

Summary Notes
Work2future Community Input Meetings
September 30, 2024

Overview

The City of San José Office of Economic Development San José Silicon Valley Workforce Development Board, work2future, conducted two community input meetings on September 30, 2024 in preparation for its solicitation for proposals from qualified organizations to provide Adult/Dislocated Worker and Youth Services within its local service delivery area. The meetings were open to all members of the public, including current and prospective partners, current and former clients, and community-based organizations. Twenty people attended the first afternoon meeting; 6 people attended the second evening meeting.

Both meetings followed the same format, consisting of a high-level overview of the meeting purposes, participant and staff introductions, a brief presentation on the RFP (Request for Proposals) and work2future services, and a facilitated discussion to collect input from the participants.

The facilitated discussion was structured around the following questions:

1. How did (can) work2future help you? What was (or will be) most effective about the services they provided?
2. What could be improved? What can work2future do differently to better serve you?
3. What recommendations do you have to help work2future leverage its strengths and address areas for improvement?

The summary below documents the results of the facilitated discussion in terms of the key points that emerged in response to the three questions that were asked. It should be noted that participants in both meetings asked several questions to learn about work2future's operations and services, all of which were answered by staff. So while the meetings fulfilled the primary purpose of collecting input, they also served an education function by informing participants about the organization.

What is Most Effective about the Services Provided?

- Career Counselors/Individualized Services
 - Help with resume building
 - Help with job exploration, postings, and placement
- Trainings and Workshops
 - No cost; free
 - The process for getting training approval is smooth and efficient

- Employment Services
 - Partnering with the Bill Wilson Center to streamline the process and develop onsite employment model
 - More people now employed than prior years
- Job Fairs with San Jose City College
 - Impactful and successful events (e.g. networking, resume submissions)
 - Good collaboration between work2future, organizations/recruiters and SJCC
- Outreach Plan
 - Increased outreach to new people and locations that have not normally been represented
- Youth Involvement and Participation
 - Providing youth with more hands-on experiences
 - Potential leadership opportunities
 - Improved youth metrics and feedback on barriers to employment

What are Areas for Improvement?

- Serving Vulnerable Community Members
 - Increase focus and services on DEI, LGBTQ and homeless community members; people with mental health issues; people with disabilities (i.e. ADA compliance); and seniors who face discriminatory ageism

[Note: Staff informed participants that work2future is not authorized per WIOA or have the jurisdiction to assist all of the vulnerable community members and enforce the discriminatory practices identified above. Instead, the organization provides referrals to allied organizations, groups, service providers and government agencies to assist clients.]
- CalJOBS
 - Website is difficult to navigate and use
 - System can be a barrier for clients
- Staff Customer Service and Responsiveness
 - One client reported that their calls for assistance were not returned

What Recommendations do You Suggest?

- Marketing and Outreach
 - Ensure clients know about the supportive services that are available, and how to access them (e.g. bus passes, access to computers and printers at the Job Center)

- Job Fairs
 - Enable job providers to conduct onsite, pre-screening interviews
 - Have companies send managers and supervisors, not just recruiters
 - Partner with Indeed and Monster Jobs to host job fairs
 - Have name tags
 - Ensure adequate parking and air conditioning
- Produce Documents and Forms in Multiple Languages
 - To better serve non-native English language clients
- Increase Focus on Networking and Volunteering
 - work2future hosts a networking event
 - Develop a new workshop on “How to Network”
 - Provide listings for volunteer opportunities in the community
- Expand Job Opportunities
 - Continue placement for blue-collar jobs and entry-level positions, and expand to white-collar jobs and senior-level positions
 - Seek out companies that provide apprenticeships and job shadowing opportunities
 - Avoid or de-emphasize companies that pay on commission
- Improve or Develop Alternatives to CalJOBS
 - Provide better guidance and tips for clients on how to use the site
 - Improve mobile functionality
 - Direct clients to alternative job sites
 - work2future develops its own website for the service area, enabling job providers to upload listings
- Balance Empowering Clients with Assisting Them
 - Continue to assist clients throughout the process, from orientation to follow through
 - And, empower clients, coaching them to be proactive advocates on their own behalf