



ONE REGION

A GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY

STRATEGY EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

May 23, 2016



PROJECT PARTNERS

This One Region Strategic Plan was developed by Avalanche Consulting and McCallum Sweeney Consulting in partnership with the Charleston Regional Development Alliance, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and community stakeholders.



Charleston Regional Development Alliance

The Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA) serves as a catalyst for long-term regional prosperity by attracting the world's best companies, talent, and entrepreneurs. CRDA is organized as a public/private corporation supported and led by the region's most influential business leaders, three county governments, the largest municipalities, and top academic institutions.



Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce

The Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce serves as an advocate for a healthy business climate and is committed to advancing our region's economy and supporting our member businesses through work in areas such as infrastructure and talent development, military retention, innovation and entrepreneurship, and economic development.



Community Stakeholders

Development of this report and the One Region Strategy has involved face-to-face discussions with more than 250 local stakeholders as well as the One Region Steering Committee. Additionally, 520 stakeholders completed the online survey and shared their perspectives on the current well-being of the region and its future opportunities.



Avalanche Consulting

Avalanche Consulting is the nation's premier economic development strategist. The firm is deeply driven to make a positive impact and seeks clients who are equally inspired to energize their economies. Since it was established in 2005, Avalanche Consulting has provided strategic planning, research, and marketing assistance to more than 100 communities.



McCallum Sweeney Consulting

McCallum Sweeney Consulting (MSC) provides site selection and incentives negotiation services to leading companies worldwide. MSC brings experience, commitment, integrity, and leading-edge technology to our clients in helping them make the best, and most informed, location decisions.

ABOUT THE ONE REGION STRATEGY

The One Region Global Competitiveness Strategy involves three interrelated phases. The first phase, Competitive Assessment, provides a comprehensive analysis of eight critical dynamics of community well-being that contribute to the economic dynamism of the region – affordability, quality of place, infrastructure, talent, innovation and entrepreneurship, equity, global fluency, and economic momentum. The second phase, High Impact Cluster Validation, identifies the high impact industry clusters that, with nourishment, will be the drivers of future regional prosperity. This third and final phase of the Strategy recommends a holistic approach to being a globally competitive place where people and businesses flourish.

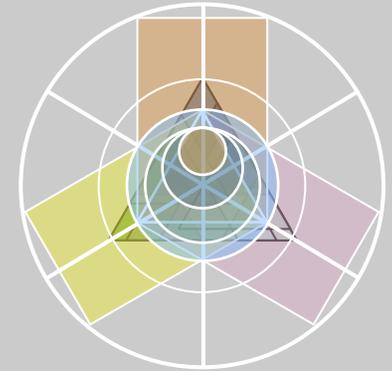
The One Region Strategy itself was initiated by regional stakeholders' desire to build a broader, more inclusive, more dynamic approach to being a more globally competitive place. It inherently reflects a commitment to regionalism – a willingness to set aside differences and work together to stand out on the national and international stage.

A Framework for a Living, Adaptable Approach

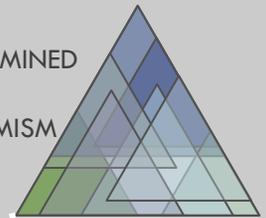
To plan as “one” requires a more inclusive and holistic approach, engaging a broad diversity of perspectives to share ideas on how to make the region more globally competitive. One tenet of this Strategy is that being globally competitive requires the region to invest in itself as much as it promotes to the outside world. The region's economy is strong. To continue that tremendous momentum, it is essential that the region also address the challenges that come with fast-paced job creation. Addressing challenges now ensures that those challenges do not derail economic momentum in the future. It also places the region on the track of accomplishing its vision of being a truly global community, embodying attributes of the world's most compelling places.

The framework of this strategy is as important as its individual recommendations. Four shared, regional values form the foundation of this strategy. The values should transcend time – they should not change as the region progresses. The values are supported by specific goals and actions that are relevant today. Goals and actions can be updated as they are completed and new opportunities arise. This values-based framework allows adaptability while ensuring that the region is thinking as “one.” As long as the actions of individuals and organizations in the region reinforce the region's values, momentum will continue.

