

Meeting held via Zoom

Attendees: Lori Ulrich, Taskforce Chair, Jessica Fortner, Rolando Thacker, Mark Hohmann, Bill Sandell, Correy Eimer, Brandon Combs, Myra Wilson, Erin White, Mary Jackson, Tom West, Sam Keathley, and Brian Amick

KWIB Staff: LaChrista Ellis, Sara Jagers, and Elishah Taylor

9:31am Welcome

Lori Ulrich, Chair, welcomed and thanked taskforce members for joining the meeting.

Work Ready Communities – Next Generation Application and Website Review

Jessica Fortner, Senior Consultant, TPMA, reported that the project remains on schedule, with all monthly milestones completed to date. Recent work has focused on refining the application process and metrics, compiling best practices for the website, and gathering data sources for quantitative measures. Collaboration with Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS) has ensured that metrics align with available data, and minor language adjustments have been made for clarity. Efforts continue to reduce barriers for applicants, including the development of a data guide, with alternative data sources provided where KYSTATS data is unavailable. The focus for November is on enhancing the website and integrating the application directly into the online platform to provide a more modern and responsive user experience.

Brian Amick, Co-Founder of Werkbot, the contractor leading the website redevelopment, presented the proposed layout for the new website, which was based on prior planning and feedback regarding the sitemap and wireframes. The overview included a demonstration of the main pages of the site, including the homepage, About page, Getting Started page, certified counties map, history and statistics pages, and news/insights section. The design is responsive and works on both desktop and mobile devices. Images displayed are placeholders and can be updated during development.

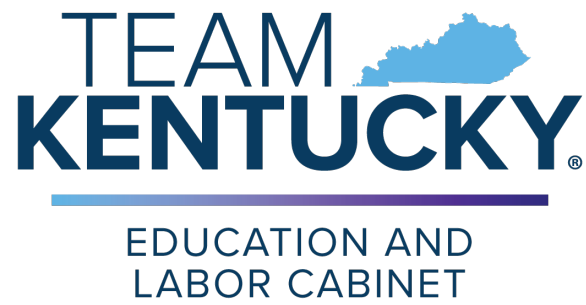
The application process was also demonstrated. Users will begin with a login page and access an online application divided into multiple tabs, including general instructions, strategic objectives, and talent-ready objectives. Worksheets and templates can be downloaded to aid planning and pre-population of application fields. Each step allows data entry, uploading of supporting documentation, and progression to the next section.

Upon completion, the application can be reviewed before submission. Any incomplete fields trigger an error notice to ensure all required information is provided. Submitted applications are stored digitally and can be shared via Google Drive or Microsoft OneDrive for review and commenting, reducing the need for paper documents and streamlining the approval process.

A link will be shared with attendees to allow review and feedback on the website layout and application process.

10:05am – Closing Comments and Adjournment

Lori Ulrich thanked attendees for their participation and encouraged everyone to provide any feedback and ideas to TPMA colleagues. The Work Ready Communities Taskforce meetings will take place on the first Wednesday of each month.



**Work Ready Communities
Taskforce Meeting Briefing Packet**

November 5, 2025

9:30 – 11:00 am EST

AGENDA
9:30 – 11:00 am EST

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81928374607?pwd=OuM3eMltmBHb2smSIWKmRJFuXT2VhW.1>

Meeting ID: 819 2837 4607 / Passcode: 942720

Dial via phone: 1 646 931 3860

9:30 CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Welcome *Lori Ulrich, Chair*
Fleming-Mason Energy

9:45 Work Ready Communities – Next Generation Updates *Sara Tracey, Vice President*
..... *National Workforce & Education*
..... *TPMA*

