areas, key staff were identified by Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest to orchestrate the writing of the Region 8 WIOA Regional Plan in support of the Regional Prosperity Initiative (RPI); [http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/rpi\\_plan\\_final.pdf](http://www.swmpc.org/downloads/rpi_plan_final.pdf). These key staff were also charged with organizing key stakeholders, including public and private sector, as represented on the respective workforce development boards and committees, to guarantee accurate information reflective of the work being done in Region 8. The Region 8 WIOA Regional Plan includes input from:

- Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest Planning and Policy staff,
- Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest Business Services staff,
- Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest Executive Leadership staff,
- Program staff, from all counties in Region 8, serving in the following programs:
  - WIOA Adult,
  - WIOA Dislocated Worker,
  - WIOA Youth staff,
  - PATH staff (TANF funded) and
  - Employment Services staff (Wagner-Peyser funded).

The areas of expertise, as represented by these staff, included throughout the Region 8 WIOA Regional Plan are reflective of the needs, goals and assets of Region 8, including, but not limited to:

- Education and training opportunities available to job seekers and the established workforce throughout Region 8,
- Employer strengths and challenges of employers throughout the region,
- Successful job seeking models for unemployed or underemployed individuals throughout the region,
- Community organizations' missions and resources to Michigan Works! stakeholders,
- Supportive services available to job seekers,
- Future growth and development throughout the region, and
- Tools and resources available to all stakeholders.

A true collaboration, relying on the strength and knowledge of key staff and stakeholders, including public and private sector, as represented on the respective workforce development boards and committees, and the extensive resources available, throughout Region 8 was key to development of and the planning for the implementation of the Region 8 WIOA Regional Plan.

In June of 2018, mid-point reviews and updates were made to the local plans of each area, along with the Region 8 Regional Plan, and those are reflected throughout this document.

## 2. Analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions

In planning workforce development strategies in Region 8, it is critical to understand the demographics of the current population, along with current and projected employment data.

### Population/Demographics

Per a 2017 estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau / DTMB, Center for Shared Solutions, the total population for the seven county area was 781,647.

Per EMSI, the 2017 race demographics for Region 8 are as follows:

- All other races – 1.3%
- Asian, Non-Hispanic – 2.0%
- Two or more races, Non-Hispanic – 2.7%
- White, Hispanic – 5.0%
- Black, Non-Hispanic – 9.5%
- White, Non-Hispanic – 79.5%

Per a 2017 estimate from the U.S. Census Bureau / DTMB, Center for Shared Solutions, the age distribution of work eligible individuals is as follows:

- 14.6% ages 15 to 24,
- 12.2% ages 25 to 34,
- 23.8% ages 35 to 54, and
- 30.8% ages 55 and older.

In reviewing this information, for preparation, it is important to look at industry employment by age, for Region 8. Industries with a lower share of older workers in Region include:

- Accommodation and Food Services – 9% are over the age of 55,
- Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services – 16% are over the age of 55,
- Construction – 18% over the age of 55, and
- Finance and Insurance – 20% over the age of 55.



On the other hand, industries in Region 8 with a higher share of older workers include:

- Public Administration – 29% over the age of 55,
- Educational Services – 26% over the age of 55,
- Wholesale Trade – 24% over the age of 55, and
- Information – 22% over the age of 55.

In planning, the aging of the workforce and preparing for the next generation of workers to avoid gaps will be integral in the work of the sector strategy consortium groups, discussed in Section 3.

### **Educational Attainment in Region 8 of the Population Ages 25 and older.**

Partnerships throughout Region 8 will continue to work with education partners, as well as work to develop training opportunities to meet the needs of employers and job seekers in the area.

Current educational attainment in Region 8, as reported by the U.S. Census Bureau / DTMB, Center for Shared Solutions, is as follows:

- Less than High School Diploma – 10% of the population, totaling 56,689 Residents
- High School Graduate, GED or Alternative - 31% of the population, totaling 162,434 Residents
- Some College or Associate's Degree - 33% of the population, totaling 172,591 Residents
- Bachelor's Degree or Higher - 23% of the population, totaling 130,723 Residents

This analysis is crucial in understanding the barriers of gaining employment for individuals with lower education levels.

### **Disability**

Per the U.S Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2009-2013, the percent of the population ages 18-64 with a disclosed disability, by county, is as follows:

- Berrien: 12.4%
- Branch: 12.3%
- Calhoun: 13.5%
- Cass: 13%
- Kalamazoo: 10.9%
- St. Joseph: 10.2%

Working with employers and vocational rehabilitation partners, as discussed throughout this plan, remain a priority of the workforce development work being completed throughout Region 8.

