

Jobs, Talent, and People Workgroup

Talent Attraction and Retention Draft Recommendations

The Growing Michigan Together Council (GMTC) was established by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer as an effort to address the state's stagnating population. The GMTC has four workgroups charged with crafting recommendations that address four key areas relevant to population growth: Jobs, Talent, and People; Infrastructure and Places; Higher Education; and Pre-K–12 Education. Workgroups will craft and propose recommendations for full council approval. Recommendations should help make Michigan more prosperous and increase the state's population by 2050.

Michigan had the weakest population growth of all U.S. states between 2000 and 2020. For more than five decades, our stagnant population has lost the state several seats within the United States House of Representatives and will continue to diminish our influence over time if our population does not grow. If Michigan's population growth is not addressed, the state will begin to lose population, resulting in lower tax revenue and a lower quality of life for Michigan residents. The Jobs, Talent, and People workgroup is tasked with crafting recommendations that target talent attraction and retention. Talent attraction and retention recommendations are important for increasing the number of people migrating to and staying in Michigan. Preliminary recommendations were gathered from the survey distributed to workgroup members and refined below.

Entrepreneur and Small-business Supports

- Provide better capital access that will generate new business startups for those in targeted demographic groups.
- Require education in small-business development programming that will ensure success and create an entrepreneurial middle class.
- Create rural water authorities to ensure that resources are available to create or upgrade water systems. This should have a lower barrier to entry than the state water revolving loan funds.
- A similar investment in internet infrastructure would assist in areas where new entrepreneurial startups could occur.

Housing and Other Supports

- Create first-time home buyer programs that are supplied by lending institutions.
- Create strategically placed housing for migrant and summer workers.
- Expand access to affordable housing by expanding the Housing and Community Development Fund and improving the Housing Choice Voucher program:
 - Prohibit housing discrimination based on source of income (disability or veterans benefits, vouchers, etc.).
- Provide universal child care.
- Provide access to universal family and medical leave.
- Implement robust language access programs.

Policies, Programs, and Incentives

- Provide government-financed relocation incentives to attract young people and domestic and international migrants to Michigan.
 - Funding would help defray housing cost.
 - Incentives and welfare assistance for immigrants that move to Michigan.
- Provide incentives for graduates who join high-growth industries and stay in Michigan.
- Strengthen partnerships between the state and organizations working on attraction and retention.
- Eliminate out-of-state tuition rates to grow enrollment.
- Increase funding for job training programs.
- Improve regulations to better and more quickly permit use of our natural resources to be part of job opportunities that center sustainability and climate.
- Implement strategies that target investments by region to communities that are best suited for those opportunities.

Workgroup Meeting Recommendations

- Look at funding formula for public universities to discern whether it provides additional funding for retaining students for at least five years after graduation.
- Examine Israel's Start-Up Nation Central as an extraordinary example to model.
- Invest in creating different spaces for different groups to feel welcomed.
- Develop rapid response marketing focused on addressing emerging international and domestic opportunities and mitigating internal challenges.
- Deploy supports that are right sized for the technical assistance needs of micro businesses versus small businesses (e.g., language services to support non-English-speaking entrepreneurs).
- Consider aggressively growing programs like the global entrepreneur in residence program, which isn't limited to the H-1B visa cap and allows us to pair foreign-born founders with universities to launch their startups here.