ONE REGION PLANNING PROCESS



PHASE 1:
THE COMPETITIVE ASSESSMENT EXAMINED
EIGHT REGIONAL DYNAMICS THAT
CONTRIBUTE TO ECONOMIC DYNAMISM



PHASE 2:
THE HIGH IMPACT CLUSTER
VALIDATION INTEGRATES LOCAL
DYNAMICS WITH REGIONAL,
NATIONAL & GLOBAL TRENDS TO
IDENTIFY RELEVANT INDUSTRY
CLUSTERS AND THE ECOSYSTEMS
THAT SUPPORT THEM



PHASE 3:
THE GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY
PROVIDES A SERIES OF STRATEGIC
RECOMMENDATIONS THAT POSITIVELY
AFFECT REGIONAL DYNAMICS AND
GENERATE PROSPERITY FOR ALL





To act as a unified region to be a globally competitive place where people and businesses flourish.

On acting as a **globally competitive place**:

- We embrace values attributable to the most prosperous communities in the world.
- We are intentional in purpose so that the decisions we make today will enhance our ability to thrive in the future.

On acting as a **place where people and businesses flourish**:

- We are thoughtful in our investments so that businesses thrive while the things that make our region special are preserved.
- We embrace the understanding that there is an inextricable relationship between people and place, and businesses prosper the most in places with a strong quality of place and livability.
- We are committed to ensuring that no one is left behind as our region grows and that there are education and career opportunities for all residents.

“It’s time to shift and broaden the purpose and practice of economic development to generate continuous growth, prosperity, and inclusion.” *The Brookings Institution, 2016 Remaking Economic Development*



The development of the region's economy – which affects the ability of the region's residents to gain wealth, prosper, and have a high standard of living – ultimately depends on its global competitiveness. Being globally competitive, and relevant to the outside world, results in opportunities for all residents to create, to enjoy, to learn, and to be productive.

Part of being One Region and being globally competitive entails having a shared vocabulary to describe our vision and values so that we communicate with one another in a meaningful way. Many times, clear communications across various interests is as important as individual actions in determining a region's outcomes.

The One Region planning process has been deliberate with the words used to describe its intentions. We listened to stakeholders and tuned into vocabulary that resonates and inspires action. As this One Region Strategy is implemented, we encourage the region to incorporate this unified vocabulary into its day-to-day communications with one another.

Inclusive and Engaging – At the heart of One Region is the idea that this Strategy provides opportunities for all residents to participate in making the region more prosperous, and that actions taken to reinforce our regional values and achieve our goals depend on involvement by a wide diversity of people and organizations.

Deliberate and Intentional – Key to balancing the region's current economic momentum with sustaining its quality of place, our activities must be deliberate and intentional. We embrace the values of this Strategy and think before we act so we control the direction in which our region develops. **“Balanced” and “sustainable”** are important parts of our shared vernacular as well.

Nourish and Nurture – This Strategy expands the region's focus on building ecosystems of prosperity. These ecosystems require injections of innovation and investment to build our foundational assets and organizational support, thus creating an environment in which businesses thrive. The region agrees to work together to nourish and nurture cluster ecosystem development, implying an intentionality in approach.

Flourish, Prosper and Thrive – This One Strategy focuses on helping residents prosper, flourish and thrive, reinforcing the desire that economic growth is accompanied in-step with improvements in lifestyle amenities and career opportunities. This implies a focus on a more well-rounded approach.

REGIONAL DYNAMICS



Past successes bring new challenges, a lesson the Charleston region knows well. In the years since the global economic downturn, the Charleston region's economy has proven extraordinarily resilient. While job creation was the primary focus of the 2011 *Opportunity Next* strategy, today's discussions about regional competitiveness are more holistic in nature and include dynamics such as affordability, infrastructure, momentum, equity, innovation, quality of place, talent, and global fluency. These eight regional dynamics and their relationships to each other are explored in-depth in the Phase 1 *Competitive Assessment* report. The high impact clusters identified in the Phase 2 report were selected in part because of their capacity to positively influence one or more regional dynamic.

The regional dynamics also influenced the tenets of this One Region Strategy. There is a thread among regional dynamics and the region's forward direction. To be a globally competitive place, the region's actions must consider the interrelationship between many different community dynamics and their impact on the region's prosperity.