- *Application and Website Update*
- *KYSTATS*

Jessica Fortner, Senior Consultant
TPMA

Brian Amick, Co-Founder
Werkbot

10:45 Closing Comments & Next Steps *Lori Ulrich, Chair*

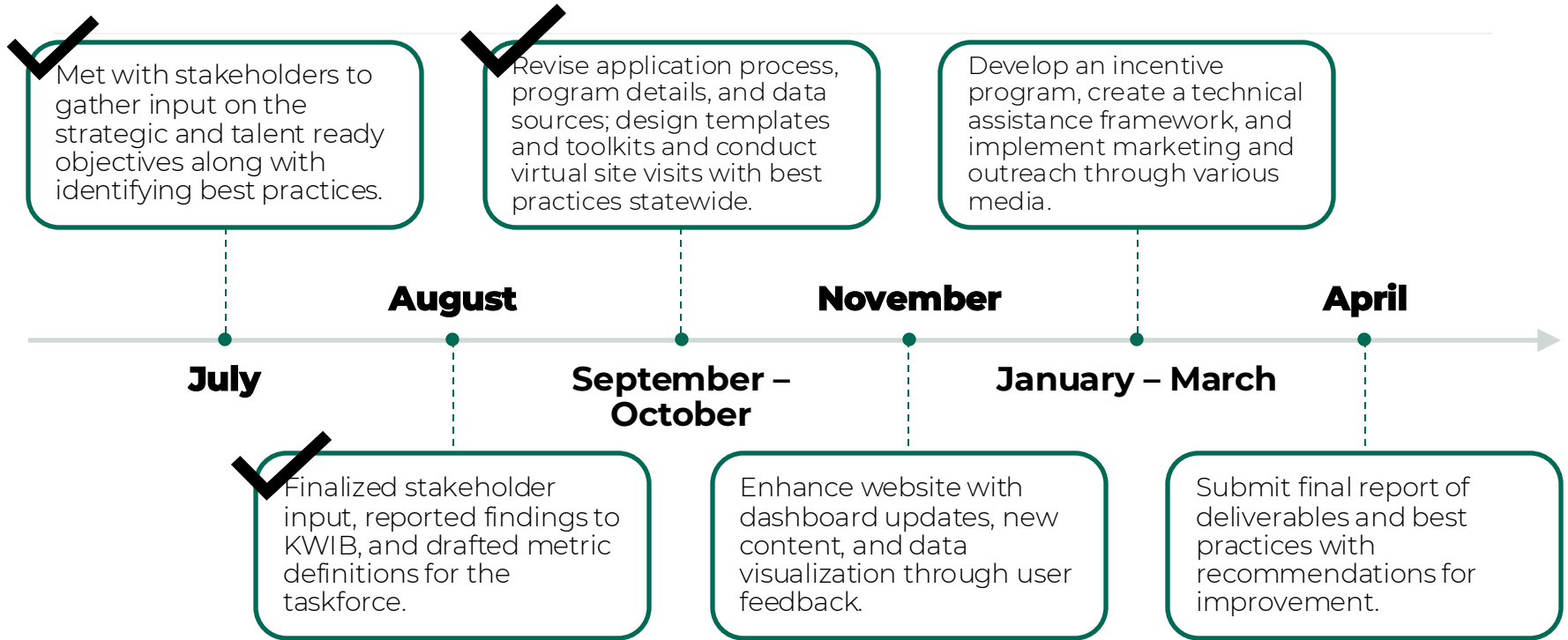
11:00 ADJOURNMENT

Meeting Schedule:

- First Wednesday of the Month at 9:30 ET
- Next Meeting: December 3, 2025

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation

Timeline



Next Steps

- Finalize website updates with new content and data visualization.
- Demo the application for usability with some volunteers

Have comments, questions, or suggestions? Send feedback to Sara Tracey and Jess Fortner.

stracey@tpma-inc.com

jfortner@tpma-inc.com

Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics and Scoring

The Work Ready Communities: Next Generation Metrics use a scoring system to assess regional workforce readiness. Each category is worth up to three points: **1 = Not Work Ready, 2 = In Progress, 3 = Work Ready.**

General Considerations

- Regions must score 8–15 to be rated In Progress and 16–24 to be rated Work Ready.
- Regions scoring 21 and below will be eligible to receive technical assistance and coaching.
- In Progress: Requires at least one letter of partnership, MOU, or other agreement showing collaboration.
- Work Ready: Requires multiple agreements across sectors (employer, education, nonprofit).
- To maintain certification, regions must show progress on at least one quantitative metric such as participation, completions, or housing units added.

