



## ONE REGION

A GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS STRATEGY

### One Region Year One Review and Future Focus

In May 2016, the Charleston region completed its five-year global competitiveness strategy, One Region. The strategy adopts a holistic view of economic prosperity inclusive of many dynamics not traditionally associated with an economic development plan, such as affordability, mobility, social equity, and talent.

The CRDA and Metro Chamber partnered on the creation of One Region, and almost 900 stakeholders participated in the planning process through an Executive Committee, Advisory Group, interviews, focus groups, and a survey.

One Region established a refreshed vision, which is to “act as a unified region to be a globally competitive place where people and businesses flourish.” Supporting that vision are four core regional values that transcend any one specific regional dynamic:

- Our region values having a strong, resilient economy.
- Our region values attainable opportunities for all residents to live, learn, and earn.
- Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.
- Our region values being a connected community.

Within each value are goals and annual activities to advance the region toward its vision.

As the region moves into One Region’s second year of implementation, **the vision, values and goals should remain the same.** While specific annual priorities can be updated to reflect current realities, the vision, values and goals continue to form the structure for action.

### FINDINGS FROM THE YEAR ONE PERFORMANCE REVIEW

To develop this annual Check-Up, Avalanche Consulting compared the region’s progress against the values, goals, and recommended year one priorities. Overall, the region performed well, receiving high marks for accomplishing many of the priorities slated for year one with the exception of local public policy around housing and affordability. The Appendix of this report provides a list of those priorities and check marks indicating which ones were successful (either directly or in the spirit of the tactic). To highlight:

**Our region values having a strong, resilient economy.****Score: A-**

**Strengths:** The region's economy is one of the best performing in the country in terms of job creation, and all high impact clusters had major wins in 2016-2017. Proactive BR&E is taking place across all counties. The CRDA continues to lead a best-in-class outbound business development program, connecting the region with business leaders and influencers around the globe. Marketing materials and media relations have been updated to reflect One Region's goals and clusters. One Region's high impact clusters are growing, and within those clusters, niche sectors like Advanced Materials are becoming rising stars.

**Challenges:** Entrepreneurial support is one of this value's three goals, specifically ensuring that entrepreneurs and small businesses have attainable real estate for start-up and flexible real estate options as they grow. Several major, local public policy decisions of the past year contradict this direction. In general, permitting process timing has not improved, and local decisions regarding density threaten affordability for small, entrepreneurial ventures.

**Our region values attainable opportunities for all residents to live, learn, and earn.****Score: B**

**Strengths:** The region has made major strides in higher education investment and alignment of programming with business needs. Funding was secured for Trident Tech's Aeronautical Training Center and the Zucker Family Graduate Education Center opened its doors. The Metro Chamber has impactful initiatives in place related to Career Academies, apprenticeships, and career readiness. Youth entrepreneurship and digital design/coding programs continue to expand in area neighborhoods.

**Challenges:** While the "learn" related year-one activities made progress, "live" related tactics have stalled. Several towns in the region have taken stances against housing diversity and density. It has been challenging for the region as a whole to connect the dots between denser development, conservation, affordability, and relief of traffic congestion. Also of note, the region's income levels and income growth rates trail other benchmark regions. While these metrics take time to shift, the focus on building career pipelines toward higher-paying jobs should continue.

**Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.****Score: C**

**Strengths:** The region's quality of life (culinary, arts, history, natural environment, etc.) is recognized worldwide, as evidenced in booming tourism, in-migration, and nearly weekly media rankings. Progress is also being made by groups like the Lowcountry Land Trust, BCD-COG, and Counties to better connect and preserve greenspace, which was one of the main priorities for year one of One Region.

**Challenges:** Again, some local policy decisions in the past year will affect development patterns and the long-term potential for balanced growth. Affordability challenges also negatively affect community creative and cultural organizations which are at the heart of the region's unique character.

## **Our region values being a connected community.**

**Score: A**

**Strengths:** In the past year, the region has made significant progress in many of One Region's first year's priorities. State infrastructure funding was approved; major Port road, rail and harbor projects began; the Airport's Terminal Redevelopment was completed; Brooking's FDI study was finalized and launched; and proactive business development continued to connect the region with the world.