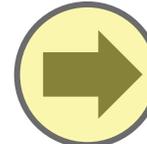
Infrastructure



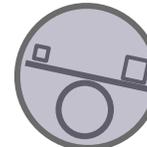
Talent



Affordability



Momentum



Equality & Equity



Innovation &
Entrepreneurship



Quality of Place



Global Fluency

ONE REGION HIGH IMPACT CLUSTERS



AEROSPACE

Civilian Aircraft OEM
Aircraft Parts Manufacturing
Composite Materials
Aerospace IT

AUTOMOTIVE

Automotive OEM Support
Automobile Parts Manufacturing
Automotive IT
Automotive R&D

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Software Development
Digital Security
Aerospace, Automotive, Health &
Logistics IT
Web Design & Marketing
Big Data
Cloud Computing
Internet of Things
Civic IT

LIFE SCIENCES

Basic & Clinical Trials
Bioengineering
Medical Devices & Diagnostics
Informatics/Analytics/Health IT
Telemedicine
Environmental & Marine
Research

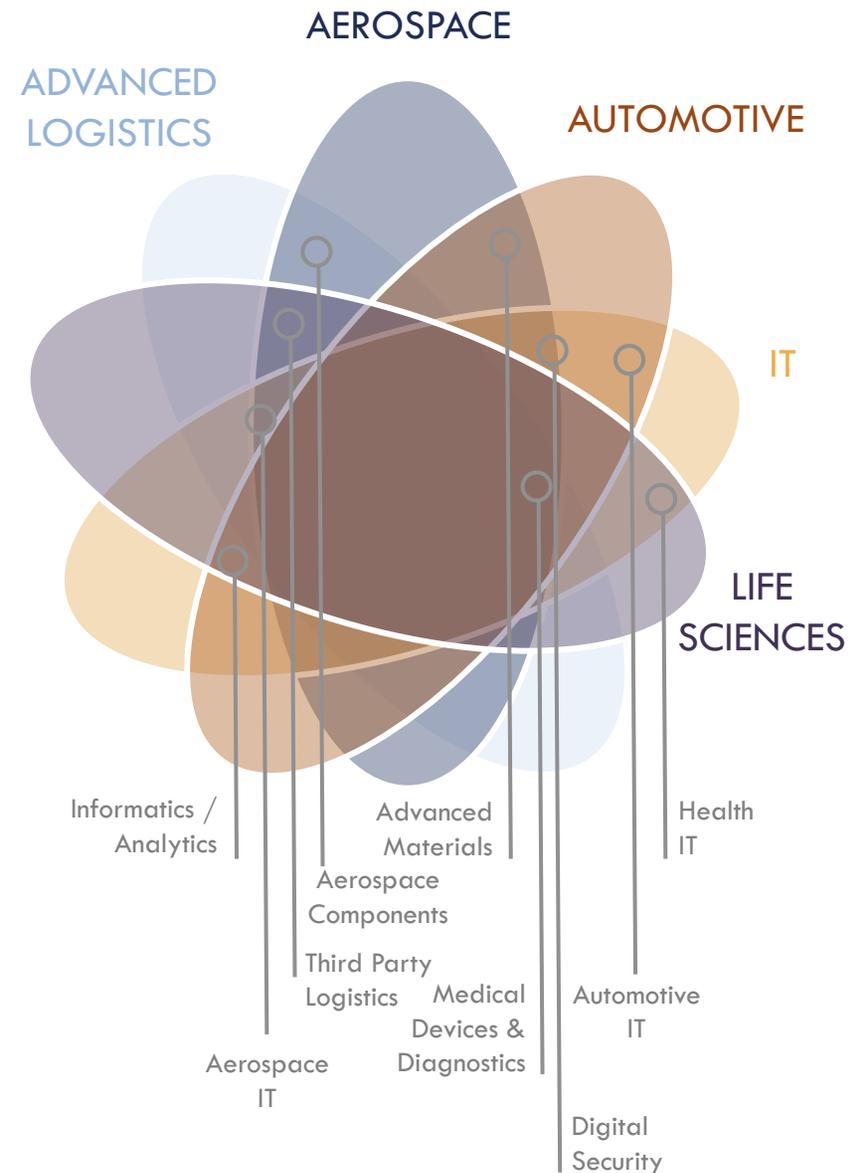
ADVANCED LOGISTICS

General Warehousing & Storage
Maritime Freight
Third Party Logistics
Cold Storage
Logistics Corporate HQs
Logistics IT

LONG TERM OPPORTUNITY*

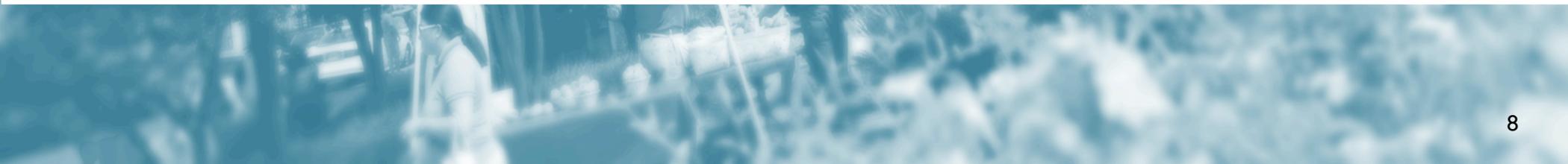
Back Office
Corporate Headquarters

**While not an industry cluster,
office operations present a high-
impact opportunity for the region*





ONE REGION VALUES, GOALS AND ACTIONS



OUR SHARED VALUES

The following four regional values are the foundation of the One Region Global Competitiveness Strategy. Each value is complemented by three supporting goals.

