South Coast Regional Plan

SC Works Lowcountry & SC Works Trident

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**Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
Regional Plan
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2023**

Planning Region Name:
South Coast

Local Areas within the Planning Region:
SC Works Lowcountry
SC Works Trident

Local Area Administrators and Contact Information:
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Attachment A: Regional Plan Requirements

The regional plan serves as an action plan to develop, align, and integrate service delivery strategies and resources among multiple local areas within a region. Local boards and chief elected officials in each planning region are required to engage in a regional planning process that results in the preparation and submission of a single regional plan. Regional plans must incorporate the local plans for each local area within the planning region. The following guiding principles should be considered priorities and included in responses throughout the document:

- Partnership and collaboration
- Increased access to resources and services through the use of technology
- The impact of COVID-19 on the state's workforce and strategies to facilitate rapid reemployment

The South Coast Region recognizes the importance of collaborating with partner agencies to galvanize and assist individuals and business customers with achieving their workforce goals. The South Coast Region is also committed to working with our Core, Mandated, and other partners in the communities to ensure the best outcome for individuals and businesses. Partner collaboration and communication occurs through regular partner meetings, emails, and virtual meetings.

The South Coast Region partners include, but not limited to
- Wagner-Peyser Employment Services Program
- Adult Education and Family Literacy
- SC Vocational Rehabilitation and Commission of the Blind
- WIOA Adult, Dislocated Worker, and Youth Programs
- Technical Colleges (Trident and The Technical College of the Lowcountry)
- Job Corps Program
- Veterans Employment and Training Activities
- SC Department of Social Services: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- Migrant & Seasonal Farmworkers: Telamon
- Goodwill with the Senior Community Service Employment Programs (SCSEP)
- Trade Adjustment Assistance Programs
- Unemployment Compensation Programs
- Youth Build Programs

Increase access to resources and services through the use of technology:
Virtual resources and services have become tremendously important during COVID-19. More and more services such as online orientation, eligibility, and enrollment in program services are accessible through technology such as WebEx, Zoom, google meets, and other types of virtual platforms that enable the provision of workforce services. Online appointment Schedulers have allowed customers to schedule an appointment to receive services as well.

Impact of COVID:
It is unarguably that COVID -19 has impacted South Carolina and the South Coast Region in major areas such as:
- Disproportionately impacted people of color, low-income and rural communities, and jails
- The Economy: Across the state and in our region, we have seen business closures and mass lay-offs. Some businesses are rebounding; however, due to the rise in cases, businesses have recently re-closed due to positive testing. Some businesses will not recover and remain closed. Although all industries have had a major impact from the pandemic, the hospitality & Food industry appears to be the hardest hit.
- Schools/Education: A lot of training providers have not returned to in-person training which is impacted the economy by getting individuals job-ready. With schools being closed, this has impacted parents' ability to return to work in some cases.
- Mental health: job loss has impacted mental health by increasing anxiety and depression.

Strategies to facilitate rapid reemployment:
The South Coast region offers many services to help businesses and workers deal with the effects of layoffs and plant closures, including those that result from increased competition from imports, natural disasters, and other events. One such service is Rapid Response. Rapid Response is a pro-active, business-focused, and flexible strategy designed to respond to layoffs and plant closings by quickly coordinating services and providing immediate aid to companies and their affected workers. Rapid Reemployment teams work with employers and any employee representative(s) to quickly maximize resources to minimize disruptions associated with job loss.

The Rapid Response Manual was developed and issued in 2019 by SCDEW to establish a comprehensive resource for Rapid Response information and operational guidance, and communicate expectations for delivery of Rapid Response services statewide across multiple programs. Rapid Response teams are comprised of representatives from the following programs:

- WIOA Title I – Dislocated Worker

- Wagner-Peyser

- Unemployment Insurance

- TAA

Additional core partners, such as Adult Education and Family Literacy are available to participate in the Rapid Response process and provide services to the company based on the needs identified by the Rapid Response Team.

The manual was distributed through a memo to all SC Works staff, including partners, to ensure high-quality, consistent, and timely services to businesses, supporting strategies 2.2 and 4.2, cross-partner staff training, and business outreach, respectively. Multiple training sessions regarding Rapid Response services and the manual were conducted and all staff providing Rapid Response services are required to complete the training and study the manual before attending any onsite Rapid Response event.

The regional plan must include:

1. **A description of how each local area within the region was afforded the opportunity to participate in the regional planning process, along with a description of the planning process undertaken to produce the regional plan. The description must include how the chief elected officials and local boards were involved in the development of the plan.**

A vision of the South Coast Region is to form an integrative force, bringing together business and industry, education, economic development, and other public entities striving to ensure adequate investment in today's workforce; and preparing tomorrow's workforce to ensure we have the skills to meet the demand of the region's growth sectors. In essence, the is to expand and develop a skilled workforce and a robust workforce system to ensure the regional economy's demands are met and are in alignment with the State's vision and goals as outlined in the State's plan.

The Goals of the South Coast Region are to support the State plan through the local workforce development board's goals as identified in the following principle goals and priorities:

- Invest in and support education and training strategies that will help to better prepare and expand the current workforce for emerging jobs;
- Align the resources of the partners in **the South Coast Region to i**mprove outcomes for businesses and individuals, including individuals with barriers;
- Identify the needs of SC Works Trident and South Coast Region businesses and industries to support career pathways in growing sectors; and
- Increase outreach and marketing strategies to engage job seekers and employers

South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) State Instruction number 15-16, change 1, provided an overview of the process used to identify planning regions. In making the determination, the state considered factors such as the extent to which the local areas in a proposed region are consistent with labor market areas in the state, are consistent with regional economic development areas in the state, and have available federal and non-federal resources necessary to effectively administer activities under subtitle B and other applicable provisions of WIOA, including whether the areas have the appropriate education and training providers, such as institutions of higher education and area career and technical education schools. SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SCDEW) also considered population centers, labor force conditions, commuting patterns, industrial composition, location quotients, geographic boundaries, income, poverty, educational attainment, and in-demand occupation groups.

The Lowcountry and Trident Workforce Development areas **make up** the South Coast Region that included core partners, board members, Executive Directors of the Council of Governments, and chief elected officials in the development of the plans. The plans were disseminated to everyone for input, review, and suggestions before releasing for public comments.   The tentative plan is for the Local Boards to approve the local and regional plans in September 2020.

Timeline:
Core and Required Partner Review: July 22nd - July 28th
Local elected officials review: July 29th – August 10th
Public Comment: August 24th – September 3rd
Approval by TWDB: September 22, 2020
Send to SC DEW for approval: September 25th

Public comments will be taken into consideration. The plan will be amended as necessary.

In 2018, the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SC DEW) launched Phase III of the Sector Planning, which is Sector Partnerships with the NextGen Consulting team helping to facilitate and guide the regional teams through the next phase.

The goals of Phase III are:
- Develop regional, industry-led sector partnerships that will serve as coordinating bodies for multiple public partners to collaborate effectively with one another and with industry;
- Develop a collaborative state strategy for jointly supporting sector partnerships across SC Department of Commerce, SC Commission on Higher Education, SC Technical College System, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, and other key state-level partners. During phase III,
- The agenda is entirely defined and driven by business leaders and not defined by parameters of grants and existing programs;
- Focus on industry competitiveness and growth versus workforce only;
- Business leaders personally champion priorities and have a stake in solutions versus providing input only;
- A long-term way to respond to changing needs of industry versus a one-time focus group;
- Go-to, shared table to understand and respond to industry's needs versus one more meeting; it is a way of doing business versus a grant or special initiative and;
- Regionally based versus jurisdiction-based

We will use the Next Generation Sector Partnerships model to accomplish this. We have launched a Healthcare industry-led sector partnership in July 2019. It was modeled after similar, successful partnerships across the country. For businesses, the launch is a forum to identify shared issues, network and troubleshoot together, and define solutions going forward. For public partners in the South Coast Region, they become an effective way for the many different economic developments, education, and training programs in our region to jointly understand the needs of the health care industry, and also help implement shared solutions.
- The priorities that come out of the Partnership might be related to specific training needs, talent attraction, or retention strategies; it could be related to regulatory challenges, technology needs, or care coordination. We will know more after the first launch meeting.
- The South Coast Region is in the process of launching a Manufacturing Sector Partnership in late fall 2020.

The original format of the regional team was given by SCDEW with the initial team configuration that has mostly been sustained for the Regional Core Team.