**Challenges:** While most year one priorities were accomplished, many of these projects resulted from decade+ efforts to plan and secure funding. Year two and beyond will require strong, continued coordination on advocating for infrastructure maintenance, new infrastructure investments, product improvement, and global outreach. Don't take your foot off of the gas pedal: being connected requires setting sights on the long-term horizon.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL NEXT STEPS: ONE REGION GOVERNANCE**

The strategy also offered organizational recommendations to ensure that community stakeholders are coordinating implementation. Year one implementation included recommendations such as keeping the Executive Committee and Advisory Group engaged, activating volunteer teams to focus on major One Region initiatives, sharing One Region with many stakeholder groups and asking them to support its values, and energizing Charleston Young Professionals to help lead initiatives.

### **Implementation Progress: Year One**

These organizational recommendations were implemented with varying success. Strengths included:

- The One Region Executive Committee stayed actively engaged.
- More than 40 organizations signed a commitment to support One Region.
- CRDA and others presented One Region to more than 30 organizations.
- Advisory Group members ("Task Force") received support materials to use in their own communications about One Region.
- The CRDA and other organizations updated their marketing materials and websites to reflect One Region and the refreshed high impact clusters.
- The CRDA's board of directors and the Metro Chamber's board of directors both voted to endorse One Region.
- The ELC is using One Region to inspire its initiatives.
- Charleston Young Professionals is vocal in housing conversations and other One Region-related issues.
- The CRDA and Metro Chamber continue to share research capacity.

- Charleston Regional Headlight and Career Headlight are featured on BCD-COG, CRDA, and Metro Chamber websites.
- Dorchester County hosted an event that shared One Region with stakeholders and discussed recommendations specific to the county.

A handful of other implementation recommendations made some progress, but not to the degree envisioned in year one of One Region:

- The Task Force has not met on a regular basis.
- Action Teams formed to support specific priorities have had mixed success.
- The One Region implementation structure and sources of funding took more than a year to finalize.

## **Future Organization**

As part of this One Region Annual Review, leaders from the One Region Executive Committee, CRDA, and Metro Chamber hosted a series of meetings to formalize One Region Governance for years two and beyond. What emerged is a clear structure for One Region governance, volunteer capacity, and staffing:

### **Governance**

The Executive Committee will evolve with a new structure and formalized governance procedures. In year two of One Region and beyond, the Executive Committee will include 12 people: three CRDA representatives, three Metro Chamber representatives, two at-large community leaders, and one community leader specific to each One Region value (for a total of four “Value Leaders”). Executive Committee members will commit to a one-year term with option to renew. (For reference, a more formal, detailed Executive Committee structure memo was completed this month but is not included in this report.)

At the beginning of each year, Executive Committee members will identify four project(s) (one specific to each One Region value) that realistically can be achieved within one year by volunteer committees. Executive Committee members will establish simple action plans for each project, including quarterly milestones. With those plans in hand, Value Leaders will identify and assemble volunteer Project Teams whose combined expertise is capable of successfully completing the project.

We offer the following advice to the Executive Committee as it identifies annual projects:

(1) Do not be afraid to tackle multi-year issues, but make sure projects are scaled at a level where the final “win” is possible within approximately one year’s time frame. (Think of them as stepping stones that support the larger One Region goals and values.)

(2) One Region’s planning process emphasized inclusion and transparency, and implementation activities should do the same by encouraging a diversity of perspectives on the Executive Committee and volunteer Project Teams.

(3) Adopt an inclusive transparent process in identifying the annual projects, asking Project Team members (which combined form the new “One Region Task Force”) to weigh-in on project selection in future years.

### Volunteer Project Teams / One Region Task Force

As described above, teams of volunteer stakeholders will be assembled to accomplish each One Region project. These Project Teams should include a diversity of individuals whose combined personal and professional expertise can move the project forward.

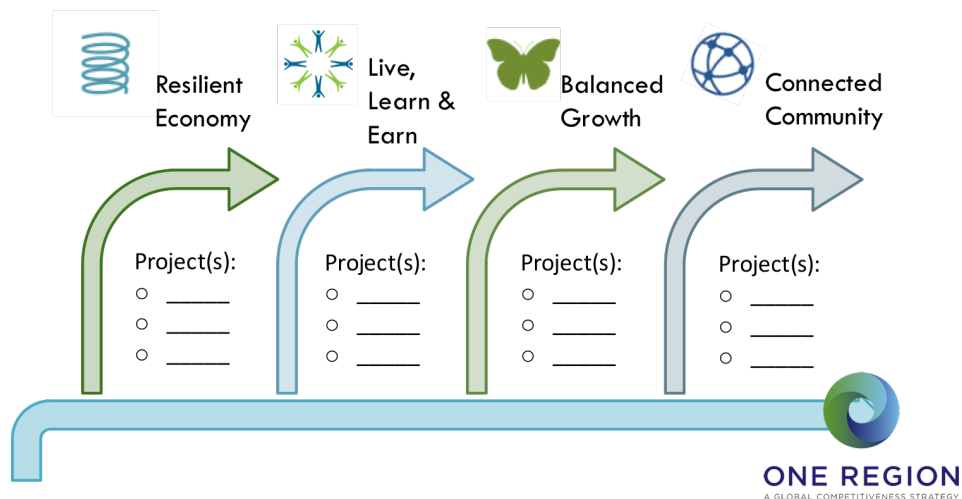
The four Value Leaders from the Executive Committee should serve as chairs for the four Project Teams. As chairs, they will be responsible for finalizing the annual project plan and coordinating activities with the volunteers.