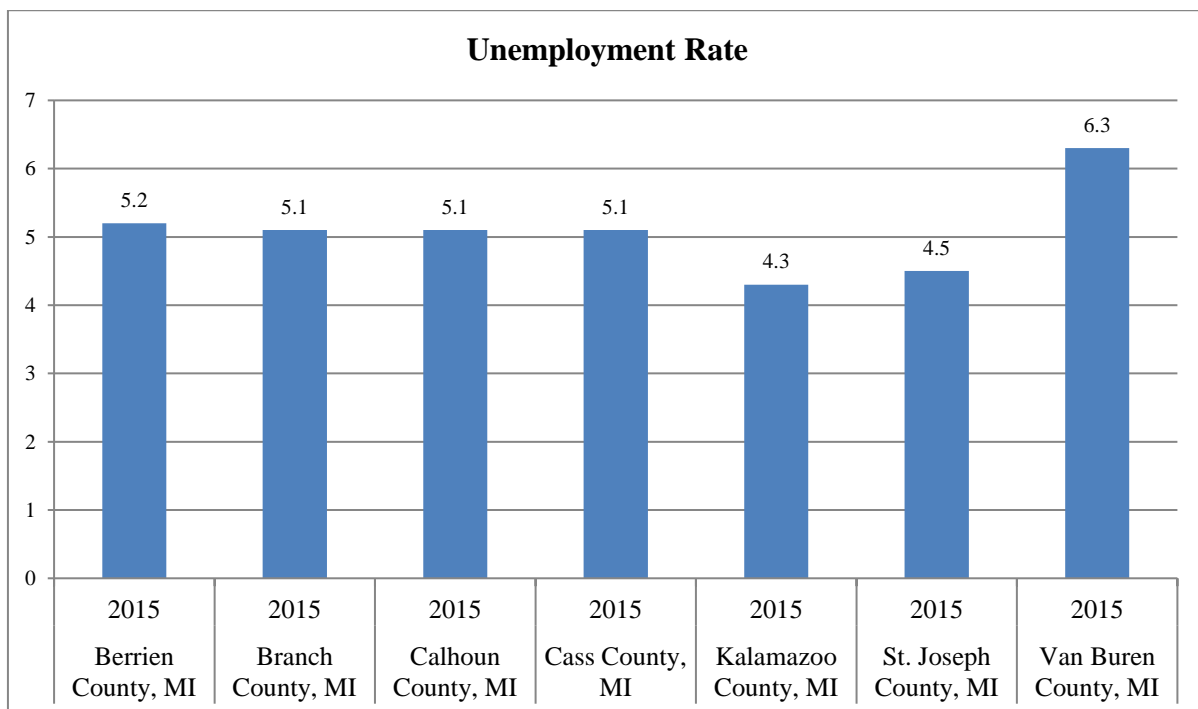
**Equity**

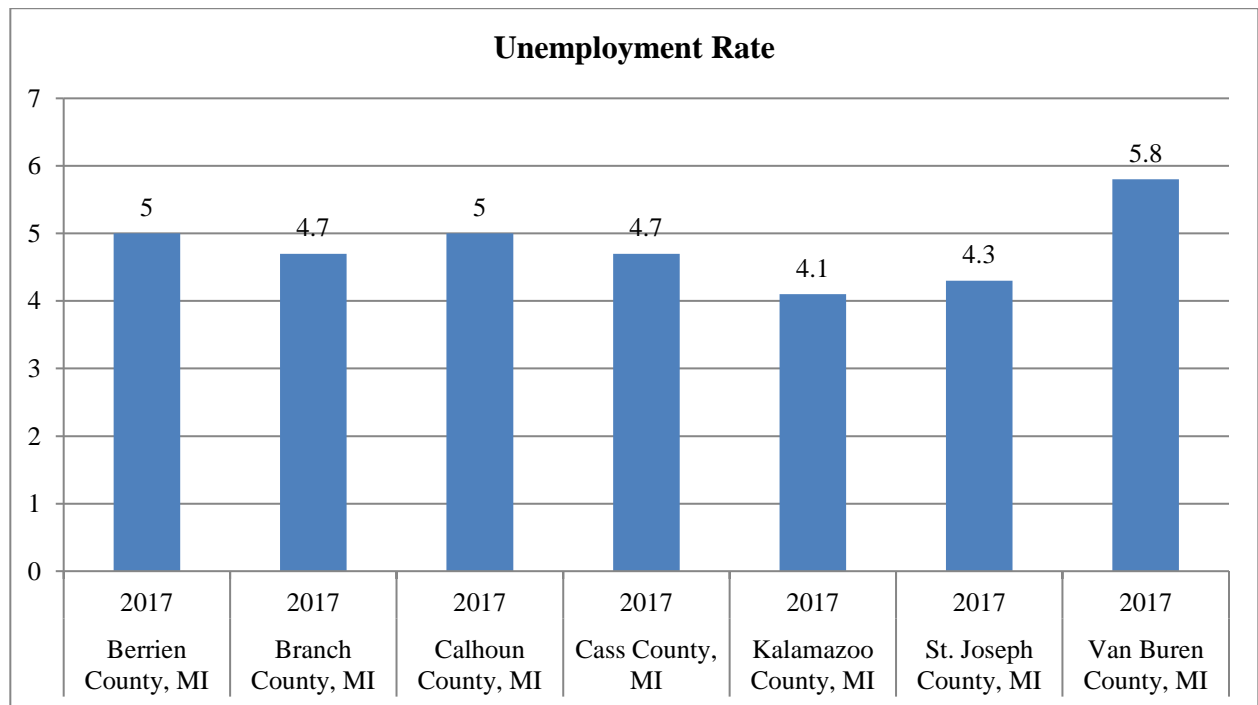
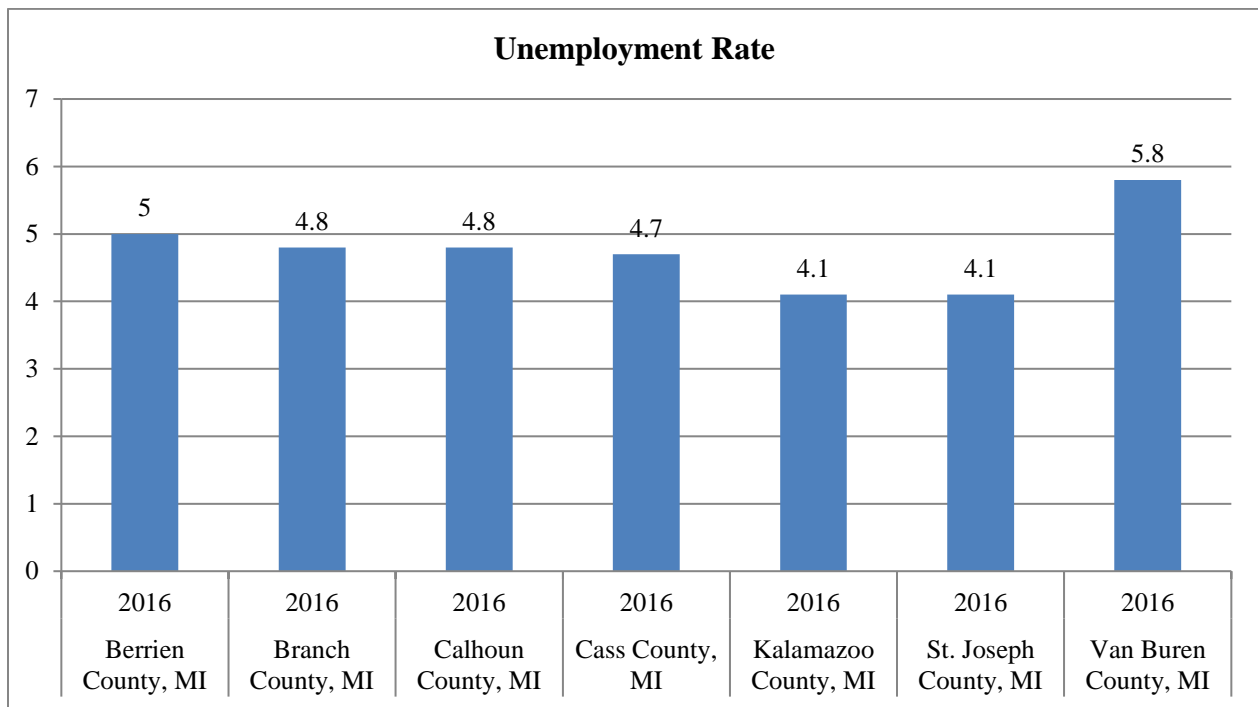
Region 8 is committed to equity in every aspect of our work, and we must serve the most disadvantaged and disenfranchised groups in our region effectively. The Michigan Works! Agencies in Region 8 are committed to working with diverse communities and individuals to best meet the needs of the communities in the region. Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest strive to incorporate equity principles and practices in our services and programs and hold ourselves accountable for creating a rich culture of diversity and inclusion throughout the region.

**Unemployment and Jobless Rate**

To reflect the current workforce, the number of unemployed individuals by county by year is outlined below. As the number of unemployed individuals continues to decrease throughout Region 8, it will be important to work strategically to meet the needs of both the job seekers and the employers.

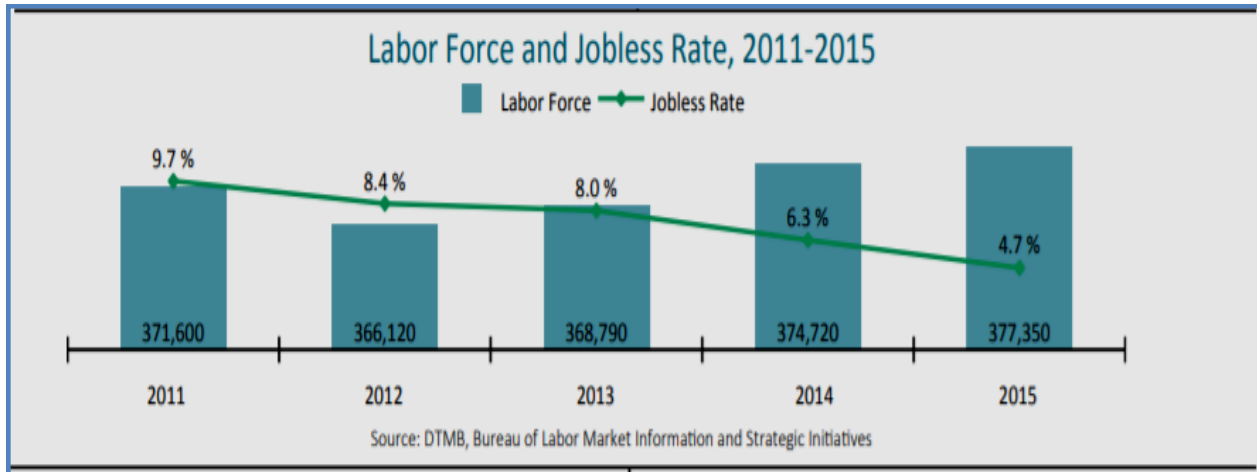
Unemployment  
Source: Michigan Labor Market Information





Jobless Rate

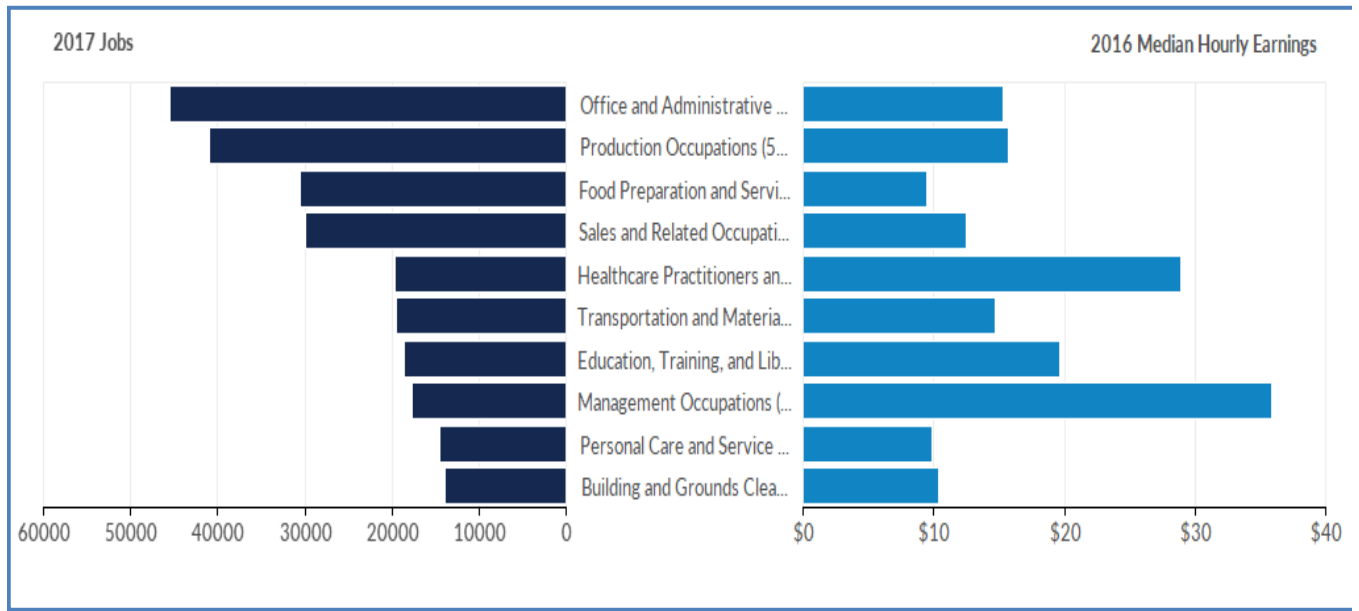
Source: Michigan Labor Market Information



**Wage Data**

Per, DTMB, Occupational Employment Statistics, there is a diverse mix of job titles in Region 8, reflective of the current workforce, and the occupational wage range is quite large, spanning from \$8.54 per hour to \$106.01 per hour. The median wage in the Region was \$15.47 /hour in 2017. In Region 8, Occupational Employment totals 338,138 with the median Occupational Wage at \$20.47.