REGIONAL WORKFORCE PLANNING and IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS – The team participated in a self-assessment **(Attachment –B**) exercise designed to help determine each region's readiness to undertake a sector strategy approach. The team also attended the Regional Institute where planning activities began for the regional plan. The team was responsible for advocating and leading the development of sector strategies and integrated services in each region of the South Coast Region. The initial team constructed by DEW was comprised of a representative from each entity below:

- Workforce Development entities
- Technical/Community Colleges
- Economic Development entities
- K-12 Education
- Business representatives, especially those from likely targeted industry sectors/Non-Profit
- Adult Education
- Vocational Rehabilitation

The current model has a support team consisting of partners as stakeholders in the community, They are supported by a team of support partners that includes decision-makers from the workforce system (workforce development boards, Job Centers, Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, etc.), education (including K-12, Career and Technical Education, community and technical colleges, and 4-year institutions), community-based training organizations, apprenticeship programs, as well as key economic development organizations and Chambers of Commerce, and other stakeholders.

Core Team: This is the team that will be directly responsible for launching and supporting the sector partnership. They are the individuals who answer the call for a new approach and who commit to using the Next Gen Sector Partnership methodology to build and sustain an authentically industry-led partnership. Members of this team must represent multiple education, workforce development, and economic development organizations. This team will be responsible for brokering relationships with businesses to bring them to—and keep them at—the table. They will also be responsible for identifying partners from the broader network of supporters (other education, workforce development, or economic development organizations) that can help implement the industry's priorities. This team will also be responsible for making decisions about which organization (or pair of organizations) is best-positioned to serve as convener. Depending on the partnership priorities and needs partners are called to step in and out of "active" involvement.

The Convening Team Coordinate, communicate, and facilitate the meetings.

2. **An analysis of regional labor market data and economic conditions, including existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations, and the employment needs of employers in those existing and emerging in-demand industry sectors and occupations. The analysis shall include:**
   - **The knowledge and skills necessary to meet the employment needs of the employers in the region, including those in in-demand industry sectors and occupations;**
   - **An analysis of the current workforce in the region, including employment and unemployment data, labor market trends, and the educational and skill levels of the workforce, including individuals with barriers to employment; and**
   - **An analysis of workforce development activities in the region, including available education and training opportunities. This analysis must indicate the strengths and weaknesses of workforce development activities necessary to address the education**

<mark>and skill needs of job seekers, including individuals with barriers to employment, and the employment needs of employers in the region.</mark>

In-Demand Sectors and Occupations

Through the analysis of data from the Community Profile by SCDEW and the original data provided by Maher & Maher, the South Coast Region will focus on the following sectors:

- Diversified Manufacturing
- HealthCare
- Information Technology & Business Services
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Construction Trade

Every regional economy consists of a mix of industries that play a greater or lesser role in the overall number of jobs that exist and in the overall value of goods and services produced. Economists speak of jobs as employment and the value of goods and services as output. Statistics related to employment and output allows researchers to compare growth in an economy over time (past or future) as well as to compare our economy to other regions around the country. By adding the workforce development component to an industry cluster in a regional economy, our strategy development requires us to identify those industry clusters, occupations, and career pathways that are most crucial to growing the regional economy. Doing so will provide the optimum mix of employment.

To make valid comparisons, researchers need consistent definitions. This study uses 22 industry clusters that were previously defined and used extensively around the country in helping workforce, economic development, and educational entities identify priority industry clusters. These industry clusters include:

Agriculture Production	Construction	Metals and Metal Fabricating
Food Processing	Chemicals, Rubber, and Plastics	Lumber and Wood Products
Communications and IT Manufacturing	Communications and IT Services	Textiles
Biotechnology	Transportation and Logistics	Wholesale Trade
Business Services	Financial Services	Health Care
Real Estate and Building Services	Government	Retail
Hospitality	Energy and Utilities	Personal Services
Education		

Using this way of conceiving clusters, a cluster like Construction would not only include the companies that build homes, commercial and industrial properties, and highways and bridges, but also the companies that supply the stone for driveways, the lumber and drywall for walls, the trusses for roofs, and all of the other materials needed to build a house, as well as the realtors that sell the houses.

Once the clusters are defined, prioritizing the clusters that are the best bets for economic and workforce development investments is the next task.

This conceptual approach is primarily a demand-driven, industry-based approach. It is one that is used primarily in economic development circles. However, it offers benefits for workforce development because: (a) it bundles industries where occupations are likely to require transferable skills; (b) it still allows us to hone in on specific occupations that may be growing or changing/improving in nature; and (c) it makes it more likely that economic development officials will see the ultimate target industries through the same lens as workforce developers, thereby enhancing alignment. Implications for career pathways and training curriculum grow out of this analysis where the voice of the industry is loud and clear.

Local competitive advantage (location quotient or LQ) seeks to identify those industries where the local area has certain advantages and as a result does things better than the competition around the country. Competitive advantage may result from access to raw materials, access to markets, an effective transportation system, knowledge generated in local research institutions, the knowledge that is embedded in the skills of the local workforce, or just the presence of an entrepreneur who has located in the local region. LQ alerts us to the presence of competitive advantage but does not tell us exactly what that advantage is.
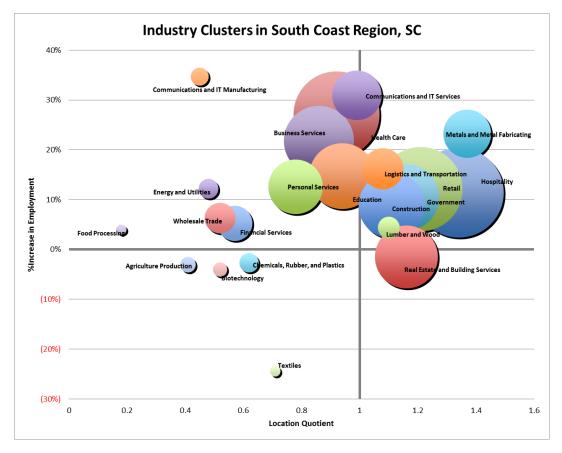
For us, competitive advantage (as measured by the location quotient statistic) is the primary metric for determining priority industries, followed by job growth projections and the absolute size of employment in the industry.

Location quotient measures the concentration of employment in the industry locally relative to the concentration of employment in the industry nationally. The assumption is that an industry with a concentration above the national average (above the number "1" in our report tables) has some sort of local competitive advantage that we need to recognize and act upon. For example, in the listing below of top industry clusters and drivers in this region, Chemicals, Rubber, and Plastics, has an LQ of 2.23, which means that the region has 2.23 times the national average of employment concentration in that industry.

The following documents are the source of the data for this analysis (*The Appendix contains all the data runs referred to in this discussion. The cover page to the Appendix explains the report structure and the general content of each report.*) See full report Attachment D

- **Cluster Summary Report (Report #1 in the Appendix)**, which includes charts with the 22 clusters ranked by size and average wage, growth, shift-share, and location quotient as well as a bubble chart that plots most of this information on a one-page graphic;
- **Highest Ranked Industry Report (Report #2 in the Appendix)**, which ranks the top 50 5-digit NAICS industries (industry drivers) by size and average wage, growth, shift-share, and location quotient;
- A document called Summary of **Clusters and Drivers by Region (Report #3 in the Appendix)**, which aligns the driver industries under each cluster title; and

- **Occupational Report (Report #4 in the Appendix)**, which includes a chart with projected occupational openings, another chart with the Top 100 openings, and a chart that organizes the Top 100 occupations into prospective Career Pathways for occupations that are in multiple industries.

The above bubble chart for this region (also Report #1E in the Appendix) summarizes the Cluster Summary Report and location quotient, the projected percentage change in employment, and the size of employment in each of the 22 pre-determined industry clusters. Priority clusters can appear in any one of the first three quadrants. Bubbles representing the 22 clusters are shown on the graphic on the following page with four quadrants where:

- The upper right quadrant indicates high LQ and high projected growth;
- The upper left shows industries with high projected growth but less than average LQ;
- The lower left indicates negative projected growth and less than average LQ.
- The lower right depicts industries with high LQ but negative growth projections. This may be the case with so-called "legacy industries", which project as being in decline but maybe large industries in terms of jobs, and may present a significant competitive advantage for the region. In South Carolina, textiles would fall into the "legacy" category.