Our region values a strong, resilient economy.

- Strengthen the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem.
 - Nourish the health of the region's existing businesses.
 - Target investments that will fuel the dynamism of the region's high impact cluster ecosystems.
-

Our region values attainable opportunities for all residents to live, learn and earn.

- Ensure all residents have access to high quality learning opportunities from Pre-K through higher education.
 - Align education with career pathways in support of the region's high impact clusters.
 - Adopt smart policies and practices across the region that ensure having a home is attainable for all.
-

Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.

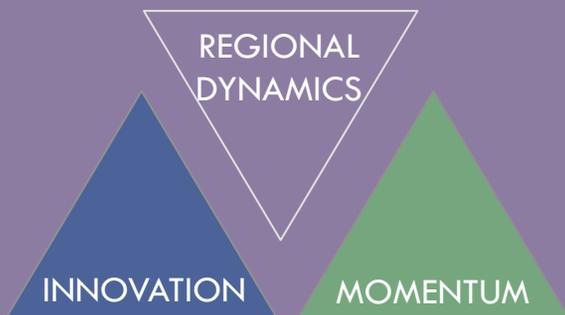
- Ensure that creative and cultural organizations can continue to prosper in the region.
 - Adopt a cohesive, regional approach to planning for the natural environment.
 - Focus employment centers in proximity to population centers.
-

Our region values being a connected community.

- Invest in infrastructure that connects the region in a balanced, efficient manner.
- Amplify our communications with each other and the rest of the world.
- Improve our region's understanding of and adaptability to global dynamics.

Our region values having a strong, resilient economy.

A strong, resilient economy includes foundational assets and organizations that ensure its businesses and cluster ecosystems thrive. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders echoed the value that they place on resilience, on being a place that remains healthy and strong throughout economic cycles. Innovation and momentum are central to this regional value.



Why is this value important?

Embracing the value of having a strong, resilient economy directly relates to the region's forward momentum, capacity for innovation, and entrepreneurial ecosystem. Expanding economic opportunities through starting businesses, expanding and retaining local businesses, and attracting new businesses are the staple ingredients of achieving economic prosperity.

Economic Momentum

A growing economy has helped the Charleston region reduce unemployment and increase household income, all while absorbing thousands of new residents. During the past five years, the Charleston region's gross domestic product has increased by nearly 25%, the unemployment rate has declined by nearly 4%, and household income has increased by more than 10%.

During the past five years, the Charleston region has enjoyed strong expansion in export activity and significant gains in local patent production. Between 2009 and 2014, the value of goods and services exported from the Charleston region tripled.

Continuing to have a vibrant, healthy economy involves strategic approaches to entrepreneurship, local business retention and expansion, and business attraction. All three of these important drivers of prosperity depend on the region's ability to address those regional dynamics that emerge with growth.

Innovation and Entrepreneurship

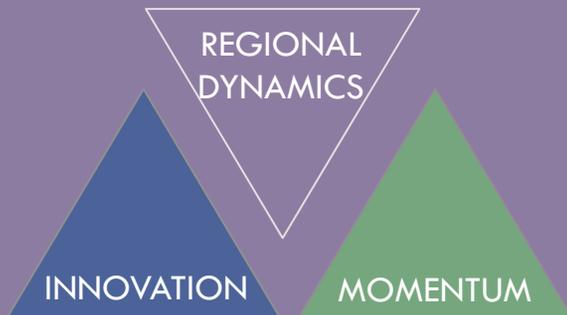
Local R&D expenditures are not translating into significant levels of patent production. Despite healthy levels of R&D expenditures by local universities, patent production remains relatively low, although improving.

The Charleston region has comparatively low levels of venture capital and science talent production. Unless STEM education capacity increases locally, the region's innovation-focused and entrepreneurial businesses will continue to depend on the attraction of these skills from outside of the region, which risks their growth potential.