## Largest Occupations

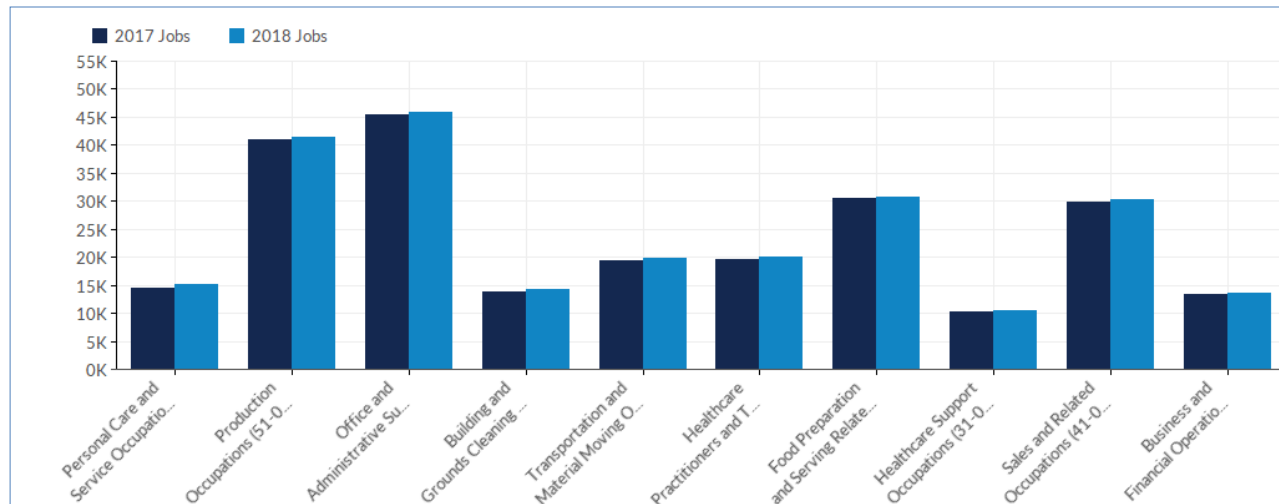


Occupation	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2017-2018)	% Change	2016 Median Hourly Earnings
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	45,436	45,887	451	1%	\$15.34
Production Occupations	40,933	41,405	472	1%	\$15.73
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	30,582	30,835	253	1%	\$9.47
Sales and Related Occupations	29,944	30,179	235	1%	\$12.49
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	19,653	19,946	293	1%	\$28.95
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	19,471	19,832	361	2%	\$14.70
Education, Training, and Library Occupations	18,604	18,433	-171	-1%	\$19.68
Management Occupations	17,689	17,884	195	1%	\$35.89
Personal Care and Service Occupations	14,479	15,057	578	4%	\$9.92
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	13,854	14,269	415	3%	\$10.37

## Growth

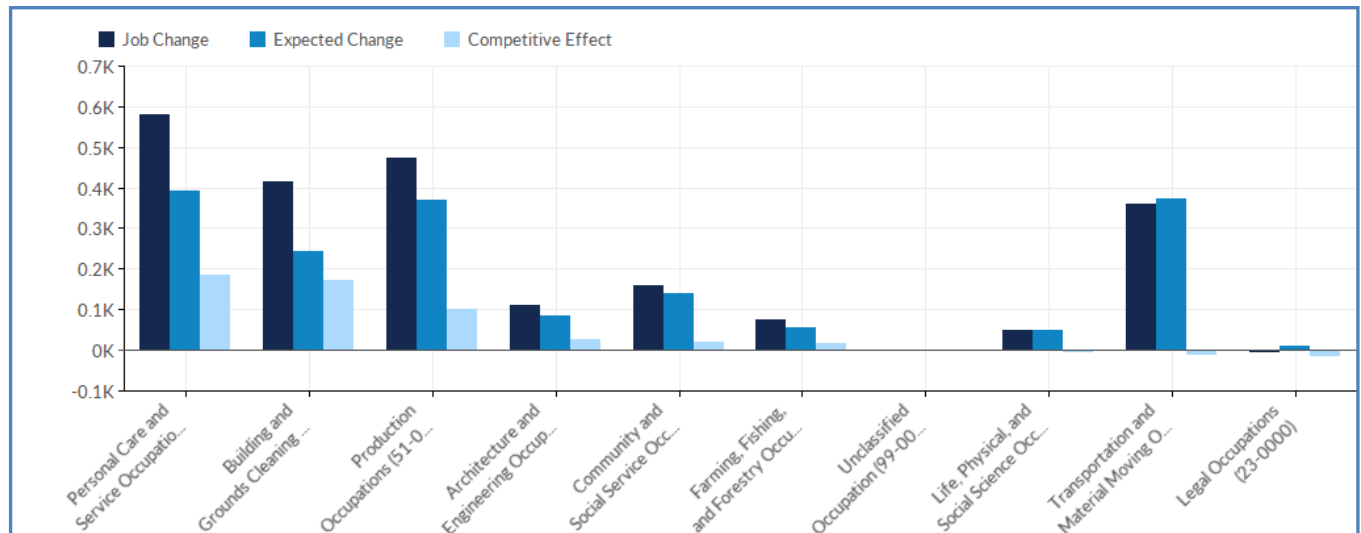
In Region 8, DTMB, Occupational Employment Statistics (this information is inclusive of the Benton Harbor, Kalamazoo, and Battle Creek Economic Forecast Regions) projects growth of 4,367 over the time period of 2017-2018 with a +1.3% projected change in employment over the same time period. As discussed throughout the regional plan, Michigan Works! Agencies in Region 8 are working with economic development and training institutions to meet the needs of the high growth occupations, outlined below.

## Fastest Growing Occupations



Occupation	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2017-2018)	% Change	2016 Median Hourly Earnings
Personal Care and Service Occupations	14,479	15,057	578	4%	\$9.92
Production Occupations	40,933	41,405	472	1%	\$15.73
Office and Administrative Support Occupations	45,436	45,887	451	1%	\$15.34
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	13,854	14,269	415	3%	\$10.37
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	19,471	19,832	361	2%	\$14.70
Healthcare Practitioners and Technical Occupations	19,653	19,946	293	1%	\$28.95
Food Preparation and Serving Related Occupations	30,582	30,835	253	1%	\$9.47
Healthcare Support Occupations	10,264	10,502	238	2%	\$13.47
Sales and Related Occupations	29,944	30,179	235	1%	\$12.49
Business and Financial Operations Occupations	13,381	13,600	219	2%	\$28.68

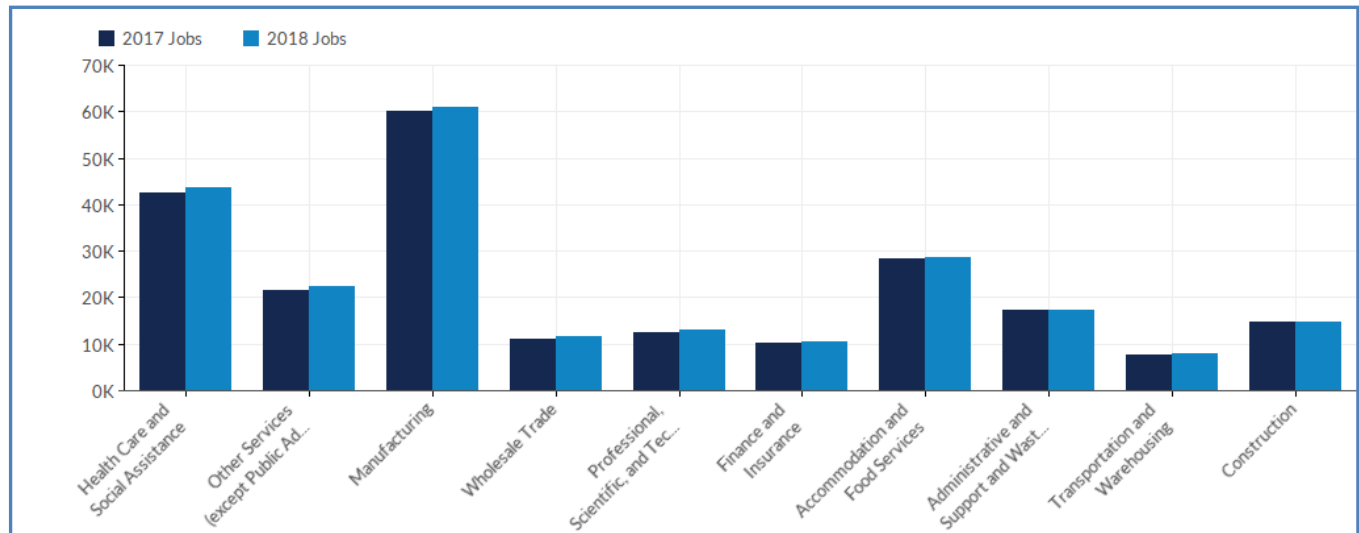
**Most Competitive Occupations**



Occupation	Job Change	Occ Mix Effect	Nat Growth Effect	Expected Change	Competitive Effect
Personal Care and Service Occupations	578	149	244	393	185
Building and Grounds Cleaning and Maintenance Occupations	415	8	234	242	173
Production Occupations	472	-321	691	370	102
Architecture and Engineering Occupations	111	-35	120	85	26
Community and Social Service Occupations	160	37	104	141	19
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry Occupations	75	-24	81	57	18
Unclassified Occupation	0	0	0	0	0
Life, Physical, and Social Science Occupations	48	1	49	50	-2
Transportation and Material Moving Occupations	361	43	329	372	-11
Legal Occupations	-4	-15	23	8	-12

The high growth industries in Region 8, per the DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, are as follows:

### Fastest Growing Industries

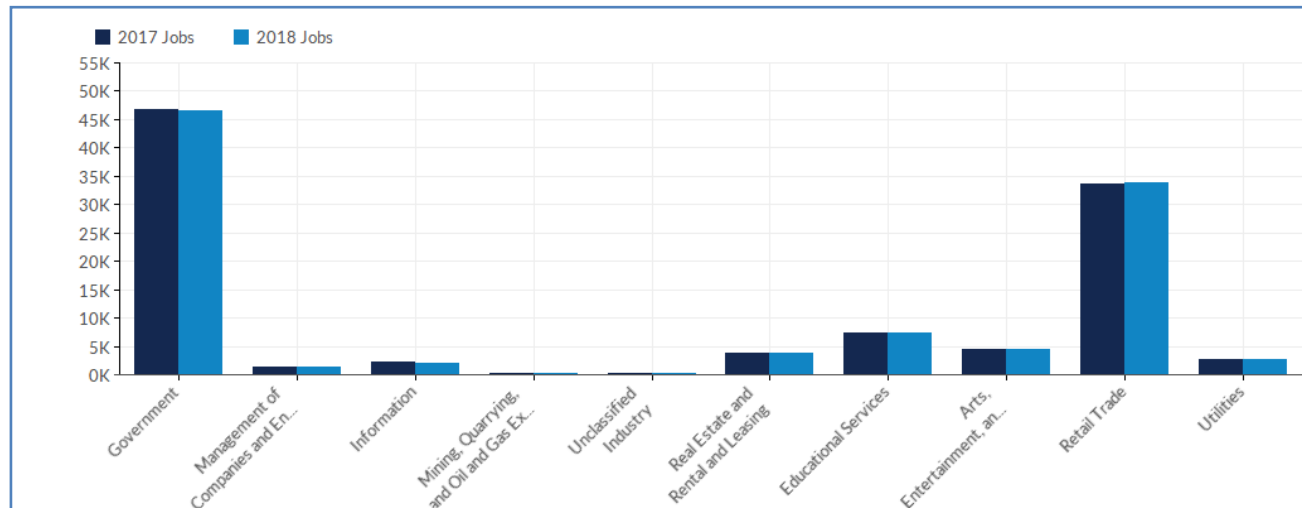


Industry	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2017-2018)	% Change	2017 Earnings Per Worker
Health Care and Social Assistance	42,612	43,586	974	2%	\$59,784
Other Services (except Public Administration)	21,592	22,463	871	4%	\$22,601
Manufacturing	60,160	60,835	675	1%	\$84,696
Wholesale Trade	11,189	11,591	402	4%	\$68,959
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12,599	12,939	340	3%	\$78,416
Finance and Insurance	10,229	10,521	292	3%	\$75,024
Accommodation and Food Services	28,381	28,651	270	1%	\$17,940
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	17,191	17,352	161	1%	\$38,831
Transportation and Warehousing	7,746	7,901	155	2%	\$59,621
Construction	14,645	14,760	115	1%	\$55,182



The declining industries in Region 8, per the DTMB, Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, are as follows:

### Slowest Growing Industries

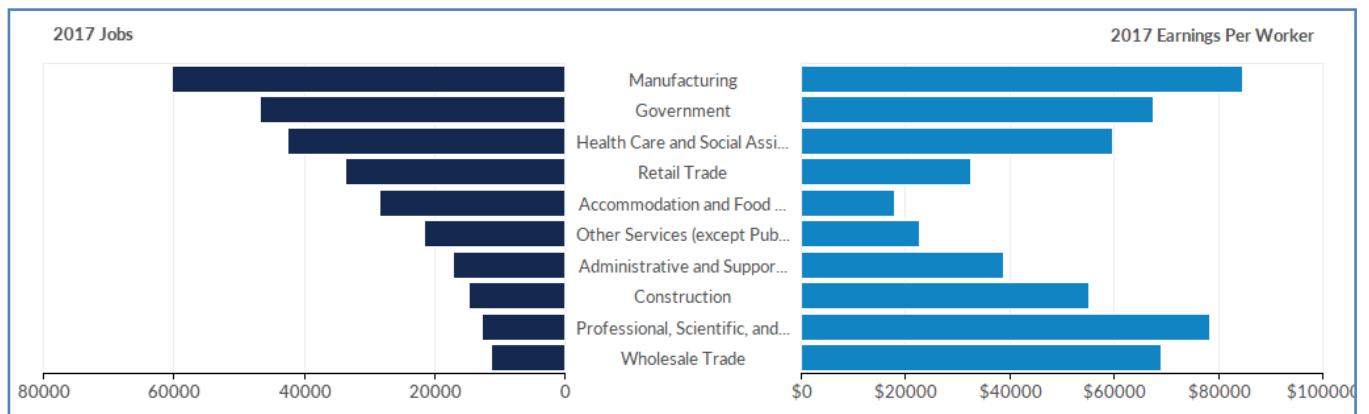


Industry	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2017-2018)	% Change	2017 Earnings Per Worker
Government	46,779	46,587	-192	0%	\$67,594
Management of Companies and Enterprises	1,288	1,233	-55	-4%	\$106,393
Information	2,147	2,097	-50	-2%	\$56,014
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	156	152	-4	-3%	\$99,795
Unclassified Industry	215	217	2	1%	\$43,701
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3,795	3,826	31	1%	\$42,397
Educational Services	7,288	7,340	52	1%	\$37,581
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	4,462	4,519	57	1%	\$20,690
Retail Trade	33,706	33,784	78	0%	\$32,414
Utilities	2,699	2,783	84	3%	\$165,704

## Industries in Region 8

In order to effectively serve employers and job seekers in Region 8, in creation of this plan, an analysis of industry growth and decline was reviewed and the following information was determined, regarding existing in-demand sectors.

### Largest Industries



Industry	2017 Jobs	2018 Jobs	Change in Jobs (2017-2018)	% Change	2017 Earnings Per Worker
Manufacturing	60,160	60,835	675	1%	\$84,696
Government	46,779	46,587	-192	0%	\$67,594
Health Care and Social Assistance	42,612	43,586	974	2%	\$59,784
Retail Trade	33,706	33,784	78	0%	\$32,414
Accommodation and Food Services	28,381	28,651	270	1%	\$17,940
Other Services (except Public Administration)	21,592	22,463	871	4%	\$22,601
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	17,191	17,352	161	1%	\$38,831
Construction	14,645	14,760	115	1%	\$55,182
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	12,599	12,939	340	3%	\$78,416
Wholesale Trade	11,189	11,591	402	4%	\$68,959

## **Industry Specific Data for Region 8 Industry**

### **Data: Manufacturing**

The manufacturing industry sector in Michigan's Prosperity Region 8 is robust, constituting 29% of the region's \$34.9 billion Gross Regional Product and accounting for 60,330 jobs (or 18% of all 338,783 jobs in the region). The Location Quotient for the manufacturing industry sector, an indicator of the industry's prominence within the region relative to national trends, is very high. With the national average of 1 indicating an equal proportion of the region's industry, Region 8's manufacturing industry LQs range from 1.38-2.98, and average 2.27 (127% higher than what would be expected of a region of this demographic composition given national trends).

The manufacturing industry sector in Prosperity Region 8 has seen significant growth since 2013, adding 5,164 jobs (a 9% growth rate). Per EMSI economic modeling software, growth was spread across the manufacturing industry sector but particularly focused in the industry groups "motor vehicle parts manufacturing," "medical equipment and supplies manufacturing," "beverage manufacturing," "motor vehicle body and trailer manufacturing," and "alumina and aluminum production and processing." In addition, the manufacturing industry sector is projected to grow by 1.5% through 2026, adding an additional 929 jobs to the region.

Also, of note is the aging of the workforce population within the manufacturing sector, with over 49% of the workforce being 45 years of age or older and only 7.5% under the age of 24. These indicators spell out current and upcoming worker and talent shortages that will require innovative talent pipeline strategies throughout Region 8.

Region 8

County Name	2013 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2013 - 2017 Change	2013 - 2017 % Change	2017 Location Quotient	Projected Growth, 2017 - 2026
Kalamazoo County, MI	16,939	18,794	1,855	11%	1.87	513
Berrien County, MI	12,190	13,155	965	8%	2.42	-275
Calhoun County, MI	11,483	12,399	916	8%	2.63	437
St. Joseph County, MI	8,039	8,329	290	4%	3.58	-261
Van Buren County, MI	2,297	2,702	405	18%	1.38	19
Cass County, MI	2,034	2,597	563	28%	2.98	512
Branch County, MI	2,184	2,353	169	8%	1.96	-15
<b>Region 8</b>	<b>55,166</b>	<b>60,330</b>	<b>5,164</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>2.27</b>	<b>929 (1.5%)</b>

Source: EMSI

**Manufacturing Average Hourly Earnings:**

County Name	2017 Avg. Hourly Earnings
Berrien County	\$46.83
Branch County	\$30.26
Calhoun County	\$38.43
Cass County	\$26.11
Kalamazoo County	\$48.77
St. Joseph County	\$30.78
Van Buren County	\$28.28
Source: EMSI	<b>\$41.12</b>

**Industry Data: Healthcare**

The healthcare industry sector in Michigan's Prosperity Region 8 is also a significant portion of the region's economy, employing 42,665 people (12.6% of the jobs in the region) and accounting for 8.5% of the total Gross Regional Product (making it the second most valuable industry). The healthcare industry sector's Location Quotient, an indicator of the industry's prominence within the region relative to national trends, ranges from slightly above average to slightly below average. With the national average of 1 indicating an equal proportion of the region's industry, Region 8's healthcare industry LQs range from 0.53-1.28 and average 1.00, exactly the national average for a region of this demographic composition.

The region has seen growth since 2013, adding 1,705 jobs (a 4% growth rate). The healthcare industry sector saw the greatest job growth in two primary industry groups, "outpatient care centers" and "nursing care facilities (skilled nursing facilities)" per EMSI economic modeling software. This industry sector is anticipated to add 6,064 new jobs through the year 2026, a growth rate of 14.2%.

The healthcare industry sector's workforce population is also aging along with the region as a whole, with over 45% of the workforce being 45 years of age or older and only 10% under the age of 24. 45% of those currently employed in this industry sector are between the ages of 25-54 years of age.

Region 8

County Name	2013 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2013 - 2017 Change	2013 - 2017 % Change	2017 Location Quotient	Projected Growth, 2017 - 2026
Kalamazoo County, MI	18,450	19,087	637	3%	1.18	1,539
Berrien County, MI	7,777	8,139	362	5%	0.93	699
Calhoun County, MI	9,063	9,723	660	7%	1.28	2,242
St. Joseph County, MI	2,404	2,004	-400	-17%	0.54	389
Van Buren County, MI	1,704	1,937	233	14%	0.61	561
Cass County, MI	716	751	35	5%	0.54	170
Branch County, MI	847	1,024	177	21%	0.53	464
<b>Region 8</b>	<b>40,960</b>	<b>42,665</b>	<b>1,705</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	<b>6,064 (14.2%)</b>

Source: EMSI

**Healthcare Average Hourly Earnings:**

County Name	2017 Avg. Hourly Earnings
Berrien County	\$28.11
Branch County	\$18.39
Calhoun County	\$26.43
Cass County	\$24.69
Kalamazoo County	\$32.28
St. Joseph County	\$24.58
Van Buren County	\$18.96
Source: EMSI	<b>\$28.72</b>

**Industry Data: Agriculture**

The agriculture industry sector in Michigan's Prosperity Region 8 is also robust despite its seasonality with 9,216 employed in agriculture-related jobs throughout the region, especially in Berrien, Kalamazoo, and Van Buren Counties. The agriculture industry sector's Location Quotient, an indicator of the industry's prominence within the region, is very high. With the national average of 1 indicating an equal proportion of the region's industry to national trends, Region 8's agriculture sector LQs range from 0.63 in Calhoun County to 9.33 in Van Buren County, averaging 2.26 for the whole of Region 8 (126% higher than what would be expected for a region of this demographic makeup given national trends).