The annual project plan’s format should be consistently formatted and shared with all Project Team members. The plan should include the following elements:

- Name of the project
- What we want to accomplish within one year
- Our quarterly project milestones
- List of organizations and individuals to involve in the project
- List of resources needed to successfully complete the project

We recommend that a the larger One Region Task Force, comprised of all Project Team volunteers, be assembled twice per year (e.g., January and June). At the January Task Force meeting, report on to-date project progress. At the June Task Force meeting, lead an annual review (such as this report), celebrate victories, and seek input on the next year’s projects. The June meeting could be a larger community celebration, open to more people.

## YEAR TWO IMPLEMENTATION



## **One Region Director**

The CRDA and Metro Chamber's boards of directors have agreed to provide seed funding for a full-time staff position to direct One Region's implementation. The job description is currently being finalized and is expected to post by July 2017. This Director will report to the Executive Committee and support the Committee and volunteer Project Teams. The Director will also monitor and report on overall One Region progress.

## **POTENTIAL ONE REGION PROJECTS FOR YEAR TWO**

For year two of implementation, the One Region Strategy recommends priorities within each of its four values and three goals. Those priorities evolved during our Year One review and June 2017 meetings in the region. The One Region Task Force was re-assembled during our visit and provided invaluable input on potential projects for year two. The projects suggested below were vetted by the Task Force.

Based on this, we recommend that the Executive Committee explore the following concepts to be refined into year two projects:

### **Our region values having a strong, resilient economy.**

- Develop a mentorship program for Black entrepreneurs. (Include support for Charleston County's three-year commitment to seed a new nonprofit called Diversity Alliance Group, of which Boeing has been very involved.)
- Help Lowcountry Local First grow its program to help entrepreneurs find real estate in the region.
- Develop an information platform that helps area business leaders counter union activity.
- Identify grant and other funding programs that help entrepreneurs offset the cost of real estate such as West Edge and other developments in the region.
- Work with higher education leaders to catalyze expansion of the region's knowledge-based economy, including growing R&D activities and promoting those already taking place in the region.

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

Note: The Task Force indicated that most of the year two priorities within this value are already underway, but some need to be more closely identified as support of One Region. They emphasized that apprenticeship, youth entrepreneurship / digital design, and other talent alignment activities must continue and strengthen. More needs to be done to address affordability and mobility issues (the "live" and "earn" elements of this value).

Additional suggestions included:

- Develop an action team dedicated to ensuring that Transportation Oriented Development (TOD) is happening in key transportation nodes. This team will use its expertise and influence to ensure that housing and mobility are planned together.
  - Because this is a long-term initiative, the first year could include identifying projects in the pipeline that need their involvement, prioritizing which one comes first, and what the structure of their activities will be for each.
- Develop a communications campaign to inform residents of what Bus Rapid Transit is and its benefits.
- Rally a volunteer team to support the Chamber's local advocacy efforts around density.
- Continue to engage young professionals in advocating for affordability and housing diversity. Survey young professionals and college students about these topics, and use the survey results in local advocacy.

**Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.**

- Pull together a group of stakeholders to explore the outdoors as an emerging high impact cluster for the region, with the premise that the region has an underleveraged opportunity to be an outdoor mecca. Begin by aggregating content that establishes the premise. (Note: Several leaders in the community have volunteered to spearhead this initiative, including Robert Prioleau of Blue Ion and reps from Half Moon, and Coastal Expeditions.)
- Review the Donnelley Foundation's recent Artspace live/work feasibility study and identify a project within that study to support that reinforces this One Region value.
- Lead a local PR and education campaign that illustrates the positive correlation between density and conservation. Create a toolkit of communications materials to support the campaign.
- Organize and host another ULI Reality Check type-of regional summit.