The Charleston region has a shortage of office inventory. A lack of office inventory appears to be driving relatively high lease rates. Small businesses and fast growing startups alike are challenged to find real estate suitable to their needs and at a price they can afford.

Our region values having a strong, resilient economy.

A strong, resilient economy includes foundational assets and organizations that ensure its businesses and cluster ecosystems thrive. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders echoed the value that they place on resilience, on being a place that remains healthy and strong throughout economic cycles. Innovation and momentum are central to this regional value.



GOALS AND TOP LINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 1.1: Strengthen the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem.

- 1.1.1 Ensure that entrepreneurs and home-grown companies have access to suitable real estate.
- 1.1.2 Increase resources available for entrepreneurs, including capital, services, and infrastructure.
- 1.1.3 Continue to expand connectivity among entrepreneurs in the region and the US.
- 1.1.4 Improve collaboration with SCRA.

Goal 1.2: Nourish the health of the region's existing businesses.

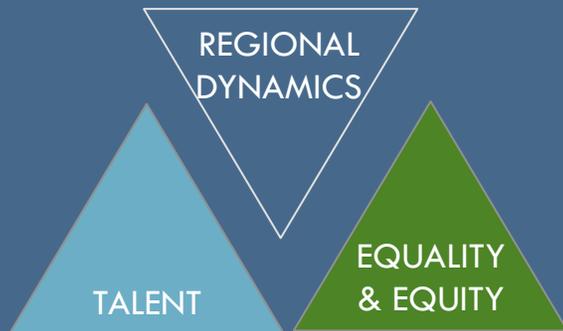
- 1.2.1 Adopt a shared BR&E approach in all three counties in the region.
- 1.2.2 Advocate for more business-friendly policies across the region.
- 1.2.3 Collaborate to retain and expand Joint Base Charleston and the major commands associated with it.

Goal 1.3: Target investments that will fuel the dynamism of the region's high impact cluster ecosystems.

- 1.3.1 Build awareness of the region among high impact cluster businesses.
- 1.3.2 Develop and promote foundational assets and enabling organizations that fuel high impact cluster ecosystems.

Our region values attainable opportunities for all residents to live, learn and earn.

Essential to being “One Region” is that economic prosperity leaves no one behind. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders voiced the value that they place on ensuring that *all residents* can attain education, career opportunities, and housing to improve their standard of living. Talent and affordability are central to this regional value.



Why is this value important?

The diligent work that has been underway in recent years to align education with the needs of business has made significant progress. These initiatives should continue and adjust to the High Impact Cluster report recommendations as well as the Talent Gap Analysis update that accompanies this One Region Strategy. Sustained economic momentum will continue to bring talent access to the forefront. In the next five years, the focus should intensify on talent alignment and building the workforce from within. Equity and equality should be top of mind, ensuring that the region acts together to provide opportunities for all residents to learn and plug into career pathways that support the region’s high impact clusters.

Talent

The Charleston region is well educated. Higher levels of educational attainment support higher wages, thus improving overall affordability. However, the region is heavily dependent on imported talent. Local talent production in the Charleston region is limited. Fortunately, the Charleston region is successful at attracting talent from other locales in the US. Maintaining the region’s high quality of place is critical in sustaining the region’s allure to outsiders.

Area schools are having positive outcomes, outperforming state and US averages on many metrics. Public schools in the Charleston region are well funded and SAT scores are rising. Both trends have contributed to high levels of post-secondary enrollment. Nearly 80% of high school students in the Charleston region enroll in either a technical school, 2-year, or 4-year college. Build on this progress to bring learning opportunities to residents who have been disengaged from the workforce.

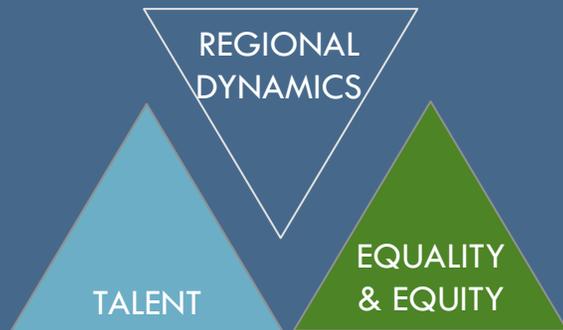
Equity and Equality

Significant differences in educational attainment among racial and ethnic groups lead to large variances in income, earnings, and poverty rates. African American and Hispanic residents in Charleston are significantly less likely than their White counterparts to graduate high school and obtain post-secondary degrees. Racial minorities and women are also much less likely to hold executive management in the region as compared to benchmark communities.