The region has also seen significant growth since 2013, gaining 607 jobs, (a 7% growth rate). Growth in the Region's agriculture industry sector was focused in "crop production" and "support activities for agriculture and forestry," per EMSI economic modeling software. In addition, the agriculture industry sector is projected to grow by 7.1% through 2026, adding an additional 658 jobs to the region.

The workforce of the agriculture industry sector is aging much like other industries, with over 53.9% of the workforce being 45 years of age or older and only 11.3% under the age of 25. These indicators spell out current and upcoming worker and talent shortages that will require innovative talent pipeline strategies throughout Region 8.

County Name	2013 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2013 - 2017 Change	2013 - 2017 % Change	2017 Location Quotient	Projected Growth, 2017 - 2026
Kalamazoo County, MI	2,009	2,063	54	3%	1.34	77
Berrien County, MI	1,905	1,971	66	3%	2.37	182
Calhoun County, MI	414	452	38	9%	0.63	20
St. Joseph County, MI	626	813	187	30%	2.28	171
Van Buren County, MI	2,962	2,801	-161	-5%	9.33	-131
Cass County, MI	388	498	110	28%	3.74	122
Branch County, MI	305	618	313	103%	3.37	218
<b>Region 8</b>	<b>8,609</b>	<b>9,216</b>	<b>607</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>2.26</b>	<b>658 (7.1%)</b>

Source: EMSI

**Agriculture Average Hourly Earnings:**

<b>County Name</b>	<b>2017 Avg. Hourly Earnings</b>
Berrien County	\$13.07
Branch County	\$16.30
Calhoun County	\$14.83
Cass County	\$15.20
Kalamazoo County	\$15.73
St. Joseph County	\$18.58
Van Buren County	\$14.17
Source: EMSI	<b>\$14.90</b>

**Industry Data: Information Technology/Information Security/Telecommunications**

The information technology/information security/telecommunications industry cluster in Michigan's Region 8 (which is comprised of 21 separate industry subgroups, as defined by Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc.) currently employs 13,133 throughout the region. The Location Quotient, an indicator of the industry's prominence within the region relative to expectations given national trends, is rather low despite the large number employed in this industry cluster in Region 8. With the national average of 1 indicating an equal proportion of the region's industry, Region 8's LQs for this industry cluster range from 0.13 in Branch County to 1.13 in Van Buren County, averaging 0.62 for the whole of Region 8 (38% lower than would typically be expected for a region of this size and demographic makeup given national averages).

Despite this low location quotient, the region has enjoyed significant growth since 2013, adding 838 jobs (a 7% growth rate). Growth in the Region's information technology/information security/telecommunications industry cluster was focused in: "scientific research and development services;" "management, scientific, and technical consulting services;" and "computer systems design and related services," per EMSI economic modeling software. In addition, the projected change for this industry cluster is 13.1%, adding an additional 1,726 jobs to the region through 2026.

Despite a perception of technology and information-related industries as having workforces that trend younger, over 51.1% of this industry cluster's workforce is 45 years of age or older and only 5.5% is under the age of 25. While this is likely indicative of the advanced levels of education required for those employed within this industry cluster, these indicators spell out current and upcoming worker and talent shortages that will require innovative talent pipeline strategies throughout Region 8.



## Region 8

County Name	2013 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2013 - 2017 Change	2013 - 2017 % Change	2017 Location Quotient	Projected Growth, 2017 - 2026
Kalamazoo County, MI	6,132	5,999	-133	-2%	0.74	-515
Berrien County, MI	1,884	2,274	390	21%	0.52	349
Calhoun County, MI	2,436	2,484	48	2%	0.65	873
St. Joseph County, MI	270	311	41	15%	0.17	-30
Van Buren County, MI	1,370	1,784	414	30%	1.13	913
Cass County, MI	162	198	36	22%	0.28	97
Branch County, MI	86	128	42	49%	0.13	37
<b>Region 8</b>	<b>12,339</b>	<b>13,177</b>	<b>838</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0.62</b>	<b>1,726 (13.1%)</b>

Source: EMSI

**Information Technology/Information Security/Telecommunications Average Hourly Earnings:**

County Name	2017 Avg. Hourly Earnings
Berrien County	\$34.80
Branch County	\$40.83
Calhoun County	\$65.08
Cass County	\$30.53
Kalamazoo County	\$53.57
St. Joseph County	\$37.76
Van Buren County	\$33.99
Source: EMSI	<b>\$49.00</b>

**Industry Data: Hospitality**

The hospitality industry in Michigan's Region 8 currently employs 28,491 and is significant contributor to regional employment, with hospitality-related occupations comprising 8.4% of all jobs. The hospitality industry's Location Quotient, an indicator of the industry's prominence within the region relative to national trends, is right around national averages for a region of this demographic composition given national trends. With the national average of 1 indicating an equal proportion of the region's industry, Region 8's LQs for this industry range from 0.64 in St. Joseph County to 1.18 in Branch County, averaging 0.98 for the whole of Region 8.

Prosperity Region 8 has enjoyed significant growth in the hospitality industry since 2013, adding 1,958 jobs (a 7% growth rate). Growth in the Region's hospitality industry was focused in the "restaurants and other eating places" industry group per EMSI economic modeling software. In addition, the projected change for the future is 3.9%, adding an additional 1,119 jobs to the region through 2026.

A breakdown of this industry in Prosperity Region 8 reveals that workers trend younger than in other industries. Only 19.8% of workers in this industry are over the age of 44, while 43.3% are younger than the age of 25.

County Name	2013 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2013 - 2017 Change	2013 - 2017 % Change	2017 Location Quotient	Projected Growth, 2017 - 2026
Kalamazoo County, MI	11,586	11,744	158	1%	1.07	-99
Berrien County, MI	5,769	6,613	844	15%	1.11	712
Calhoun County, MI	3,966	3,919	-47	-1%	0.76	-225
St. Joseph County, MI	1,146	1,616	470	41%	0.64	271
Van Buren County, MI	1,890	2,051	161	9%	0.96	53
Cass County, MI	848	1,004	156	18%	1.05	156
Branch County, MI	1,328	1,546	218	16%	1.18	248
<b>Region 8</b>	<b>26,533</b>	<b>28,491</b>	<b>1,958</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>0.98</b>	<b>1,119 (3.9%)</b>

Source: EMSI

**Hospitality Average Hourly Earnings:**

<b>County Name</b>	<b>2017 Avg. Hourly Earnings</b>
Berrien County	\$9.12
Branch County	\$7.73
Calhoun County	\$8.80
Cass County	\$7.41
Kalamazoo County	\$8.80
St. Joseph County	\$7.91
Van Buren County	\$8.49
Source: EMSI	<b>\$8.70</b>

**Industry Data: Construction**

The construction industry in Michigan's Region 8 employs 14,944 people and represents 4.3% of the jobs in the region. The construction industry's Location Quotient, an indicator of the industry's prominence within the region relative to national trends, range from slightly above average to below average. With the national average of 1 indicating an equal proportion of the region's industry, Region 8's construction industry LQs range from 0.53-1.09 and average 0.79, 21% lower than what would be expected for a region of this demographic composition given national trends.

The region has seen significant growth in the construction industry since 2013, adding 1,762 jobs (a 14% growth rate). The most significant growth was in the "nonresidential building construction" and "building equipment constructors" industry groups, although "residential building construction," "other specialty trade contractors," and "utility system construction" also enjoyed robust growth per EMSI economic modeling software. The construction industry is expected to grow by 5.7% in the coming years, adding 833 jobs to the region through 2026

The construction industry's workforce is also aging rapidly, with over 48% of the workforce being 45 years of age or older and only 8% under the age of 25. These indicators spell out current and upcoming worker and talent shortages that will require innovative talent pipeline strategies throughout Region 8.

County Name	2013 Jobs	2017 Jobs	2013 - 2017 Change	2013 - 2017 % Change	2017 Location Quotient	Projected Growth, 2017 - 2026
Kalamazoo County, MI	5,041	6,241	1,200	24%	0.89	626
Berrien County, MI	2,494	2,570	76	3%	0.68	-81
Calhoun County, MI	2,026	2,050	24	1%	0.62	-153
St. Joseph County, MI	864	860	-4	0%	0.53	2
Van Buren County, MI	1,155	1,497	342	30%	1.09	342
Cass County, MI	628	634	6	1%	1.04	-31
Branch County, MI	640	759	119	19%	0.91	129
<b>Region 8</b>	<b>12,849</b>	<b>14,611</b>	<b>1,762</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>0.79</b>	<b>833 (5.7%)</b>

Source: EMSI

**Construction Average Hourly Earnings:**

County Name	2017 Avg. Hourly Earnings
Berrien County	\$23.33
Branch County	\$19.68
Calhoun County	\$27.17
Cass County	\$18.14
Kalamazoo County	\$29.95
St. Joseph County	\$21.68
Van Buren County	\$24.38
Source: EMSI	<b>\$26.29</b>

## Skills

As noted in the State Plan, the occupations described above all require a solid foundation in basic skills, such as reading, communication, math, and cognitive abilities that influence the acquisition and application of knowledge in problem solving. Most require active learning and critical thinking skills. In addition, these occupations require workers to possess technical skills and knowledge related to their specific occupational discipline and to master certain tools and technologies and even achieve particular certifications. Throughout Region 8, specific to Manufacturing, training in CNC and Mechatronics are in-demand, based on information gathered from employers, and in Healthcare, employer requests for training focus on CNA, Home Health Care and Medical Assisting training.