Objectives	Description	Quantitative Metrics	Qualitative /Narrative Questions	Scoring Recommendations + Notes
Strategic Objective 1: Supply and Demand of Regional Skills	How are communities addressing local talent supply and employment demands? What strategic efforts are being made to meet the needs/goals of the industry through an aligned education vision? What are the strategies to meet the local in-demand industries as defined by Local Workforce Development Boards?	Core Demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 5 industries (by # of jobs) • Top 5 occupations (by # of jobs) in your workforce area Supply <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of residents earning CTE Pathways or Credentials in key industries • # of training/ education programs + # of graduates annually related to top industries and occupations. 	Core How does your Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB) work with employers, job seekers, and partners to meet the needs of local in-demand industries? Is there a formalized public-private partnership to address industry-specific workforce needs? How does your region ensure educators are responsive to industry needs? Explain strategies in place to address mismatches where supply	Not Work Ready: No evidence of strategic alignment between workforce, education, and industry. Residents are not earning relevant credentials or enrolling in relevant pathways. In Progress: Workforce Board and education providers have engaged industry, and relevant training programs are in place or under development. Credentialed talent is growing yet supply lags employer demand. Work Ready: One or more sector partnerships (or similar public-private collaboratives) exist in top industries. Region has strategies addressing industry alignment and demand for skilled talent. Metrics indicate residents are upskilling/reskilling as industry demands.

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			does not meet demand. Identify the top 5 skills employers are looking for.	
<p>Evidence: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Advisory Council Minutes, Strategic Plan, Perkins Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment, Local Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) plan</p> <p>Potential Data Source: Kentucky Center for Statistics (KYSTATS)</p>				
<p>Strategic Objective 2: Growing Talent Pools</p>	<p>Does the community have awareness and engagement of all the non-profit organizations targeting untapped talent pools (individuals with disabilities, veterans, immigrants/ refugees, ex-offenders and those in recovery seeking second chances, foster youth, those who are hungry, etc.)? What are the strategic coordination efforts being made to create pipelines into employment? Kentucky's Workforce Pipeline can be used as a guide to potential talent.</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall labor force participation rate <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of non-profit organizations serving [untapped population] and providing training/ employment related services (e.g., KY Valor) 	<p>Describe your region's collaborative efforts to grow the talent pool by engaging untapped populations and the organizations that serve them. What measurable outcomes is your region tracking and what are the results? Describe how local employers are being engaged/educated to expand willingness to hire untapped populations. Describe which untapped populations are being prioritized and qualitatively assess progress in employment outcomes, barriers addressed, and partnerships developed.</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: Region does not have a strategy to create pipelines into employment. Non-profit organizations serving untapped talent populations are not active in the region.</p> <p>In Progress: Region is able to describe collaborative efforts or strategies in place to increase labor force participation in at least one key population, but results are not available or measured to date.</p> <p>Work Ready: Overall labor force participation is at or above 60%. Region has clear, collaborative strategy for increasing labor force participation in at least two key populations and measurable results of pipeline development are available.</p>

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Evidence: MOU, hiring policy updates, public investments, grant reporting documents				
Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, training program enrollment and completion data, LWDB, Kentucky Community Technical College System (KCTCS)				
Strategic Objective 3: Work-Based Learning	What strategies are used to grow skills and fill employment needs through the various work-based learning opportunities, such as career exploration, internships, co-ops, registered apprenticeships, on-the-job training, etc.?	Core <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Work Based Learning (WBL) programs available (including paid internships, co-ops, registered apprenticeships) • # of employers participating in WBL programs • # of registered apprentices + # of registered apprenticeships completed annually Optional: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average # of WBL hours HS graduates or CTE students complete annually • % of WBL participants earning an industry-recognized credential or certificate 	What is your region's approach to work-based learning at the high school, post-secondary, and adult/workforce development levels? What partners are involved in promoting, coordinating, and/or delivering WBL? What support is available to employers that are interested in creating or expanding WBL programs? Does the region have a system to track WBL opportunities, participation, and outcomes?	Not Work Ready: Region does not have a WBL strategy in place; WBL that is available is not coordinated or measured reliably. In Progress: Region has at least one coordinated WBL initiative (e.g., expanding registered apprenticeship, required high school internships, etc.). Work Ready: Region has WBL options available for adults and students at all levels; significant coordination between workforce system and employers is evident. 80% or more WBL participants earn an industry-recognized credential or certificate.
Evidence: MOU, Employer participation list				
Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, KCTCS				