We do the Highest Ranked Industry Report (Report #2 in the Appendix) to ensure that we recognize industry drivers (five-digit NAICS code industries) that have high location quotients and rapid growth but that may show a lesser impact when they are consolidated into a cluster. Drivers point to highly

competitive and rapidly growing industries that may be the essence of local competitive advantage. Matching drivers to clusters in the Summary of Clusters and Drivers by Region (See Report #3 in the Appendix) allows us to see other drivers that we may have missed in our cluster analysis.

THE SOUTH COAST REGION

Demographics

This Region includes seven counties including Beaufort, Berkeley, Charleston, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, and Jasper.

The population reflected in the Community profile for the South Coast region indicates a current population of 985,950 with a projected population of 1,086,390 by 2030. Based on the historical and projected data, the South Coast is on track to experience tremendous growth over the next few years.

Industry Analysis

A competitive advantage (as measured by the location quotient statistic) is the primary metric for determining priority industries, followed by job growth projections and the absolute size of employment in the industry (See Reports #1D, #1B, and #1A in the Appendix).

Ranked only by projected location quotient in 2025 from previous data (number in parentheses is location quotient), the top industry clusters and drivers included (additional information can be seen in Report #3):

- Metal and Metal Fabricating (1.37)
    - Motor Vehicle Brake System Manufacturing (37.91)
    - Rolled Steel Shape Manufacturing (27.79)
    - Alumina Refining and Primary Aluminum Productions (7.17)
    - Residential Electric Lighting Fixture Manufacturing (17.69)
    - Aircraft Manufacturing (14.70)
    - Other Engine Equipment Manufacturing (7.25)
    - Aluminum Sheet, Plate, and Foil Manufacturing (4.74)
    - Boat Building (7.41)
    - Travel Trailer and Camper Manufacturing (2.89)
    - All Other Transportation Equipment Manufacturing (4.54)
- Hospitality (1.34)
    - Convention and Visitors Bureaus (5.71)
    - Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Land (4.59)
    - Recreational Goods Rental (5.29)
    - Historic Sites (4.07)
    - Scenic and Sightseeing Transportation, Water (3.18)
    - Amusement Arcades (3.42)
- Retail (1.21)
    - Boat Dealers (4.51)
- Government (1.16)
- Real Estate and Building Services (1.16)

- o Land Subdivision (7.62)
- o Hazardous Waste Collection (5.45)
- o Other Waste Collection (4.31)
- o Solid Waste Combustors and Incinerators (2.08)
- Construction (1.11)
  - o New Multifamily Housing Construction (6.19)
- Lumber and Wood Products (1.10)
  - o Paperboard Mills (20.04)
  - o Timber Tract Operations (6.97)
- Logistics and Transportation (1.08)
  - o Marine Cargo Handling (11.68)
  - o Port and Harbor Operations (8.20)
  - o Coastal and Great Lakes Passenger Transportation (9.04)
  - o Marinas (2.85)
  - o Navigational Services to Shipping (2.49)

There are several sectors, which have a concentration of employment that is only slightly higher or slightly lower than the national average. However, they are larger sectors that are expected to generate good growth numbers over the period being examined. They need to be considered among the priority industries. They are listed below along with the location quotient for the cluster and the expected job growth for the cluster and drivers for the decade ahead.

- Communications and IT Manufacturing (1.02, 729)
- Communications and IT Services (.99, 5,100)
  - o Custom Computer Programming Services (1,237)
  - o Computer Systems Design Services (1,034)
  - o Wireless Telecommunications Carriers (498)
- Education (.94, 4,919)
  - o Elementary and Secondary Schools (2,235)
  - o Colleges and Universities (1,054)
- Health Care (.92, 13,817)
  - o Hospitals (State Government) (7.81, 753)
  - o Diagnostic Imaging Centers (4.96)
  - o Offices of Physicians (3,214)
  - o Home Health Care Services (1,407)
  - o General Medical and Surgical Hospitals (1,058)
  - o Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities (925)
  - o Continuing Care Retirement Centers (698)
  - o Offices of Dentists (685)
  - o Nursing Care Facilities (653)
  - o Diagnostic Imaging Centers (475)
- Business Services (.86, 7,722)
  - o Temporary Help Services (2,588)
  - o Corporate, Subsidiary, and Regional Management Services (823)
  - o Engineering Services (786)

This data was provided by Maher and Maher.

Based on data from the Community Profile, the State plan, and other resources such as One region and the Charleston Metro Chamber for the South Coast Region, the in-demand sectors continue to be:

- Diversified Manufacturing
- Healthcare
- IT & Business Services
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics
- Construction

Knowledge and Skills:

These assumptions for the South Coast Region were prepared much before a sea change of economic and business impacts began in early 2020 due to COVID-19. A massive pandemic COVID-19 health issue led to record unemployment and business dislocation beginning in early 2020 (evidence of a downturn began in March 2020 nationally and locally when the National Bureau of Economic Research declared an official start of the nation's recession).

Unemployment Insurance claims hit record levels and economic stimulus legislation was passed to soften the impact in April 2020 (additional UI benefits, Small Business Loans, Payroll Protection, new unemployment program for self-employed, gig workers, and independent contractors were implemented to help businesses and laid off employees survive).

Between March 2020 until July 2020, the South Coast area has undergone large changes to the business models in many industries, involving many of the key components of the Trident and Lowcountry areas economy (tourism – travel, restaurants. hotels/lodging, etc.; retail (stores on lockdown and now reduced customers); business services, auto (cutbacks because of reduced travel – with Mercedes, Volvo, etc.; aeronautical – Boeing; federal, state, and local governments, etc. and not many entities were immune as the virus continues to hit the area hard on another wave of incidents.

Existing and Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations
The South Coast Region incredible strides in recovering from the recession of the 2007-2010 periods; however, we are currently faced with another situation that has massively impacted the economy in the South Coast Region. Most economic indicators pointed to increasing employment and economic activity. The region bounced back strong in the manufacturing and transportation/logistics industries due to companies such as Boeing. Volvo Car Corporation selected the Charleston, S.C. area for the location of its first North American plant. These projects added to the momentum the region has experienced.

Utilizing the data from Maher and Maher, The One Region Plan, and the Community Profile from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, The South Coast Region has seen tremendous job growth. Retail Trade has seen the highest growth followed by Healthcare and Social Assistance and then Food Services and Accommodation. Based on information from the One Region Plan and Talent Strategy Workforce Supply & Demand Analysis 2016 update, The South Coast region will create nearly 26,000 new jobs. The occupations forecasted to grow are in software & IT, Production, Mathematics, Marketing Engineering, Communications, Business, and Medical. The Clusters with the highest employment are Medical, Production, and Software & IT. According to the Talent Gap Analysis update, occupations that are expected to have the largest workforce shortages are general assemblers, accounting support, and software developers.

Per the Community profile report by the SC Department of Employment and Workforce quarterly census of employment, the **top employment by Industry** is Retail Trade, Health Care & Social Assistance, Accommodation & Food Services, Administrative, Support & Waste Management & Remediation Services, and Manufacturing. The top five occupational openings are Retail Salespersons, First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers, Registered Nurses, Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products, and Customer Service. The top five new hires by industry are Accommodation & Food Services, Administrative & Support, and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation and Construction. **Industries with the highest turnover** are Accommodation & Food Services, Administrative & Support, and Waste Management and Remediation Services, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting, Arts, Entertainment & Recreation, and Construction. The top average annual wage by Industries is Utilities, Professional, Scientific & Technical Services, Finance & Insurance, Management of Companies and Enterprises, and Manufacturing. **The labor market projections by industries** top five based on percent change Healthcare & Social Assistance, Accommodation& Food Services, Transportation and Warehousing, Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remedial and real Estate and Rental and Leasing. Growing Occupations are Home Health Aides, Personal care Aides, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Software Developers, Applications, Statisticians, Industrial Engineers, Computer Numerically Controlled Machine Tool Programmers, ME, Information Security Analysts and Medical Assistants. Data is based on information provided in the Community profile from the SC Department of Employment and Workforce.