Soft skills are overwhelmingly the most highly sought after “skill” by employers in Region 8. Employers struggle to find employees with the required technical skills as well with soft skills, including attendance, work ethic, problem solving, time management and teamwork.

## Opportunities for the Current and Future Workforce

**Age:** The current workforce, as concluded by DTMB, in the manufacturing industry sector registers the highest number of older employees (jobs held by workers ages 55+) in Region 8. This may make the Region susceptible to potential talent shortfalls, especially if there are not enough skilled workers able to replace existing workers upon retirement or other exits from the labor market.

**Individuals with Barriers:** As the unemployment rate continues to decrease (discussed below) the population of individuals with barriers to employment are a focus for the MWAs in Region 8. Barriers include transportation, both within county lines, as well as across county lines; childcare and access to childcare, specifically on shifts other than first shift; and finally housing. Affordable housing throughout the region is an increasing issue for employed individuals and their families.

Through the work of the Workforce Development Boards and local community collaborations and partnerships throughout the Region and State, Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest have a focus on working with partners in housing, transportation and childcare on the development of innovative and practical solutions to create opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment.

**Decreasing Unemployment Rate:** Just as is with Michigan’s economic growth being largely dependent on the talent of its citizens, so is that as of Region 8. Currently in Region 8, there is a failure to match the supply of talent with the demand of employers, especially in the high growth industries discussed above. While Region 8’s unemployment rate has been steadily decreasing, the result has been fewer unemployed residents actively seeking jobs. It is important to note that the unemployment rate does not include marginally attached workers and individuals working part-time but wanting full-time work, presenting an opportunity to Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest to work with this population. However, this still means employers are not getting the talent they need to achieve maximum success and workers are losing out on higher wage jobs that would allow them to be better providers for their families. The Business Services Teams are actively outreaching to individuals not reported in the unemployment rate to assist in matching the

unreported talent with appropriate employers.

To address this challenge, the partners in Region 8 are working collaboratively with employers, economic development, training providers, and other partners, by employing several strategies to boost the education/skill level of workers and Michigan's unemployed and low income population with available job vacancies, discussed throughout this plan.

### **Workforce Development Activities in the Region**

Workforce Development activities in Region 8 are discussed throughout the remainder of this Plan.

**Strengths:** Specifically, Section 4 of this Plan highlights numerous innovative approaches to workforce development activities that the Michigan Works! Agencies in Region 8 have implemented in conjunction with training institutions, employers and community partners to address the needs of employers and job seekers, including employer consortiums, customized training opportunities and implementation of sector strategies. These activities are implemented to address the needs of individuals with barriers to employment as well as to meet the employment needs of employers in the region.

In addition, as discussed in Section 3 of this Plan, the Michigan Works! Business Services Teams in Region 8 utilizes the Business Solutions Model of the development of a coordinated, systematic, team approach to business outreach and engagement, resulting in quality employer relationships.

**Weaknesses:** To align with the emerging industries, highlighted above, there is opportunity throughout Region 8 to expand the work of employer consortium groups to the development and implementation of an Agriculture and an IT consortium.

### **3. Regional Service Strategies**

**A description of regional service strategies that have been or will be established as a result of coordinated regional analysis and delivery of services, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements, when appropriate.**

Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest have developed systems and best practices through effective communication and data sharing that effectively meet the needs of job seekers and employers in Region 8. As outlined below, many of these strategies will be expanded and streamlined throughout the life of this plan to prioritize regional planning efforts.

### **Geography**

Region 8 is located in the southwest corner of Michigan. The region shares a border with Indiana and has a major interstate highway that connects Detroit and Chicago. The region includes a mixture of urban and rural areas that are attractive to a variety of industry sectors.

## Business Services Teams

The two Michigan Works! Agencies in Region 8 utilize the Business Services model to engage employers in the region. The business services lead staff for the region, regularly collaborate with community stakeholders to meet the needs of employers and job seekers. The work of these teams throughout Region 8 will continue to be streamlined throughout the implementation of the WIOA.

The work done by Certified Business Solutions Professionals leverages partnerships between business, workforce development, educators and economic developers to help businesses in Region 8 be successful and to meet their demands for a skilled workforce.

The demand-driven model requires the workforce development system to place business as the primary customer. To help attract, retain and expand local businesses, Michigan Works! in Region 8 has established strong relationships with local businesses, education and economic development organizations. Through these relationships Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest are able to leverage an increasing number of jobs for Region 8 job seeker customers while assuring that the needs of local businesses are being met thereby serving the needs of both the supply and demand side of the equation.

A focus on employers as a primary customer does not minimize the Region 8 Business Services Teams' commitment to excellent customer service for job seekers. Using our industry consortiums and local labor market data allows our Business Services Team to provide job seekers with the appropriate training and targeted job placement strategies to help families maintain financial self-sufficiency.

Utilizing the Business Services Teams (BST) is a key strategy in implementing the demand-driven model, which is utilized throughout Region 8. The BST concept has three key features:

- A focus on business as the driver and primary customer;
- Development of a team of workforce development professionals specifically trained for and committed to developing relationships with businesses; and
- Understanding the value and role in strategic collaborations with regional economic development and education partners to provide business solutions.

The BST concept calls for a coordinated, systematic, team approach to business outreach and engagement.

Regionally the work of the Business Services Teams include, but is not limited to:

- Outreach and recruitment assistance;
- Screening applications;
- Job postings on Pure Michigan Talent Connect (PMTTC);
- Local and regional hiring events and job fairs for all job seekers;
- Attraction and retention assistance in partnership with economic development partners;
- Training and funding opportunities for new and incumbent workers, including connecting the unemployed with work-based learning and apprenticeship opportunities throughout Region 8;

- Work with educators and employers to understand and improve opportunities for individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth, or other hard-to-serve populations;
- Connecting employers and education institutions;
- Approaching the ever-changing workforce through a multi-generational approach; and
- Industry specific consortia work throughout Region 8 (See Section 4 for more information).

To support the work of the Business Services Teams throughout Region 8, Business Services Staff engage with multiple partners including the following:

- Education and Training Providers;
- Vocational Rehabilitation Partners;
- Veteran Services Partners;
- Economic development organizations;
- Area Chambers of Commerce;
- Local units of government;
- Organized Labor Unions;
- Michigan Economic Development Corporation;
- Talent Investment Agency/Workforce Development Agency, State of Michigan;
- Other state agencies, including Department of Agriculture, Department of Corrections, and LARA; and
- BSPs from other Michigan Works! areas outside of Region 8.

Pure Michigan Talent Connect will also be used by all program staff and the Business Services Team to assist employers and job seekers by providing strategic tools through the web based portal connecting the two. Talent Connect provides tools for employers to identify and develop their talent base while also giving job seekers the opportunity to create a personalized plan to help them more effectively navigate career decisions.

### **Career Educational Advisory Council**

Prior to the transition to Career Educational Advisory Councils (CEAC) in April 2018, the Southwest Michigan Region 8 Talent District Career Council (TDCC) worked together to serve in an advisory capacity to both Workforce Development Boards within Region 8, representing the counties of Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph and Van Buren. The mission of the Southwest Michigan Region 8 TDCC was to create and support a regional talent preparation and development system that provided all students, youth to the adult learner, with the necessary academic, technical, and work behavior skills to meet business and industry needs to maintain and enhance the regional economy of the seven county region.

With the transition to CEACs, aligned with the Michigan Works! areas, the two groups will continue to work together, throughout Region 8, as appropriate.

### **Jobs for Michigan Graduates**

Under the leadership of Youth Solutions, Michigan Works! Southwest actively participates in Jobs for Michigan Graduates programming working to raise Region 8's, as well as the state of Michigan's, high school graduation rate by expanding mentoring, job readiness, leadership



development, and other academic support for students either at risk of dropping out or those who have already dropped out. The Michigan Works! Agencies in Region 8 will continue to work with Youth Solutions to expand JMG into other school districts.

### **Veterans Services**

Veterans Career Advisors are State of Michigan employees who provide intensive, individualized services to meet the employment needs of eligible veterans and spouses with significant barriers to employment.

Services provided by these employment service professionals in assisting eligible veterans and spouses reduce and/or eliminate barriers to employment. Services include, but are not limited to:

- Resume development,
- Interviewing skills, networking, and
- Direct referral to other service providers

Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest comply with the Jobs for Veterans Act by giving veterans and eligible spouses priority of service status for all programs.

### **Veterans Regional Job Fair**

Michigan Works! organizations in Region 8 have come together in the past to offer a region wide Veterans Career Fair to connect veterans and their spouses with employment opportunities that appropriately pair with their transferable skills. This job fair not only assisted veterans in their transition to the civilian workforce but also assisted employers in understanding this transition to available positions within their businesses. This event will continue to be evaluated in regard to holding another one in the future.

### **Veterans Community Action Team – VCAT**

The Michigan Veterans Affairs Agency has recently expanded its Veterans Community Action Team program to veterans and their families living in Michigan’s Prosperity Region 8, which includes Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph and Van Buren counties. This group works to assist more than 55,000 veterans in Southwest Michigan with creating easier access to comprehensive health, employment, education and quality-of-life opportunities thanks to a collaboration that brings together local, state and federal resources and services. Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest will continue to work with this partnership driven collaborative to assist veterans in Southwest Michigan.

### **Sector Partnership National Emergency Grant**

The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) awarded the Talent Investment Agency/Workforce Development Agency (TIA/WDA) SP NEG funds to provide employment related services for dislocated workers. SP NEG funds were structured to advance and complement the more integrated and comprehensive dislocated worker services envisioned by the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA).