Related to this, is a growing gap between high earners and low earners. Wages for workers in the top 50% of earners saw their earnings increase at five times the rate of workers in the bottom 50% of earners between 2009 and 2014.

Our region values attainable opportunities for all residents to live, learn and earn.

Essential to being “One Region” is that economic prosperity leaves no one behind. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders voiced the value that they place on ensuring that *all residents* can attain education, career opportunities, and housing to improve their standard of living. Talent and affordability are central to this regional value.



GOALS AND TOP LINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 2.1: Ensure all residents have access to high quality learning opportunities from Pre-K through higher education.

2.1.1 Set a bold goal for increasing overall educational attainment for all residents.

2.1.2 Continue the region’s programs to expand educational offerings and improve educational outcomes.

2.1.3 Re-engage adult learners in the workforce. Fuel the talent pipeline with the region’s current residents.

2.1.4 Elevate awareness of education and career opportunities in the region using Charleston Regional Career Headlight.

2.1.5 Develop opportunities for minority residents to learn technology and entrepreneurial skills.

**Goal 2.2:
Continue to align education with career pathways in support of the region’s high impact clusters.**

2.2.1 Expand Trident Technical Colleges’ programs to support the region’s high impact clusters.

2.1.2 Continue to increase STEM-related programs and participation.

**Goal 2.3:
Adopt smart policies and practices across the region that ensure having a home is attainable for all.**

2.2.1 Adopt public policies that diversify the variety of and affordability of housing in the region.

2.3.2 Coordinate with organizations that are addressing regional dynamics such as housing, education, and access to health care.

Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.

The Charleston region's culture and natural environment are its most valuable assets. During the One Region planning process, stakeholders emphasized the value that they place on being intentional so that the things that make the region special are preserved even as economic momentum continues. Quality of place and affordability are influenced by this regional value.

Why is this value important?

Strong economic momentum has raised concerns across the region that growth will overrun the aspects of the region that make it unique. Sustainable growth is a topic on many minds, and the Competitive Assessment evaluation revealed that such concerns are valid, particularly as they relate to the region's quality of place and overall affordability. Economic momentum is threatened when the people and organizations that contribute so much to the region's character can no longer afford to be in the region. Locating in a quality place that appeals to talented individuals is of paramount importance to businesses. Diminishing the uniqueness of the region would have a direct impact on the region's ability to attract and retain employers.

Quality of Place

The competitive assessment examined a variety of quality of place indicators, including overall economic health, the outdoors, and arts and culture. (Quality of place truly affects every aspect of a community.)

The Charleston region has enjoyed strong employment growth during the past five years. Since 2009, the Charleston region has created approximately 35,000 jobs. High-quality jobs have also helped drive an increase in median household income levels. With that, development patterns have skewed toward more low-density development, resulting in greater automobile dependency and low levels of transit ridership. This pattern contributes to traffic congestion levels typically experienced by much larger regions, increasing residents' frustration levels and lowering their time available to enjoy the region's many amenities.

Young and educated workers are increasingly attracted to regions rich in both employment and cultural opportunities. Arts and culture are strong contributors to the fabric of the region, yet a comparison to benchmark regions shows that the region lags in NEA grant funding.

Affordability

Housing in the Charleston region is relatively expensive. The lack of affordable housing remains one of the most significant threats to the Charleston region's quality of place. Rising home prices are making it more difficult for many residents. Despite interest rates being near historic lows, the percentage of residents spending more than 30% of their incomes on housing is higher than many benchmark regions. This is due, in part, to a growing disconnect between population and employment growth within the region.



Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.

The Charleston region's culture and natural environment are its most valuable assets. During the One Region planning process, stakeholders emphasized the value that they place on being intentional so that the things that make the region special are preserved even as economic momentum continues. Quality of place and affordability are influenced by this regional value.

GOALS AND TOP LINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 3.1: Ensure that creative and cultural organizations can continue to prosper in the region long-term.

3.1.1 Adopt city resolutions to support the wellbeing of the Charleston region's cultural sectors.

3.1.2 Gather together cultural sector leaders to develop a roadmap for addressing affordability challenges.

Goal 3.2: Adopt a cohesive, regional approach to planning for the natural environment.

3.2.1 Develop a unified Regional Agenda / Regional Vision for conservation that is coordinated across all three counties.

Goal 3.3: Focus employment centers in proximity to population centers.