Per data, the South Coast Region should focus on the following healthcare **industries** (incl. employment change from 2016 – 2026):
   - o Healthcare & Social Assistance
   - o Nursing Care Facilities Healthcare Assistants
   - o Home Health Care
   - o Hospitals, Medical/Surgical
   - o Ambulance Services
   - o Temporary Health
   - o Back Office
- Per data, the South Coast Region should focus on the following healthcare **occupations** (incl. employment change from 2016 – 2026 and required education/training):
   - o Registered Nurse)
   - o Personal Care/Home Health Aide
   - o Nurse Assistants
   - o Medical Assistants)
   - o Medical Secretaries/Office Clerk General/Receptionists
   - o First-Line Supervisors/Office Administrative Support Workers diploma/equivalent)
   - o EMT/Paramedic
   - o Patient Care Technician (PCT) (Phlebotomy
   - o Customer Service Representatives – 287
- Per the Diversified Manufacturing Data, the South Coast Region should focus on the following manufacturing **occupations**:
   - o Aircraft Structure, Surfaces, Rigging, and Systems Assemblers
   - o Inspectors, Testers, Sorters, Samplers, and Weighers
   - o Team Assemblers
   - o Computer-Controlled Machine Tool Operators, Metal and Plastic
   - o Machinists

- o Aircraft Mechanics and Service Technicians
- o Industrial Machinery Mechanics
- o Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers
- o Purchasing Agents, Except Wholesale, Retail, and Farm Products
- o Production, Planning, and Expediting Clerks
- o Electrical and Electronic Equipment Assemblers
- o Industrial Engineering Technicians
- o Business Operations Specialists, All Other
- o First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers
- o Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand
- o Welders, Cutters, Solders, and Brazers
- o Cutting, Punching, and Press Machine Setters, Operators, and Tenders, Metal, and Plastic
- o Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive
- o Avionics Technicians
- o Tool and Die Makers
- o Aerospace Engineering and Operations Technicians
- o Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technicians
- o Engineering Technicians, Except Drafters, All Other
- o Computer User Support Specialists
- o Electrical and Electronics Repairers, Commercial and Industrial Equipment

It was noted that some of the occupations listed in the manufacturing sector cross over into other sectors as well (e.g., construction) and need training programs to fill positions in multiple sectors. Therefore, the data team recommended obtaining the staffing patterns for the remaining sectors (IT, TDL, and Construction Trades) right away to be analyzed and fused with the existing recommendations.

Challenges

Challenges to recruiting employers include accessibility to interstates, tax regulations, and infrastructure. For example, sectors such as manufacturing experiencing retirees in the workforce.

Other challenges include:

- Transportation
- Commuting
- Sharing/Marketing of these lists to various entities to create buy-in
- Aligning our Workforce vocabulary across all core programs and partners
  Messaging needs to start early with visual tools to show the skills needed and the importance

Strengths and Weaknesses:
The South Coast Region has a strong workforce relationship that yields strong collaborations in the workforce activities. The South Coast Region generally hosts two re-entry job fairs per program year. The most recent job fair was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The collaboration with the Sector Strategies Partnership has led to collaboration with business services activities such as job fairs. Each local area offers a robust list of workforce development activities.

Lowcountry and Trident collaborate with their perspective local partners to conduct out-reach specifically to the Youth population. Currently, both areas are in the process of conducting virtual outreach to high school seniors as an option for those not on the college pathway.

Both local areas offer outreach and collaboration with partners to reach individuals with disabilities and make them aware of services and employment opportunities within the system.

Both local workforce areas enjoy a strong partnership with the local Technical College that supports training and referral activities. Also, both local areas have partnerships with private training providers for training activities that meet the needs of employers in the local areas. Both areas have the training and educational activities provided through a partnership with the Technical Colleges and Adult Education and Family Literacy program in their perspective areas.

Both local workforce areas have strong working relationships with their Wagner-Peyser partners and share in the business services activities such as job fairs and hiring events, and last both areas maintain a

Strengths of the Region:

- **Strong Working Relationship between staff and partner staff of each local Workforce Area.**
- **The Business Services Managers in each local Workforce Area collaborate and work together often on activities business-related.**

Weaknesses:

- **Whereas both areas have strong partnerships with their partners and a strong partnership with the local area when it comes to the South Coast Sector Strategies, the weaknesses are:**
- **There needs to be more collaboration with activities together as a region**
- **More conversation is needed on how to replicate providing education and training to participates on a regional level**
- **More collaboration is needed on tracking and reporting performance and /or outcome of training and education regionally**
- **More collaboration is needed on how to engage and conduct outreach to those in both areas that are geographically limited by transportation and/or access to service activities**

Employment and unemployment Data:
The Community Profile indicates the region had fifteen thousand one hundred and forty-four job openings as of June 2020 with an unemployment rate of 8.7%. The charts below show the top certifications and soft skills needed in each of the counties that comprise the South Coast. Soft skills are those attributes not defined by technical accomplishments or certifications attained. Analysis of data over the past three years indicates that many soft skills are listed as a part of the job postings, such as communication skills, integrity, team-orientation, detail-orientation, problem-solving skills, and self-motivation. The team will still need to validate the data with employers from each chosen sector, which will include a focus group or a survey with employers utilizing predetermined questions. The Talent Demand Analysis update conducted by the Charleston Metro Chamber provided additional data on employer needs. It identified critical areas of need for current and future jobs that include Software & IT, Production, Mathematics, Marketing, Engineering, Communications, Business, and Medical. The Region has several programs in existence with technical colleges, private providers, and Adult Education to meet the needs of the customers. However, more specific programs will need to be developed.

Employment & Labor Market Trends

An important component of the economy is the labor force. The labor force measures people at their resident location and equals the sum of the employed and the unemployed. The trends in the labor force, the number of people employed, and the number of people unemployed. Employment in the South Coast Region declined sharply during the recession. However, steady increases in employment encouraged more individuals to join the labor force and since early 2014, the region's labor force has experienced solid growth. **The unemployment rate as of 2018 for the South Coast is 3.5% with a total number of 2,258,057 people employed. The region's unemployment rate has continued to drop since the pandemic began. Based on the analysis of the data in the Community Profile for the South Coast Region, the top 10 employment industries are:**

- **Accommodation and Food Services**
- **Health Care and Social Assistance**
- **Retail Trade**
- **Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services**
- **Manufacturing**
- **Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services**
- **Public Administration**
- **Construction**
- **Educational Services**
- **Transportation and Warehousing**

The top 20 Largest Employers are:

- BEAUFORT COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
- BERKELEY COUNTY SCHOOLS
- Bon Secours Mercy Health Inc
- CAREALLIANCE HEALTH SERVICES
- CHARLESTON COUNTY CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
- CITY OF CHARLESTON
- COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON
- DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DORCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT #2
- HARRIS TEETER LLC MEDICAL UNIV OF SC HOSPITAL AUTHORI
- MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SC
- PUBLIX SUPER MARKETS INC
- ROBERT BOSCH CORPORATION
- THE BOEING COMPANY
- TRIDENT MEDICAL CENTER LLC
- UNIVERSITY MEDICAL ASSOCIATES INC
- WAL-MART ASSOCIATES INC
- WJBD VA MEDICAL CENTER

Source: S.C. Department of Employment & Workforce & The Conference Board's Help Wanted OnLine® data series

The Top 20 Occupational Openings in the South Coast Region are:

- Registered Nurses
- Retail Salespersons

- First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers
- Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products
- Customer Service Representatives (43-4051) 448
- Maintenance and Repair Workers, General (49-9071) 304
- Secretaries and Administrative Assistants, Except Legal, Medical, and Executive (43-6014) 251
- Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers (53-3032) 247 Managers, All Other (11-9199) 247
- Food Service Managers (11-9051) 214
- Medical and Health Services Managers (11-9111) 211
- Waiters and Waitresses (35-3031) 206
- Laborers and Freight, Stock, and Material Movers, Hand (53-7062) 205
- Janitors and Cleaners, Except Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners (37-2011) 196
- Driver/Sales Workers (53-3031) 180
- Cashiers (41-2011) 179
- Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners (37-2012) 166
- Automotive Service Technicians and Mechanics (49-3023) 163
- Hotel, Motel, and Resort Desk Clerks (43-4081) 157
- General and Operations Managers (11-1021) 153

Source: S.C. Department of Employment & Workforce & The Conference Board's Help Wanted OnLine® data series

Unemployment

By early 2008, conditions began to deteriorate, and unemployment skyrocketed to a high in June 2009. It then began a slow decline to March 2014. The unemployment rate is the percent of the labor force that is unemployed. In the South Coast Region in early 2008, the rate began to climb and accelerated in the fall of that year to reach an all-time high by December 2009 and January 2010. The unemployment rate then began to fall, reaching 5.7 percent in early 2014. The rate continued to decline reaching 5.3 percent by 2015. In 2018, the unemployment rate in the South Coast Region was at 3.0% and in December of 2019, it was even lower. Due to the impact of COVID-19, it started to increase in January 2020 and steadily rose to 8.7% in June 2020. As of December 2020, the unemployment rate for the region was 4.3%, which is lower than the state's rate.