For Region 8, Michigan Works! Southwest served as the administrator of these funds for all of Region 8, through their expiration in March of 2018. The focus of SP NEG in Region 8 was to offer a unique opportunity to broaden the applicant pool in addition to the requirements of serving those workers who have been laid off due to plant closure or mass layoff, for individuals who were nearing the exhaustion of their unemployment compensation and for those who were long term unemployed without any unemployment benefits and had given up hope for the opportunity of re-employment. Central to the success of the participants served under this grant were the Region 8’s Michigan Works! Service Centers’ fully integrated non-siloed talent pipeline approach to anyone in search of a job or career.

Under Career Services, participants had standardized entry services that provided them with accurate and clear information on all available services; and through effective guidance, staff targeted the right services the first time and ensure jobseekers receive appropriate services aligned to their needs. The goal was to provide a continuum of services over time until goals were met in which the intensity of services and the contact methodology was based on individual need and service availability.

Regional planning funds were used to enhance the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach. These funds were used to ensure partnerships and regional assets were aligned and integrated.

### **Offender Success**

The mission of Offender Success, funded through the Michigan Department of Corrections, is to enhance public safety by reducing offender recidivism through a seamless plan of services and supervision, delivered through state and local collaboration. The plan developed with each prisoner begins at the time of his or her entry into the prison system through parole and reintegration into the community. Positive reentry of individuals in Region 8 will rely on cross county collaboration and leveraging of resources to guarantee employment placement and successful transition back into the communities throughout the region.

### **Other Regional Partnerships**

By developing positive and cooperative relationships with state agencies, at the local levels, such as the Unemployment Insurance Agency, the Department of Health and Human Services, Michigan Rehabilitative Services, the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons, the Department of Education, and others, we can better serve our business customers and job seekers through unduplicated, coordinated services. Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest work collaboratively with the following agencies throughout Region 8 with a goal of inclusion and universal access:

- Disability Network of Southwest Michigan: an organization dedicated to educating and connecting people with disabilities to resources while advocating for social change.
- Michigan Rehabilitation Services: a statewide agency that works with individuals and employers to achieve quality employment outcomes and independence for individuals with disabilities.
- Bureau of Services for Blind Persons: an organization committed to providing opportunities for individuals who are blind or visually impaired to achieve employability and/or function independently in society.
- Job Accommodation Network: an organization that provides free, expert, and confidential guidance on workplace accommodations and the Americans with Disabilities Act legislation to individuals and employers.
- AARP - The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is the nation's oldest program to help low-income, unemployed individuals aged 55+ find work. Throughout Region 8, AARP matches eligible older job seekers with local nonprofits and public agencies so they can increase skills and build self-confidence, while earning a modest income. Based on their employment interests and goals, participants may also receive supportive services and skills training through an educational institution.

#### 4. In Demand Industry Sectors

A description of plans for the development and implementation of, or the expansion of, sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region.

#### Regional Priorities and Collaboration

In Region 8, collaborations and priorities are focused on an industry cluster approach. As defined per the State of Michigan, “a cluster is a geographic concentration of related employers, industry suppliers, and support institutions in a product or service field. For the purposes of workforce development, Michigan's clusters are broad industry sectors. There is growing evidence that industry clusters are an effective organizing framework for positively impacting economic and workforce development activities.” With that, Michigan has implemented the Michigan Industry Cluster Approach throughout the workforce system and identified Agriculture, Energy, Health Care, Information Technology & Media, and Manufacturing as five priority clusters.

As representative in the data presented above, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Hospitality and Agriculture present the major occupation sectors and occupations within the region and will continue to be the priority of Region 8. However, in addition, in planning for the future and aligning with the State of Michigan industry sectors and cluster approach, Region 8 will also focus on the IT and Energy sectors, as appropriate.

#### Current Sector Based Partnerships and Business Involvement

Current consortium groups in Manufacturing and Healthcare exist in Region 8 and an Agriculture Consortium is in the planning stages. The existing consortium groups are active throughout the region in the following ways:

- Employer group and individual employer GoingPRO Talent Fund (previously STTF) applications;
- Joint career fairs and other events to assist job seekers and employers;
- Identifying needs and challenges of their specific industry;
- Connecting job seekers with employers; and
- General information and resource sharing.

Members of the consortium group are reflective of Region 8, and include partners in:

- Education and Training,
- Economic Development,
- Workforce Development and
- Employers.

The strong employer involvement in the consortiums is the foundation in which the groups are built on and is critical to the groups continuing to serve as change agents throughout the region. Each consortium provides expertise and understanding of the specific industries, guiding each consortia's collective efforts. The employer led consortiums work with community partners, including Michigan Works! Agencies, to address the needs of individuals with barriers to employment as well as with training institutions on the development of customized training

programs to meet the specific needs of the employers.

### **Southwest Michigan Advanced Manufacturing Career Consortium**

With the lack of qualified candidates to fill entry-level, technician-level and engineering job openings in Southwest Michigan, the Advanced Manufacturing Career Consortium formed in 2011. Today, 158 local manufacturing companies and 17 service provider organizations are invited to meet quarterly to discuss and develop innovative and integrated strategies to address this crucial issue, including on-the-job training, apprenticeships, career advancement, and payment of education, according to their website.

The consortium focuses on three strategic areas to address the skilled labor shortage: recruitment, screening and training. The Southwest Michigan Advanced Manufacturing Career Consortium uses a locally developed, innovative and integrated model to address these strategic areas and attract, screen, and train qualified candidates for current and future advanced manufacturing career opportunities.

Listed below are some of the innovative approaches in conjunction with training institutions that have been implemented to address the employer identified needs, specific to skills gaps:

- Glen Oaks Community College (GOCC) Business and Industry Training;
- Kellogg Community College (KCC) Regional Manufacturing Technology Center (RMTC);
- Kellogg Advanced Manufacturing Assembly Program;
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC) CNC Operator Academy;
- KVCC Mechatronic Technician Academy; and
- Michigan Advanced Technician Training Program (MAT<sup>2</sup>®) - Innovative, industry-driven approach to a training program that combines theory, practice and work.

In addition, the Southwest Michigan Advanced Manufacturing Career Consortium, prioritizes Project Lead The Way, an engaging, project-based K-12 curriculum that prepares the students to be innovative and productive leaders in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

### **Southwest Michigan Healthcare Consortium**

The focus of the Southwest Michigan Healthcare Consortium is to develop healthcare industry-based partnerships that promote the economic health and welfare of Region 8 businesses and workers.

The overall focus in forming this alliance was to develop healthcare industry-based partnerships that would promote the economic health and welfare of the region's businesses and workers. Regional activities address healthcare worker shortages, skill shortages, training mismatches, employee recruitment, retention, and organizational design issues that are common across this geographic area.

Throughout the years, resources have been shared and combined efforts have been made to address common issues. In September 2011, an information gathering survey, along with an

invitation to meet to discuss healthcare employer needs, was sent to healthcare providers in numerous counties in Region 8, resulting in the development of the Southwest Michigan Healthcare Consortium.

Currently, five regional strategies are in place:

- Share best practices in a forum that includes healthcare employers and partners representing workforce development, education, and economic development;
- Plan and hold periodic career fairs to assist with meeting current employer needs;
- Explore and identify a common assessment tool to assist employers in finding good candidate matches early on in the recruitment process;
- Develop and maintain a database of current healthcare providers within the five county area; and
- Conduct periodic needs surveys and share the results.

The group continues to grow throughout the region, streamline their work and enhance the industry throughout Region 8.

There is also opportunity throughout Region 8 to expand the work of employer consortium groups to the development and implementation of an Agriculture and an IT consortium.

### **Regional Career Fairs**

Employers throughout Region 8 play a role in the planning and implementation of a nontraditional career fair model that has been implemented throughout the region on numerous occasions, including the Veteran Job Fair discussed in Section 3. This successful career fair model calls for pre-event preparation, in order to assist in preparing the best possible job seekers for the employers, including, but not limited to,

- Resume review of job seeker resumes planning to attend the career fair, by Michigan Works! staff or employer representatives;
- Mock interviews by Michigan Works! staff or employers prior to the event;
- Employability skill building workshop opportunities; and
- Employer panel information sharing/question and answer opportunity.

Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest continue to partner with economic development and training partners across Region 8 to meet the needs of employers and foster growth of in demand sectors and occupations.

### **5. Administrative Cost Requirements**

A description of any administrative cost arrangements that currently exist or that will be established within the region, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate.

Annually and upon receiving regionally allocated funds from the Talent Investment Agency/Workforce Development Agency, Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest leadership teams analyze performance and administrative requirements of regional funds to ensure that all

distributions comply with state policy. Upon completion of this analysis, the leadership teams of both organizations determine administrative cost arrangements for the region for that year or the funding stream. An MOU will be completed, agreed upon and signed by the directors of both Michigan Works! agencies in Region 8 clearly stating the cost sharing requirements for that year or that funding stream.

## **6. Transportation and Supportive Service Coordination**

A description of how transportation and other supportive services, as appropriate, currently are coordinated or will be coordinated within the region.

To meet the needs of employers and job seekers throughout Region 8, transportation and support service coordination has ample opportunity to be enhanced through the potential breaking down of county line restrictions and barriers of service area alignment by county, and will be prioritized throughout the life of this plan to address this barrier to employment for individuals.

### **Transportation**

Throughout the region, public transportation, through the guidance and assistance of Michigan Works!, has already started work to break down the geographic barriers of county lines and have completed trial projects of transporting job seekers and workers across county lines to job search and ultimately maintain employment, through meeting points at county lines.

Existing community transportation partners, that Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest will continue to work with to explore options of cross regional transportation include:

- Battle Creek Area Transit
- Branch Area Transit Authority, Inc.
- Kalamazoo Metro Transit
- Marshall Albion Transit Authority
- Michigan Great Southwest
- Southwest Michigan Planning Commission
- Saint Joseph County Transit Authority
- Strategic Leadership Council

In addition, Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest, will work collaboratively with the Regional Prosperity Initiative to break down transportation barriers for individuals with this barrier to employment. The Southcentral Planning Commission, leading the RPI, per their website, has been charged by the Michigan Department of Transportation with conducting regional transportation planning for areas outside metropolitan areas (Kalamazoo County and the Northwestern section of Calhoun County). Metropolitan area transportation planning is conducted by the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) and the Battle Creek Area Transportation Study (BCATS) within their respective Metropolitan Planning Areas. SMPC currently contracts with the Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study to provide regional transportation planning and related activities, and Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest, will continue to support and assist in the development of these activities.