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<p>Talent Ready Objective 1: Childcare</p>	<p>What is the existing landscape of access and affordability, and what strategies are being taken to address the needs of the community? Data and strategy can include utilizing KYSTATs (kystats.ky.gov/Reports/Reports) capacity data and services offered by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Education.</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of licensed childcare settings within a 10 and 20 minute drive • # of Early Childhood workers in the region • Average cost of childcare (as compared to average income in the region) <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of workers who remain in the field year-over-year, to capture sustainability of workforce supply • # of early childhood registered apprentices 	<p>How does your region ensure the availability and affordability of childcare for working parents? Are there strategies in place (such as apprenticeships and credential pathways) to grow and retain the early childhood workforce? What strategies are in place or in development to address the barriers to affordable childcare? How do local employers contribute to the solution? Describe the transportation services available for childcare, including morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up (e.g., buses, vans, car riders).</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: Metrics indicate insufficient childcare providers (business and/or individual workers) and unclear plans to address the shortage.</p> <p>In Progress: Metrics indicate gaps in childcare availability or affordability, but one or more collaborative strategies are in place/in development to address the gap.</p> <p>Work Ready: Metrics indicate adequate availability of providers/workers, or the region has a coordinated strategy to recruit and retain providers. At least 60% of childcare workers remain in the field year-over-year. Region shows evidence of employer support (e.g., on-site childcare, financial support).</p>
<p>Evidence: ECCAP agreements, Retention and recruitment strategy, Collaborative Agreements, Apprenticeship enrollment and completion data,</p> <p>Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, Childcare Aware Market Report</p>				
<p>Talent Ready Objective 2: Affordable Housing</p>	<p>What kind of housing trends are seen in the community (for example, the number of units being added annually) and what strategies are utilized to meet the demand? How are communities addressing affordable housing? Data gathering</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % change in housing stock year-over-year [% change=(Previous Year Units - Current Year Units /Previous Year Units) ×100] • Median housing costs for renters/owners • % of residents who are cost burdened (>30% of gross income; significant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your region's efforts to ensure affordable housing is available for all residents. What strategies are in place or in development to encourage home ownership (e.g., home repair or preservation funds, home 	<p>Not Work Ready: Metrics indicate insufficient housing availability or a majority of residents experience significant cost burdens (≥50% of gross income). Housing quality concerns are widespread or unaddressed.</p> <p>In Progress: Metrics indicate gaps in housing availability, affordability (30–50% cost burden), or quality, but programs are in development to address those gaps.</p>

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	could incorporate the local energy companies to gauge growth by understanding new meters added.	<p>cost burden defined as >50% of gross income)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing vacancy rates 	<p>maintenance courses)? Does the community offer rental assistance or other transitional/ supportive services for low-income residents, through a housing authority or other partners? If housing availability is a concern, are there incentives available for developers? Are zoning laws/planning rules friendly to new unit development (e.g., reduced parking requirements, flexible lot sizes)? How is the community addressing the quality of available housing stock (rehabilitation programs, inspections, code enforcement)? (Optional) Provide an evaluation of housing quality (e.g., age of stock, code compliance, rehabilitation needs)</p>	<p>Work Ready: Metrics indicate housing is widely available, affordable (significant portion of residents spend <30% of gross income on housing), and of acceptable quality. The region has a strategic plan to maintain adequate stock for population and employer growth.</p>
<p>Evidence: Developer agreements, nonprofit or community development reports</p> <p>Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, American Community Survey (ACS)</p>				