Characteristics of Unemployment Insurance Claimants December 2020:

Gender	South Coast Region	South Carolina
Female	2,097	14,488
Male	1,867	13,345
O	15	87

Race	South Coast Region	South Carolina
ASIAN	73	338
BLACK	1,742	13,312
HAWAIIAN	7	36
MULTIPLE	133	962
NATIVE AMERICAN	20	153
UNKNOWN	162	992
WHITE	1,842	12,127

Characteristics of Unemployment Insurance Claimants December 2020 Continued:

Age Group	South Coast Region	South Carolina
18-24	429	3,825
25-40	1,585	11,030
41-55	1,137	7,899
56-64	486	3,415
65	313	1,631
Less than 18	29	120

Education	South Coast Region	South Carolina
College Grad	1,931	10,467
Some College	1,612	12,451
Some High School	373	2,829
No High School	24	228
Unknown	39	1,945

Education and Skill Levels

The current educational levels in the South Coast Region are provided by data from the SCDEW Community profile. The information is presented with seven levels of educational attainment:

Less than 9th grade: 4.17%
9th to 12th No Diploma: 8.06%
High School Graduate: 26.49%
Some College: 21.90%
Associate Degree: 8.29%
Bachelor Degree: 19.80%
Graduate Degree: 11.29%

The Lowcountry and Trident Workforce Area has focused its efforts in developing economic development strategies that places high emphasis on job seekers and their skills and how they contribute to industry demands. Both Workforce areas that makes up the South Coast Region seek to address the issues of low-skilled workers and employers need for more employees in various industries due to the current aging workforce. The South Coast Region has and will continue to address participant barriers to overall employment success.

The South Coast Region has embraced a workforce development strategy that is focused on sector-based industry training within agency and employer partnerships. Sector based programs has allowed the South Coast Region to look at specific skills gap industries are facing with job seekers. Incumbent Worker Training grants (IWT) have allowed the South Coast Region to help employers re-define the career pathways for their workers and increase their job skills by re-tooling their knowledge of the job along with On-the-Job Training for Adults and Youth and Work Experience for Youth clients.

The South Coast Region partnerships focus on a collaborated effort to connect low-income or disadvantage individuals with employment in careers that offer the promise of financial stability

and significant growth in the industry in the near future. Our sector-based strategy must focus on a specific industry in order to be successful.

The Lowcountry Workforce Development Area has focused on five specific industry clusters to focus resources on: Manufacturing, Transportation Distribution and Logistics, Healthcare, Technical and now Culinary. The Trident Workforce Development Area has focused on six specific industry clusters to focus resources on: Manufacturing, Transportation Distribution and Logistics, Healthcare, It & Business Services, Construction and Hospitality. As a part of our strategies, community partners come together within the region to form a network of activities and services to support both employers and potential employees. At the table with employers, we have several educational partners in the region offering occupational skills training, both secondary and postsecondary, as well as remedial.

In the Lowcountry these educational partners include:

Secondary and Remedial	Post-Secondary
Beaufort County School District	USC Salkehatchie
Colleton County School District	USC Beaufort
Hampton County School District 1&2	Technical College of the Lowcountry
Jasper County School District	Trident Technical College
Beaufort Adult Ed	Orangeburg Technical College
Colleton, Jasper/Hampton Adult ED	

In the Trident Workforce Area these educational partners include:

Secondary, Remedial and Post-Secondary
Berkeley Adult Education
Charleston Adult Education
Dorchester Adult Education
Trident Literacy
Trident Technical College
Technical College of the Lowcountry
Orangeburg Technical College

Barriers to Employment:
Groups with barriers to Employment:
The South Coast region workforce is diverse. Different population groups often face varying challenges and barriers and may need more services to meet their employment and training needs. There are many programs and services described in the Workforce, Education, and Training Analysis that address the needs of individuals with barriers to employment. Additionally, measures are being taken to further improve programmatic and physical accessibility for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) individuals and individuals with disabilities, and to improve the overall education and employment outcomes for all individuals, especially individuals with barriers to employment.
Individuals with barriers to employment include displaced homemakers; low-income individuals; Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians; individuals with disabilities, including youth who are individuals

with disabilities; older individuals; ex-offenders; homeless individuals, or homeless children and youths; youth who are in or have aged out of the foster care system; individuals who are English language learners, individuals who have low levels of literacy, and individuals facing substantial cultural barriers; farmworkers; eligible individual for the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (TANF); single parents (including single pregnant women); long-term unemployed individuals and Veterans, unemployed workers, youth, and others that the state may identify.

Hispanics

The Hispanic population has grown significantly in the region and state. This population more than doubled from 2000 to 2010 and has continued to grow. Though the growth has slowed, there is still a growing need for programs that serve the Hispanic community.

Homeless

There are a growing number of homeless individuals in the South Coast Region. This includes the number of homeless Veterans that need special programs devised to meet their needs. For many, living arrangements make it less conducive to become employed to restraints with transportation. Based on the information provided by the SC Department of Employment and Workforce, the homeless data is a point in time count of the sheltered and unsheltered homeless population. Based on information from the South Carolina Coalition for the Homeless, 2016 point in time report conducted by the Continuum of Care in South Carolina reported on the Lowcountry (Berkeley, Charleston, Beaufort, Colleton, Dorchester, Hampton, and Jasper counties): Emergency shelter was 1,834, Transitional Housing was 1,515 and unsheltered was 1,689.

Veterans

According to the 2017 American Community Survey, South Carolina had 362,000 civilian veterans aged 18 or older, comprising 9.3 percent of the state's civilian adult population. Veterans had a higher percentage having some college education or an associate's degree compared to the population aged 25 and older as a whole (37.7 percent for veterans, 29.8 percent for all). Veterans had a lower unemployment rate at 4.5 percent than the civilian population aged 18 to 64 (5.7 percent).[5]

Veterans may have to overcome stereotypes employers may have such as thinking that all post-9/11 veterans have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). However, veterans have a great deal to contribute to any company. Many veterans have job skills that transfer directly to the civilian world, such as integrity, attention to detail, leadership, problem-solving, and a team-player mentality. COVID-19 has impacted the employment rate for veterans; however, it is still too early to know the outcomes.

Ex-Offenders

As of June 30, 2018, South Carolina had an inmate population of 18,958. For the FY 2018 (July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018), the S.C. Department of Corrections (SCDC) had 8,585 total releases from its base population. The average age of an inmate was 38.5 years old. African-Americans made up 60 percent of the total with whites at 37 percent and other races at 3 percent. The average sentence length is 14 years. Forty-nine percent of inmates do not have a high school diploma or GED upon incarceration.[6]

The SCDC had numerous individuals reaching achievements in FY 2018, including 324 GED/High School Diplomas earned and 2,333 vocational certificates earned. The SCDC has been authorized as a Department of Labor (DOL) Apprenticeship site, awarding 36 DOL apprenticeship credentials in FY 2018 and 636 WorkKeys certificates.

Beginning July 1, 2018, SCDC, in partnership with the Department of Employment and Workforce, transitioned to the new WIN Learning – Work Ready certification program. WIN replaced WorkKeys with similar skills assessment (Applied Math, Reading for Information, and Locating Information) while adding a soft skills component that will be of profound benefit to inmates' post-release.[7]

People who have been imprisoned face several challenges re-entering society, such as overcoming their past criminal history when seeking employment. Lack of education, poor computer skills, poor people skills, low self-esteem, substance abuse problems, and access to reliable transportation are problems that may be faced by an ex-offender during the job search.

Juvenile Offenders

In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016-17, the S.C. Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) handled 13,591 new cases, down from 15,429 in 2015-2016. The top five offenses putting a person into DJJ custody are assault and battery, shoplifting, public disorderly conduct, simple marijuana possession, and disturbing school.

DJJ's Career Readiness Center (CRC) had a total enrollment of 1,423 for its training classes in FY 2016-17. Students at JRTC took classes in financial literacy, culinary arts, leadership, interviewing skills, public speaking, interpersonal skills, and in many other areas related to life skills and job placement. During FY 2016-17, 901 youth completed job-readiness training in DJJ's 16 community job-readiness training sites, located throughout the state. DJJ doubled its number of training sites from the previous fiscal year and nearly doubled the number of participants.