**Supportive Services**

Supportive services, often restricted by policy guidelines, will also be analyzed for coordination across the geographic area to best serve job seekers and workers. Potential partners could include, but are not limited to:

- 211
- Childcare Resources (throughout the region)
- Community Action Agency (throughout the region)
- Community Collaborative Bodies (throughout the region)
- County Land Banks (throughout the region)
- Goodwill (throughout the region)
- Housing Resources, Inc. (Kalamazoo County)
- Meals on Wheels (throughout the region)
- Salvation Army (throughout the region)
- Southwest Michigan Community Development Corporation (throughout the region)
- United Way (throughout the region)

Staff from both Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest are active within their respective counties, as well as across the region, with support service providers and transportation entities to assist in guiding as well as leading future coordination of transportation and supportive service delivery across the region.

## 7. Collaboration

**A description of how workforce development services currently are, or could be, coordinated with economic development services and providers within the region, and a description of the strategies that have been or will be established to enhance service delivery as a result of the coordinated regional analysis of such services.**

With the demand-driven model, as discussed, requiring the workforce development system to place business as the primary customer, Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest strive to be one stop shops within their given counties, as well as in the region as a whole, to assist prospective employer clients and existing customers with business development services through an integrated business retention and attraction program. In order to be successful, it is critical that a coordinated partnership with economic development services and providers within the region remain a priority.

### Partnerships

Both Michigan Works! agencies in Region 8 have established relationships with local area community colleges, economic development organizations, planning commissions as well as the MEDC, TED and TIA, and strive to enhance service delivery.

In order to ensure regional collaboration and success of employers and industry in Region 8, partner meetings to discuss best practices, current projects and review available resources are held regularly in the form of project specific meetings or the work of the industry specific consortiums, active in Region 8 (See Section 4 for more information).

### Economic Development

Current economic development organizations engaged in regional planning, include,

- Southwest Michigan First,
  - Southwest Michigan First covers the region in its' entirety, and the organization and their team are passionate about creating jobs and cultivating a strong economy in Southwest Michigan. Per their website, Southwest Michigan First was created for one singular purpose: To assist companies in growing jobs. Southwest Michigan First focuses their activities on services and collaborations that promote Business Growth, including but not limited to: Business-to-Business Marketing, Supply Chain Recruitment, Workforce Development, Capital Acquisition, Site Selection, Consulting Services, Brand Development, and Efficient Government.
  - Michigan Works! throughout Region 8 are actively involved in the Southwest Michigan First spearheaded regional planning meetings and plan to continue so as the region prioritizes economic development in all counties.

In addition to collaborating with Southwest Michigan First partnerships have been formed to assist the following economic development organizations with their work:

- Albion Economic Development Alliance,

- Battle Creek Unlimited,
- Branch County Economic Growth Alliance,
- Cornerstone Alliance,
- Marshall Area Economic Development Alliance,
- Southwest Michigan Economic Growth Alliance, and
- Van Buren County Economic Development Corporation.

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation is also a critical partner in Region 8 in offering business assistance services and capital programs for business attraction and acceleration.

### **Training and Education**

Education and training providers currently involved with economic development that assist with regional planning, include, but are not limited to:

- Berrien Regional Educational Services Agency
- Branch County Intermediate School District
- Calhoun County Intermediate School District
- Glen Oaks Community College
- Kalamazoo Regional Educational Services Agency
- Kalamazoo Valley Community College
- Kellogg Community College
- Lake Michigan College
- Lewis Cass Intermediate School District
- Saint Joseph County Intermediate School District
- Southwestern Michigan College
- Van Buren Intermediate School District
- Western Michigan University
- Other:
  - CTE Programs throughout the region
  - Early Middle College programs throughout the region
  - College Access Networks throughout the region

In addition, Michigan Training Connect, housed within the Pure Michigan Talent Connect system, will be used throughout Region 8 to provide job seekers with the tools they need to select a training program to become employed in a high demand job industry.

Over the remaining two years of this plan, training and education options for job seekers in Region 8 will continue to be identified and developed. Information gained from employers, in partnership with the identified economic developers and training institutions will remain a critical tool in creating and implementing needed trainings based on the demands of the industries in Region 8.

### **Employers**

There are hundreds of businesses currently involved with Kinexus, Michigan Works! Southwest, the identified economic development organizations and the identified training organizations,

including numerous businesses from emerging sectors/industries.

One major project that will continue throughout the span of this plan, is the attraction and expansion of Clemens Food Group, representative of the Agriculture Sector in Region 8. This project has thus far and will continue to require the efforts of numerous state and local economic developers, Michigan Works!, state and local government and workforce development professionals and organizations to guarantee their ongoing successful expansion into the region. For this specific project, Michigan Works! worked directly with Clemens Food Group on the recruitment and training of job seekers to meet the employers' initial need for over 800 positions to launch a successful operation, as scheduled, in the Fall of 2017.

### **Regional Prosperity Initiative**

The RPI is a voluntary competitive grant process designed to encourage local private, public and non-profit partners to create vibrant regional economies, and Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest are active in the Regional Prosperity Initiative in Region 8. To achieve coordinated regional services, the collaborative relationships among local and regional partners, as facilitated by RPI, allows the state, as well as private and non-profit stakeholders, to recognize local efforts and work in closer collaboration with local and regional decision makers to support efforts for economic prosperity.

As is with the Regional Prosperity Initiative, Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest value and rely on regional collaboration to work to eliminate overlapping responsibilities and competing visions as to economic priorities, as well as to avoid redundancies and gaps in services.

### **GoingPRO Talent fund (formerly the Skilled Trades Training Fund)**

Just as the State sees collaboration between Michigan Works! Agencies, economic development and education as essential in achieving demand-driven training that addresses talent shortages preventing growth of Michigan industries, so do the partners in Region 8. Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest work together to coordinate and maximize GoingPRO Talent Fund (previously called the Skilled Trades Training Fund) benefits for Region 8 by working together to meet the needs of employers. STTF focuses on assisting companies in meeting their talent challenges through providing competitive awards for employer responsive training that enhances talent, productivity, and employment retention while increasing the quality and competitiveness of Michigan's businesses.

As both Michigan Works! agencies in Region 8 spearhead the GoingPro Talent Fund (STTF) every year, collaboration amongst the two organizations, training institutions across the region and regional economic development partners are critical to the success of this opportunity to employers in Southwest Michigan.

Per the STTF Dashboard, employers in Region 8 were awarded:

- 15 awards for fiscal year 2016 totaling \$678,263,
- 41 awards for fiscal year 2017 totaling \$886,091, and
- 80 awards for fiscal year 2018 totaling \$3,057,311

Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest plan to continue to work collaboratively to assist employers in Southwest Michigan in achieving this opportunity.

### **Other**

The Southwest Michigan Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) provides services in all seven counties in Region 8 and assists businesses who wish to sell products and services to the federal, state, and local governments. PTAC services, include the following and, are offered at no charge:

- **Training Events:** PTAC hosts training seminars and networking events to assist businesses in Region 8 in learning more about government procurement topics.
- **Bid Match:** A customized search is created for each client to identify federal, state, and local government bid opportunities. Over 2,000 websites are explored each day.
- **Custom Market Research:** PTAC researches what, when, how, quantity, and frequency of government buys of the client's products/services. Competitor's government history is also researched. A custom marketing strategy is designed to meet the needs of each client.
- **Government Registrations:** Assistance is offered to complete the federal government's System for Award Management (SAM), the State of Michigan, and other registrations.
- **Subcontracting Assistance:** PTAC helps clients identify subcontracting opportunities with government prime contractors.

Coordination with business, economic development and education is critical to the growth of business and industry, as well as the success of job seekers in Region 8.

## **8. Regional Performance Goals**

A description of how the region will collectively negotiate and reach agreement with the Governor on local levels of performance for, and report on, the performance accountability measures described in the WIOA Section 116(c), for the local areas or the planning region.

Per the WIOA Unified State Plan, “the WIOA performance measures serve as indicators to track progress toward meeting the state’s goals and vision for the workforce investment system. The state uses the performance accountability system to assess the effectiveness of local areas in achieving continuous improvement of workforce investment activities in order to optimize the return on investment of WIOA funds.”

Both WIOA and Wagner-Peyser performance data is tracked in OSMIS. The State Plan also describes that reports detailing performance on all performance measures are published quarterly for all local areas. These reports allow the state and local areas to monitor performance outcomes in order to establish trends and identify measures requiring corrective action, as well as track WIOA performance measures which serve as indicators to track progress toward meeting the state’s goal and vision for the workforce investment system. Both Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest monitor individual area local performance, as outlined in the individual local plans.

Kinexus and Michigan Works! Southwest are currently striving to meet the local area negotiated performance measures for PY2016, and subsequent years. If necessary, leadership staff across the two Michigan Works! agencies will analyze performance requirements and collectively negotiate to reach agreements locally, across the region and ultimately with the Governor, as appropriate, on local levels of performance for the performance accountability measures outlined in the WIOA Section 116, including meeting the measures identified in the State of Michigan Unified Plan.

## **9. Public Comment**

A 30-day public comment period was made available during the initial development of this plan, as well as at the time of mid-cycle modification. In both instances, the plan was posted for review on the Michigan Works! Agencies’ websites and emailed out to workforce development board members, workforce development board committee members and other partners, including representatives of businesses, labor organizations, community organizations and education and training institutions.

In addition, the Regional Plan was discussed at the workforce development board meetings, and notification was announced that the Plan was available for review and public comment.

No comments were received during the public comment and review period of the Region 8 Regional Plan.