**Our region values being a connected community.**

- Engage the One Region's Global Fluency Action Team to identify one project that will spur global fluency. Over the past year, the Action Team has been actively conducting best practice research and aggregating international assets, which should fuel additional projects.
- Explore the creation of a "Charleston United" program aimed at advancing multiracial leadership, using Chicago United as a model.
- Work with area employers like Google, Boeing, Volvo, Daimler as a think tank to develop next generation solutions to the region's mobility challenges. Promote the region as an ideal test bed for entrepreneurial pilot programs and mobility-focused corporate laboratories.

These project concepts vary in terms of scale and detail, but they are sound starting points for the Executive Committee to identify the four one-year projects to adopt for One Region's second year of implementation.



Also, on a final note, the projects suggested for each value are in no way the only One Region activities taking place during year two. They are initiatives that require coordination from a team of many different stakeholders to implement. The One Region priorities slated specifically for the CRDA, the Metro Chamber, other Chambers, BCD-COG, Counties, and other individual organizations should continue to be implemented.



## APPENDIX

### Year One Implementation Progress by Tactic

**Value:**

**Our region values a strong, resilient economy.**

**Score: A-**

Goals:

1. Strengthen the region's entrepreneurial infrastructure.
2. Nourish the health of the region's existing businesses.
3. Target investments that will fuel the dynamism of the region's high impact clusters.

#### YEAR 1 PRIORITIES

- Continue to streamline approval / permitting processes
- Review / revise local policies to allow for more robust RE mix for sm. business
- Work with developers, govt. to ensure entrepreneurial spaces are in plans
- Continue to support a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem
- Continue to collaborate to retain/expand Joint Base Charleston
- Meet with SCRA to plan ways to increase access to its 100 gig broadband
- Expand and supplement Counties' BR&E activities
- Update CRDA's/Counties'/Chambers' websites, mktg materials
- Continue to engage in proactive business dev and media relations
- Continue to work with area companies to map and fill in supply chain
- Align CVB's event targets with high impact clusters
- Continue to leverage DIGSouth and build entrepreneurial networks

**Value:**

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

**Score: B**

Goals:

1. Ensure all residents have access to high quality learning opportunities from PK12 through higher education.
2. Align education and career pathways in support of the region's high impact clusters.
3. Adopt smart policies and practices that ensure having a home is attainable for all.

#### YEAR 1 PRIORITIES

- ✓ Secure remaining funding for Trident Tech's Aeronautical Training Center
- ✓ Continue to rally participation in Tri-County Cradle to Career
- ✓ Elevate awareness of education, career opportunities via Career Headlight
- ✓ Continue to expand youth entrepreneurship and design / coding programs
- ✓ Continue to incorporate Project Based Learning into Career Academies, training educators on PBL
- ✓ Continue to expand credit offerings at Career Academies
- ✓ Promote micro-scholarship programs
- ✓ Continue to establish career readiness standards in PK12
- Adopt public policies that diversify housing options in the region
- ✓ Continue to expand participation in Charleston Open Source

**Value:**

**Our region values balancing growth with nurturing our unique character.**

**Score: C**

**Goals:**

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

## YEAR 1 PRIORITIES

- ✓ Support investments that preserve and enhance the region's quality of place
- ✓ Begin developing a unified Regional Agenda for land conservation across all three counties
- ✓ Continue to unite around the Flourish initiative
- Embrace parks conservancy goals of planning green space within a short distance of every home in the region
- Encourage more diverse real estate options (housing and entrepreneurial space) and job centers closer to population centers through updating zoning and policies

### **Value:**

**Our region values being a connected community.**

### **Score: A**

### Goals:

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

## YEAR 1 PRIORITIES

- ✓ Continue to advocate for improvements to the region's roadways
- ✓ Continue to engage in Brookings' FDI study and follow through on results
- ✓ Update all marketing materials to reflect One Region's clusters and themes
- ✓ Continue proactive bus dev and media relations across US and abroad
- ✓ Continue working w/ local companies to identify opps to fill supply chain
- ✓ Work with Counties to ensure sites and bldgs are on SCDOC's sites database
- ✓ Coordinate bus dev activities and World Trade Center Charleston activities
- ✓ Continue to expand broadband access across the region
- ✓ Build road and rail infrastructure to support the Port
- ✓ Begin harbor deepening
- ✓ Continue expanding domestic and international flight connections
- ✓ Complete Terminal Redevelopment and Improvement Program