Low-Income
In 2017, South Carolina had an estimated 752,000 people living below the poverty level or 15.4 percent of the population for whom poverty status is determined. Of this group, nearly 170,000 were employed, and 44,000 were unemployed.[8] Government and educational assistance can help many in this population raise their income to sustain levels. Again COVID-19 has greatly impacted this number and the expectations are the numbers are much higher now.

College Graduation Debt and Retention
A recent 2017 study analyzed the effects of rising post-secondary education costs in comparison to the levels of debt that South Carolinians are taking on and determined the employment outcomes of recent college graduates. Two cohorts of South Carolina college graduates were studied to determine: (1) the percentage of students found working in the state one- and five-years post-graduation, (2) their annual earnings, (3) their median earnings one- and five-years post-graduation, and (4) their industry of employment one- and five-years post-graduation.

Major findings of that report showed:

- 64.9 percent of South Carolina college graduates from FY2009-10 was employed one-year post-graduation, and 50.0 percent were employed five years post-graduation

- Women, African-Americans, in-state students, and those pursuing less than a bachelor's degree were more likely to be found in wage records in S.C. one- and five-years post-graduation. Students majoring in Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) fields were the least likely to be found in wages records post-graduation.

- Retention rates were higher for students that are native to South Carolina (78.6 percent) than those from out-of-state (50.2 percent).

- STEM graduates had the fastest median annual wage growth (9.6 percent) one to five years post-graduation; Trades was second (8.2 percent), and third was Business and Communication (8.1 percent).

- The college majors associated with South Carolina's Talent Pipeline Initiative[11] showed either above-average wages ($35,238) one-year post-graduation or higher than average wage growth (6.3 percent per year) between the first and fifth years. Many of the fields of the study funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) will likely have similar wage outcomes.

Individuals with Disabilities

The diversity of disabilities ranges from those seen such as necessitating the use of a wheelchair or cane, to those unseen, invisible disabilities such as mental illness or substance use disorders. Although many innovative programs and collaborative efforts are in place in South Carolina to expand competitively, integrated employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, data shows that a continued focus on increasing rates of employment and labor force participation is necessary.

Estimates from the American Community Survey in 2017 show that 14.8 percent of the state's civilian, the non-institutionalized population was disabled.[9] The disabled employed equaled nearly 123,000 people aged 18 to 64. Nearly 18,600 more people were unemployed, yielding a disabled unemployment rate of 13.2 percent, substantially over the state's average unemployment levels. The ambulatory difficulty was the most common disability for both those employed and those not in the labor force, while a cognitive difficulty was reported as the most common disability for those who were unemployed.[10] Therefore, this group will continue to need focused services to overcome substantial barriers to employment.

3. **A description of plans for the development and implementation or expansion of sector initiatives for in-demand industry sectors or occupations for the region. Regions should consider:**
   - **Current in-demand industry sectors and occupations within the region;**
   - **The status of regional collaboration in support of the sector initiatives;**
   - **Current sector-based partnerships within the region;**
   - **Data-driven sector priorities within the region;**
   - **The extent of business involvement in current initiatives; and**
   - **Potential public-private partnerships in the region to support sector strategies.**

In 2018, the SC Department of Employment and Workforce (SC DEW) launched Phase III of the Sector Planning, which is Sector Partnerships with the NextGen Consulting team helping to facilitate and guide the regional teams through the next phase.

The goals of Phase III are:

- Develop regional, industry-led sector partnerships that will serve as coordinating bodies for multiple public partners to collaborate effectively with one another and with industry;
- Develop a collaborative state strategy for jointly supporting sector partnerships across SC Department of Commerce, SC Commission on Higher Education, SC Technical College System, SC Department of Employment and Workforce, and other key state-level partners. During phase III,
- The agenda is entirely defined and driven by business leaders and not defined by parameters of grants and existing programs;
- Focus on industry competitiveness and growth versus workforce only;
- Business leaders personally champion priorities and have a stake in solutions versus providing input only;
- A long-term way to respond to changing needs of industry versus a one-time focus group;
- Go-to, shared table to understand and respond to industry's needs versus one more meeting; it is a way of doing business versus a grant or special initiative and;
- Regionally based versus jurisdiction-based

We will use the Next Generation Sector Partnerships model to accomplish this. The South Coast Region launched a Healthcare industry-led sector partnership in July of 2019. It is being modeled after similar, successful partnerships across the country. For businesses, the launch is a forum to identify shared issues, network and troubleshoot together, and define solutions going forward. For public partners in the South Coast Region, they become an effective way for the many different economic developments, education, and training programs in our region to jointly understand the needs of the health care industry, and also help implement shared solutions.

The priorities that come out of the Partnership might be related to specific training needs, talent attraction, or retention strategies; it could be related to regulatory challenges, technology needs, or care coordination. The healthcare Sector Partnership is on-going and the South Coast Region is in the process of launching the Manufacturing Sector partnership.

The team analyzed a comprehensive set of data relating to regional economies, industry sectors, and clusters. The data for each industry cluster was organized by the following three metrics: 1) location quotient (concentration of industry employment in the area as compared to the national average), 2) percentage increase in employment from 2015-2025, and 3) size of employment in the industry.

In conclusion, the following focus areas were agreed upon:

Primary Target Sectors	Secondary Target Sectors
• Diversified Manufacturing • Healthcare	• Construction • Information Technology (IT) & Business Services • Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics (TDL)

The Sector Industries identified in the South Coast Region will align career pathways and career and training services. Both the Trident Workforce and Lowcountry Workforce Development Areas, which is comprised of the South Coast Region, are in full support of the regional sector strategies and are working together on sector strategies to ensure the region meets the in-demand occupational needs. Based on data from multiple sources to include SC Department of Employment and Workforce, previous data from Maher & Maher that runs through 2025, The One Region plan, the Talent Gap Analysis update, and the Technical colleges, the highest two in-demand industry sectors that are common across

the South Coast Region are Manufacturing and Healthcare. Data indicate that the occupational skill needs for Diversified Manufacturing are**:** assemblers, production workers, and machinists. The occupational skill needs identified for healthcare are home health caretakers, personal care aides, medical assistants, and nurses. The data also shows that there are current gaps and predicts future gaps in filling these positions. The next step in the region plan is to assemble a group of regional employers to validate the data and determine the needs of the employers. Professional services such as back-office (business Services) positions will also be included under the sectors. Data shows as industries expand there will be a growing need for positions such as accountants, office managers, and administrative positions**.**

- **The extent of business involvement in current initiatives; and**
- **Potential public-private partnerships in the region to support sector strategies.**

The Region put together a joint regional business service strategy below:

A Regional Integrated Business Services Team (RIBST) that will consist of representatives from the core partner agencies that will work together to deliver coordinated and efficient business services. The team will be responsible for taking the pan and strategies to their perspective local area for delivery and implementation. They will meet at least quarterly to develop strategies that align with the state plan and coordinate. The RIBST will organize employer contacts, job fairs, and hiring events.
Business services staff will focus on building relationships with employers, trade associations, community, civic and non-profit organizations, and use these relationships to better understand the needs of employers and to provide awareness of the available employer services and resources.
Engage with Business Community & Business Organizations

Strategy 1: Business Services Engagement
The team will engage with the business community to create alliances, relationships, partnerships, and strategic alignments by having a presence and being visible where business leaders are. This will include staff engagement in Chambers of Commerce, trade organizations that were appropriate and effective, and the Society of Human Resource Management meetings. The RIBST will meet to develop joint strategies on how they will engage businesses.

Strategy 2: Business Services & Talent Acquisition & Retention
The RIBST will develop presentations to business leaders helping them understand the array of services that the South Coast Region can offer such as:
1. Talent Acquisition
2. Talent Retention
3. Customized Training
4. Assistive Technology Services
5. ADA Consultation

Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP)
The RIBST will develop resources to enable the agencies to fully utilize the Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP) to connect qualified quality applicants to South Coast businesses who are engaged in the
TAP program.

Increase Coordination with WIOA Partner's Business Services

Strategy 3: Coordination of Business Services with WIOA Partners
Regional Integrated Business Service Team (RIBST) will coordinate and collaborate with the core WIOA partner's efforts to build a customer-centered delivery system for South Carolina's businesses by linking the Talent Pipeline Project, Job Driven, Sector Strategies, and Talent Pool Development. This will be accomplished by scheduling regular coordination meetings, sharing information and contacts, and collaborating on meeting business needs.