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<p>Talent Ready Objective 3: Transportation</p>	<p>What are the strategies used to grow transportation access and infrastructure to meet community and business needs? Can communities quantify the demand for transportation?</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average cost of commuting relative to household income • Average commuting distance/time • # of residents commuting in/out of region for work <p>Optional:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of individuals using public transportation daily/weekly • # of registered vehicle owners (as compared to # of working age population) • # of bus stops/transit stops • # of micro-transit or community-based transportation programs available 	<p>Describe how your region is addressing/planning to address transportation demand and barriers? How do key employers in your region support workers' transportation needs? If public transportation is available, how does coverage compare to workers' needs (e.g., do buses run for 3rd shift workers? How far do individuals have to travel to reach a bus stop?)? Are there non-profit or private companies offering micro-transit options? What transportation supports are available for workers with disabilities?</p>	<p>Not Work Ready: Metrics indicate that residents are spending significant time and/or money on their daily commute (as compared to household income), and no plans are in place to address the disparity.</p> <p>In Progress: Metrics indicate gaps in transportation availability or affordability, but the region has plans in place or in development to improve infrastructure, availability, or assistance.</p> <p>Work Ready: Metrics indicate transportation is adequate and affordable in the region and/or strategies and initiatives are in place to improve infrastructure, availability, or assistance. Public-private partnerships and employer assistance are evident. Average cost of commuting is less than 20% of household income.</p>
<p>Evidence: Employer and Transportation MOU, Survey data</p> <p>Potential Data Source: KYSTATS, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KTC) Datamart, ACS</p>				
<p>Talent Ready Objective 4: Digital Access & Broadband Infrastructure</p>	<p>What is the internet availability across their rural and urban centers? Does a community have a digital access plan or strategy to ensure access for all?</p>	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of residents with access to broadband at home • % of region covered by broadband access • Speed of broadband access (% of residents who can access top speed) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe your region's digital access plan or strategy to ensure broadband access for all. Describe opportunities available to learn digital literacy skills (in person, virtual, hybrid, instructor led or student led) 	<p>Not Work Ready: Significant portion of region does not have broadband access or public Wi-Fi available. No digital equity plan in place. No structured digital literacy programs are in place.</p> <p>In Progress: Coverage is available in most areas, but gaps remain in speed, affordability, or rural access. Public Wi-Fi is accessible for residents without reliable home service. A digital access plan is in development or has only recently been</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # digital literacy programs offered annually <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of public facilities with free Wi-Fi available to residents 		<p>adopted. Digital literacy programs are available but not yet widely accessible.</p> <p>Work Ready: Broadband access and high-speed coverage are widely available across the region (90% of households or more have broadband access, 50% or more at top speeds), with affordability and rural access barriers being actively addressed. A comprehensive digital access plan is in place and being implemented. Residents of all working ages have access to coordinated in-person digital literacy programs.</p>
<p>Evidence: Digital Access Plan, Provider service map, Broadband coverage maps, MOU or partnership agreements, Digital Literacy program completion</p> <p>Data Source: KYSTATS, Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Map</p>				
Talent Ready Objective 5: Talent Attraction	What strategies are being used to actively attract talent locally or regionally? Are these strategies aligning with business demand?	<p>Core</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % population growth (working age) Cost of living (as compared to nearest MSA) Labor force participation by age <p>Optional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Web and social media traffic related to talent attraction campaigns # of inquiries, relocations, or event participation linked to campaigns. 	Describe your region's efforts to attract new residents. Is there an individual or organization dedicated to talent attraction and community development? Does the region have a marketing or social media strategy, and if so, how is it measured? Do strategies align with business needs? How do local business needs inform strategies?	<p>Not Work Ready: Region does not have a strategy for attracting new talent. Population growth is stagnant or decreasing.</p> <p>In Progress: Region is developing a strategy for attracting new talent or has recently launched a strategy, but results are not evident to date. Population growth is stagnant or decreasing.</p> <p>Work Ready: Region has coordinated talent attraction strategy with demonstrated results such as increase in working-age labor force participation and tax revenue.</p>
<p>Evidence: Cost of living index, website analytics (heat map), marketing and branding materials, surveys</p> <p>Data Source: KYSTATS, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Cost of Living Calculations</p>				



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Input was provided from the following stakeholders: KWIB Taskforce, Workforce Boards, Economic Developers, Industry – Employers, KY Chamber of Commerce, KDE/CTE, KY Association of School Superintendents, KY Community and Technical Colleges, KY Council of Economic Developers, KY League of Cities, KY Transportation Cabinet, KY Housing Corporation, former Executive Director of the KY Housing Corporation, KY Office of Early Childhood, and KY Office of Broadband Development