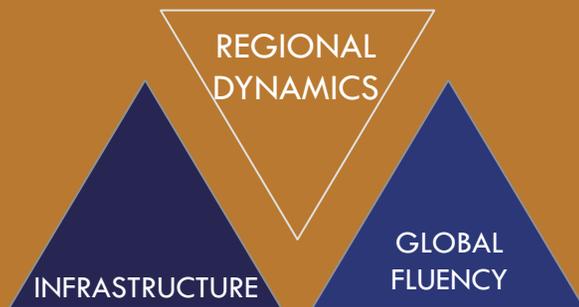
3.3.1 Ensure that local land use planning, zoning, and infrastructure investments entice commercial development near areas of regional population growth.

3.3.2 Consider One Region's values and high impact clusters when planning neighborhood revitalization initiatives.



Our region values being a connected community.

Acting as one unified region requires connectivity. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders discussed the value that they place on being better connected with one another and with the rest of the world. Physical infrastructure and global fluency are dynamics that affect this regional value.



Why is this value important?

Being a connected community expresses a desire to be better linked to and engaged with others. Connectivity can be improved with better physical infrastructure, more effective communications, and a willingness to embrace newcomers into the community. The Competitive Assessment and High Impact Clusters reports revealed that in order to be a globally competitive place and continue the region's momentum, the region should proactively address some emerging challenges.

Infrastructure

Charleston has the high traffic congestion of a much larger city but the infrastructure of a smaller city. Severe traffic congestion represents a significant threat to the region's quality of place and affordability, which also impacts talent availability. Congestion in Charleston is at least partially attributable to disproportionately high demand on its roadways. More than 80% of Charleston residents drive alone to work. Just 5% of workers telecommute. South Carolina's capacity to fund infrastructure improvements is limited. On a per capita basis, South Carolina generates low levels of motor fuel tax revenues. Furthermore, these revenues are declining in real terms.

Global Fluency

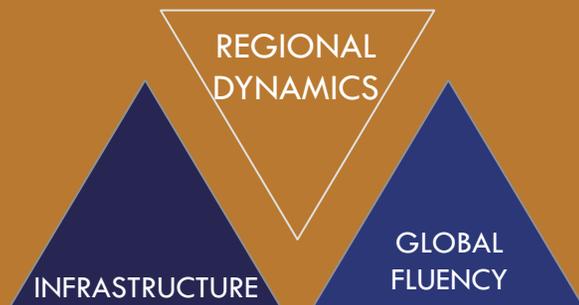
Economically, the Charleston region is deeply integrated with the rest of the world. The region is home to a large number of foreign-owned companies and a booming export base. More than 7% of workers in the Charleston region are employed in foreign-owned establishments. During the past five years, the value of exports from the Charleston region have increased by more than 300%, a significant percentage.

Demographically, the Charleston region's international character is far more limited. Fewer than 5% of residents in the Charleston region are foreign-born. In other communities such as Austin, Seattle, Salt Lake City, and Raleigh, foreign-born residents represent more than 10% of the population.

Businesses and talent alike are drawn to regions with diversity and international flavor. The greater the understanding of and response to the expectations of the global marketplace, the better able the region will be to continue its economic momentum and support the international firms that call the region home.

Our region values being a connected community.

Acting as one unified region requires connectivity. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders discussed the value that they place on being better connected with one another and with the rest of the world. Physical infrastructure and global fluency are dynamics that affect this regional value.



GOALS AND TOP LINE RECOMMENDATIONS

Goal 4.1: Invest in infrastructure that connects the region in a balanced, efficient manner.

4.1.1 Continue advocating for improvements to the region's roadways and relief of traffic congestion.

4.1.2 Involve the region's Aerospace, Automotive, and IT leaders in thinking futuristically about the region's transportation infrastructure.

4.1.3 Encourage the region's businesses to adopt flexible work schedules and reward employees who carpool, ride share, and use public transit.

4.1.4 Anticipate and address broadband needs across the region.

4.1.5 Complete the deepening of the harbor so that the Port of Charleston can attract larger post-Panamax ships even during changes in tidal conditions.

4.1.6 Continue expanding the Charleston International Airport's facilities and flight services.

Goal 4.2:

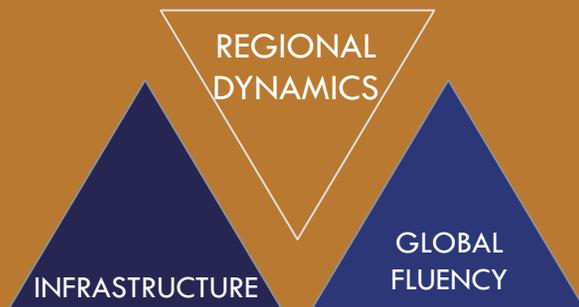
Amplify our communications with each other and the rest of the world.