Seek Opportunities for Customized Training Partnerships
Strategy 4: Technical & Community College Relationship Building
Customized training is a focus of WIOA and all partners including required partners. During PY 2016 RIBST in collaboration with WIOA partners will conduct outreach and relationship building with South Carolina's technical and community colleges to explore potential partnerships for industry responsive customized training initiatives that are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

The status of regional collaboration in support of the sector initiatives is imperative for meeting current and future workforce demands. Collaboratively, educators, school leaders, and industry representatives discuss opportunities for partnerships and work-based learning activities to introduce students to in-demand occupations. Through this collaboration and educational advisory committees, teams can create and implement strategic long-range plans for students' pathways. Currently, there are sector base partnerships with the technical colleges, Adult Education & Family Literacy programs, Vocational Rehabilitation, and Commission of the Blind and Local DEW programs. These pathways address the areas of shortage and growth opportunities in the region. Specific examples of secondary education include:
- Youth apprenticeship opportunities
- Career academies
- Student-run credit unions on high school campuses

This is in agreement with the analysis and recommendations outlined in the Charleston Region Talent Strategy and the One Region plan.

4. **A description of regional service strategies that may be established as a result of the regionally coordinated delivery of services, including the use of cooperative service delivery agreements, when appropriate. Regions should consider:**
    - **Existing service delivery strategies that will be expanded, streamlined, or eliminated;**
    - **New service strategies necessary to address regional education and training needs;**
    - **Strategies to address geographic advantages;**
    - **Approaches to improve services to individuals with disabilities, veterans, youth in or aged out of the foster care system, offenders, or other hard-to-serve populations;**
    - **Strategies to connect the unemployed with work-based learning opportunities; and**
    - **Strategies to integrate existing regional planning efforts among core partners.**

The South Coast Region will engage in service strategies to support the local workforce development system that meets the workforce needs across the planning region. These will include:
  ➢ When it is appropriate, leverage the collective resources of the local area workforce development boards to develop collaborative initiatives that engage with industry-specific associations and aim to reduce duplication in efforts

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➢ Coordinate and convene with the appropriate stakeholders in the communities to encourage collaboration and increase communication of services or activities related to preparation for priority/unemployed job seekers entering the workforce.

➢ Promote a consistent voice and systems across all local area workforce centers and regional partners to ensure a more seamless continuum of services for employer and jobseeker customers throughout the region

➢ Combine expertise across the partners to work with priority populations in a concerted effort in collaborating services thus allowing all partner staff to address talent gaps, basic skills deficiency, effectively regardless of the funding stream or targeted populations they may represent

➢ Coordinate service delivery and partnership alignment to maximize resources and identify and utilize the strengths available through each system

WIOA provides a focus on servicing individuals with barriers to employment as defined in section II and those that are on in the priority population. The Priority population consists of those receiving public assistance, other low-income individuals, and individuals who are basic skills deficient. WIOA will serve K-12 students and other youth, dislocated workers, veterans, career-changers, up-skill, etc.

The South Coast Region has made work-based learning opportunities (OJT, work-experience, apprenticeships, school-to-work) for the unemployed a top priority for the local areas. The Business Services Team has been given the task of ensuring all facets of customers such as youth, adults and dislocated workers have accurate, up to date knowledge/information concerning Work-Based Learning Programs. For youth, programs such as career assessments, work experience, and On-the-Job training are designed to lead to career pathway choices. The region will be adding additional worksites for work experiences and summer employment opportunities each year by partnering with other agencies and new prior partner employers. This will require networking of partnering priorities to address the ever-changing workplace and its requirements. Real-world knowledge is required for the youth to have adequate preparation to be competitive in the workplace.   For adults/dislocated workers, our Region will be working on increasing the numbers of hard to serve populations in the career pathway through various programs. Job seekers will be provided career assessments for job placement, establish and increase workshops to provide additional real-world skills so adults can reenter the workplace with skills to compete. Our Business Services staff has a priority to search out opportunities to match employer's job requirements to increasing skills training such as On the Job training plus assisting job seekers to develop a priority to seek employment in high demand sectors.

Geographic advantages for the South Coast Region include:

➢ **The partner services that are already existing. There is an existing outreach approach in each area and we will collaborate to strengthen the outreach to the seven counties that incorporate the South Coast region.**

➢ **The Ports in both in the counties that make up the South Coast drives economic growth that serves as a competitive advantage for the state. This drives more Businesses wanting to relocate headquarters and/or main facilities to the areas.**

➢ **The South Coast Counties enjoy a robust Hospitality and Tourism industry. This drives the economy and creates jobs in the areas.**

➢ **South Coast counties have seen significant growth in the manufacturing industries as well that offer economic advantages.**

> ➢ **The Trident area has one of the largest transportation systems in place that offers advantages to locals with employment opportunities.**
> ➢ **The Lowcountry area has Palmetto Breeze transportation system that serves hundreds of riders daily for employment opportunities in the hospitality and tourism industry in Hilton Head. Service is also made available for individuals needing to visit a SC Work Center, education entities and occupational skills training facilities throughout the Lowcountry.**
> ➢ **Easy access to I-26 & I-526 gives traveling with long hauls quick access which is an advantage for the South Coast Region Counties.**
> ➢ **South Coast offers a Business-friendly atmosphere and tends to attract more business to what is known as the Lowcountry that includes all of the counties that make up the South Coast Region.**

The South Coast Region's strategy to address the advantages is:

Utilizing the South Coast Regional Industry Sector Strategy approach. An industry Sector Strategy will be launched for each of the in-demand sectors identified in the South Coast Region.

Each industry will have a sector partner launch. During the sector partnership, industries will identify pain points/needs that affect all or most companies within the industry and cannot be addressed/solved alone.

Public partners will support the industry by addressing actionable items and solutions.

The South Coast will engage in regional Business services as a team to address the advantages:

- **The team members will identify business /industry needs in the Trident and Lowcountry Workforce Areas such as job recruitment for employers in Healthcare.**
- **The team will create strategies and solutions that will address industry needs**
- **Create recruitment/outreach strategies for the region based on the industry needs**
- **Cross-training staff and partners so we are speaking the same language is on-going**
- **Strategize on transportation gaps to assist the region is still an on-going goal**

This will require all staff from intake to partners to understand their respective roles and execute the plan to seamlessly serve all customers to include those listed under customers with barriers to employment. Staff and partner training will be done on a local and regional level to ensure everyone is using the same language and executing the plan once approved.

South Carolina Vocational Rehabilitation Department (SCVRD) provides individualized services across the state through a network of area offices, job readiness training centers, comprehensive evaluation centers, substance abuse treatment centers, and staff that serve clients at various itinerant sites such as SC Works, local high schools, and community mental health centers. The South Coast region has four VR area offices and four job readiness training centers with locations in Beaufort, Charleston, Moncks Corner, and Walterboro.

Through a team approach, SCVRD staff work to prepare consumers for employment opportunities within their local labor market, as well as develop relationships with business and industry to individually match consumers with employment opportunities that fit their strengths, abilities, capabilities, and skillsets. Comprehensive programs, including occupational therapy and physical therapy

services, rehabilitation engineering, IT training centers, and residential alcohol and drug recovery center further expand the capacity of SCVRD to meet the individualized needs of eligible individuals with disabilities.

SCVRD also works with employers and employees by providing job retention services. Individuals experiencing physical or emotional concerns jeopardizing work performance (including alcohol and other substance abuse) may seek assistance. Employees can apply for VR services on their own, or an employer can make the referral.

People with disabilities who exit the SCVRD program with a successful employment outcome enhance the quality of their lives and their families' lives by earning paychecks, lessening their reliance on government assistance, and stimulating the state's economy by paying taxes, making purchases, and ultimately contributing to the state's return on its investment in their services.

5. **A description of any administrative cost arrangements that currently exist or that will be established within the region, including the pooling of funds for administrative costs, as appropriate. Regions should consider:**
   - **Current or proposed resource leveraging agreements; and**
   - **The establishment of a process to evaluate cost-sharing arrangements.**

The South Coast Region will not pursue administrative cost agreements. Currently, each local area has its unique budget structure and cost allocation plan that does not permit a regional administrative cost arrangement at this time.

6. **A description of how transportation, access to childcare, or other supportive services are coordinated within the region, as appropriate. Regions should consider:**
   - **How the provision of transportation or other supportive services could be enhanced regionally;**
   - **What organizations currently provide or could provide supportive services; and**
   - **Establishing a process to promote coordination of the delivery of supportive services.**

Van Pool is a form of transportation that is being discussed and may serve as a regional transportation solution. The idea is to have vans that will serve a specific population/employer's needs for transportation. The best practice for childcare is to partner with agencies that provide childcare such as First Steps, ABC Vouchers through DSS and the on-site head start programs.