4.2.1 Achieve a more inclusive, unified "voice" reflective of One Region's values and objectives.

4.2.2 Strengthen external awareness of the Charleston region's values and assets.

Our region values being a connected community.

Acting as one unified region requires connectivity. Throughout the One Region planning process, stakeholders discussed the value that they place on being better connected with one another and with the rest of the world. Physical infrastructure and global fluency are dynamics that affect this regional value.



GOALS AND TOP LINE RECOMMENDATIONS, CONTINUED

Goal 4.3:

Improve our region's understanding of and adaptability to global dynamics.

4.3.1 Establish an International Business Council.

4.3.2 Establish hospitality programs and other services to help international workers smoothly transition into the region.

4.3.3 Develop cultural sensitivity training programs.

4.3.4 Ensure that the region's K12 schools meet the expectations of families moving into the region from other countries.

4.3.5 Increase the pursuit of Foreign Direct Investment and international mergers and acquisitions.

ACTIVATING ONE REGION: EMBRACING “ONE”

One Set of Shared Values

One Region represents the progression of thinking and acting regionally. It calls on stakeholders in all three counties to embrace the regional values that form the foundation of this Global Competitiveness Strategy. Values should transcend political lines.

One Shared Leadership Voice

The One Region planning process illuminated the interrelationship between eight regional dynamics that might otherwise be seen as standalone issues. Viewing the region through this lens makes it even more important that the region have a unified leadership voice on issues, and that the voice be inclusive of a variety of perspectives. Add more seats to the table to amplify the region’s message. When advocating for change that will positively affect one of the region’s dynamics (for example, infrastructure), invite organizations and individuals associated with related dynamics to participate (for example, affordability and equity & equality). Uniting seemingly unrelated perspectives together to speak out on behalf of change – all using the same datasets to support their perspective – will make a much more powerful impact.

One Region Task Force

The One Region planning process engaged hundreds of stakeholders from across the three counties in the region. Leading the charge was the One Region Advisory Group. Successfully achieving One Region’s goals depends on the combined force of initiatives and activities of the Advisory Group members and others. To keep one another informed of progress and to better coordinate activities, establish a Task Force dedicated to monitoring (and championing) One Region.

One Region Compact

Gaining support for this unified, regional strategy should begin by asking stakeholders for a simple commitment to reinforce One Region values in their own activities. Develop a simple compact for stakeholders to sign agreeing to the shared One Region values and committing to at least one One Region initiative over the next five years. Make the Compact readily available across the region.

ACTIVATING ONE REGION: EMBRACING “ONE”

One Region Public and Economic Policy Institute

Our extensive best practice research of other high-performing regions show that they all have one thing in common – they agree as a region to base decisions on real research and data, not conjecture. Establish a Public and Economic Policy Institute. The Institute will serve as a one-stop-shop repository of information. Whether it’s a CEO leadership group, local elected officials, or issues-focused volunteer organizations, having a shared set of research will ensure that decisions are based on the same foundation. Their approach to solving problems may differ, but sharing a foundation of information will increase the likelihood that decisions move the region forward in the same direction.

Charleston Young Professionals: Generation One Region

The One Region planning process included a series of sessions with Charleston Young Professionals (CYP) to hear their desires for the region that is theirs to inherit. In fact, many of the recommendations in this strategy reflect their input. Young professionals from all three counties must continue to be engaged in the One Region initiative. This is a transformative time for the region, and it needs the energy and creativity of young people to drive One Region forward. Share the One Region Strategy with CYP and empower them to take ownership.

One Region Award

Recognize and reward individuals and organizations whose actions advance One Region. Consider adding a One Region Award to annual events like the Charleston Metro Chamber’s Honors Night, or recognize One Region supporters at monthly Business After Hours networking events, such as the ones hosted by the Greater Summerville / Dorchester County Chamber.

One Region Director and Administrator

Dedicate a full-time employee to coordinating One Region initiatives, communications, Task Force meetings, and other activities. This person should be responsible for facilitating implementation and be responsible for monitoring activities, reporting progress, leading Task Force meetings, and convening stakeholders as needed to bring the values, goals and actions of this strategy to life. This person should be a senior-level executive who has strong familiarity with One Region, is a strategic thinker, is respected in the region, and has the gravitas needed to direct action.