The South Coast Planning Region's strategy for the coordination of transportation and other supportive services will center on using the collective voice of the region to approach agencies and negotiate competitive rates. This should improve the accessibility and affordability of these services to its customers. The region anticipates that the size and volume of its customer base will contribute to its ability to negotiate the best possible value for these services. The region will prioritize these efforts based on the most prevalent needs of customers across the region (e.g., transportation services, childcare). This will require the local area workforce development boards to develop a comprehensive understanding of each other's local area needs and available resources. Workforce boards will acquire this knowledge

through regular informal meetings as well as through formal regional planning sessions, as described above.

Transportation has always been an issue in rural areas of the South Coast Region - there is a lack of infrastructure and accessible availability of regional public transportation. Even in higher population areas, such as Charleston, where there are city buses, the hours and geographic coverage area is limited. This is important especially for night shift or swing shift workers who rely on public transit as their only option. There is also a significant shortage in the area of CDL drivers, including school bus drivers. There is also a need for services to assist individuals with medical transportation, including access to hospitals and mental health treatment centers. There are several local efforts, but there are many barriers to a coordinated regional solution. This is also a focus for expansion of the Tourism and Hospitality sectors - having public transportation options for visitors is a key factor for increasing tourism. This is also important for offenders - when offenders are released back into the community, they rarely have transportation of their own and thus rely on public transportation options when looking for work.

The South Coast region will advocate for more infrastructure to address transportation and other support services deficiencies.

7. **A description of how workforce development services are coordinated with economic development services and providers within the region. Regions should consider:**
   - **Current economic development organizations engaged in regional planning; and**
   - **Education and training providers are involved with economic development.**

Economic Development organizations, Education, and training providers are essential to the success of the South Coast Region in sector strategies partnerships. Economic Development and Education service providers serve on the South Coast Core regional team as we move forward with sector partnerships. The first launch will be in Healthcare. These organizations have been involved with the development of the launch plans from the very beginning, and all partners have worked together to develop the action plan to ensure a successful launch of the healthcare sector and we are continuing to work together for the launch of the Manufacturing Sector partnership.

Workforce development services are coordinated with education and training providers throughout the region. Collaboration with providers is included in conversations revolving around planning for growth and economic development. Regional planning assesses training needs for upcoming employment opportunities while sustaining current industry needs. Education and training providers collaborate through civic organizations, government agencies, private industries, and public forums to address economic development. Various groups meet regularly to maintain an open line of communication. Locally, chambers of commerce provide public school districts with data detailing workforce talent demands. Workforce data drives skills-based training programs in high schools. Completion of those programs coupled with industry credentials provides industries with graduates prepared for entry-level positions. A specific example includes the partnership with Trident Technical College, the Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce, and public-school districts in the tri-county to fulfill workforce needs in specific occupational areas as defined in the Talent Demand Study for the Charleston Metro area.

Through Career and Technology, Education (CATE) students are exposed to a variety of viable career options and are prepared for fast-growing, high-paying jobs in high-growth occupations – including healthcare, the skilled trades, STEM, information technology, and marketing[45]. Classroom instruction and student experiences are linked to career clusters. Career clusters connect what students learn in school with the knowledge and skills they need for success in college and careers. Each career cluster identifies

different pathways from secondary school to two- and four-year colleges, graduate school, and the workplace. Exposure to career pathways in these fields is one way to change the outdated perception of manufacturing and other STEM-related fields that contributes to the SC workforce skills gap.

Over 300 Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses were offered in secondary schools in 2012-13 and approximately 186,000 students were enrolled in at least one CTE course in the same academic year. The Graduation Rate for CTE students who complete at least four courses in a state-approved CTE program was 95% (as compared to the state average of 77.5%) and the Placement Rate into post-secondary education, employment, or military service was 96.5%. High school students also have the opportunity to participate in dual enrollment, which allows students to be enrolled in high school while earning credits toward a college degree, diploma, or certificate. The Community College Research Center's recent study found that dual enrollment participation is positively related to a range of college outcomes, including college enrollment and persistence, greater credit accumulation, and a higher college GPA.

S.C. Technical College System provides 95% of the state's dual enrollment programs[49]; serves more than a quarter-million South Carolinians each year and educates more undergraduates than all other public higher education institutions combined[50]. The System has three main components – the technical colleges, ReadySC™, and Apprenticeship Carolina™. The 16 colleges combined offer 77 degrees, 28 diplomas, and 1,078 certificates. Nearly 90% of graduates from the SC Technical College System are placed in a job related to their field of study or continuing their studies and further their education. The colleges also provide education and training for WIOA participants and SCVRD/SCCB, clients. Adult Education has MOAs with all 16 local technical colleges to provide reciprocal referrals where appropriate and many Adult Education programs are partnering with technical colleges to establish dual enrollment programs.

S.C. Technical College System and S.C. Department of Education are co-chairs and key partners serving on the Talent Pipeline State Leadership Team. Regionally, local technical colleges, guidance counselors, superintendents, and other education partners will collaborate with the workforce, economic development, and other significant stakeholders to develop regional sector initiatives that help close the workforce skills gap. The colleges also partner with business and industry to provide training for new and incumbent workers. The other components of the System - ReadySC™ and Apprenticeship Carolina™ - focus on the recruiting and initial training needs of new and expanding organizations, and building awareness, and increasing the use of Registered Apprenticeships. ReadySC™ and Apprenticeship Carolina™ representatives serve on the BSTs, which include core partner programs and several mandatory and optional one-stop partners as well, and work closely with workforce and economic development to identify and meet the needs of business and industry. Additionally, an apprenticeship liaison in each LWDA serves as the link between businesses and Apprenticeship Carolina™.

There are several economic development entities, including, but not limited to the S.C. Department of Commerce, ReadySC™, and county and regional economic alliances. Workforce development programs and activities are well coordinated with economic development entities.

Sector Strategies/South Carolina Talent Pipeline Project
S.C. Department of Commerce is a co-chair of the Talent Pipeline State Leadership Team partnering with DEW, S.C. Technical College System, and S.C. Department of Education to adopt a sector strategies approach to developing a skilled talent pipeline for South Carolina's business community. S.C. Department of Commerce Regional Workforce Advisors (RWA) and economic alliances are partnering with workforce and education entities to develop and implement sector strategies on a regional basis.

S.C. Certified Work Ready Communities

S.C. Department of Commerce was a member of the CWRC state leadership team formed to implement this initiative and continues to be a strong supporter. Likewise, at the county-level, economic developers have played a vital role in recruiting business support and helping counties earn the Certified Work Ready Community designation as a strategy for meeting the talent needs of employers. The state of South Carolina is no longer engaged in the Work Ready initiative. WIN is currently the career readiness assessment tool used in South Carolina to gauge an individual's job readiness skills.

Business Services Teams

South Coast Integrated Business Services Team (IBST) consisting of members who represent a variety of workforce and economic development entities.

Regional Alliances and other economic development organizations engaged in workforce development that is partnering with the South Coast are the economic development directors in each workforce area, ReadySC representative, and SC Department of Commerce. The Economic Directors or a representative participates on a committee to review Incumbent Worker Training (IWT) applications. This keeps all organizations aware of business services and on-going initiatives. Economic partners from the counties that make up the region have been involved in the region plan committee and instrumental in writing the plan. The Charleston Regional Development Alliance (CRDA) supports all counties in the Trident Area has been involved in the writing of the region plan and is instrumental in providing crucial information that involved both Trident and Lowcountry regarding the growth and commuting patterns between the areas. The region's plan is closely aligned with the CRDA's goals and strategies. A strong relationship is established with the Charleston Metro-Chamber. They have a representative to partner with us on the Business Service Team and have provided data to support findings on in-demand occupational skill needs for the region that can be found in the Talent Demand Analysis update.

8. **A description of the region's plan regarding the coordination of local performance negotiations. Each local area will continue to negotiate performance goals with the state and will remain ultimately responsible for ensuring performance meets or exceeds the agreed-upon goals.**

   Each local area will continue to negotiate local performance separately. Regional coordination of performance measures will become a part of the South Coast Sector Strategy partnership. As a region, we will look to create our own goals that may not be a part of the local goals such as expanding the business service team and possibly shared staff. We may devise performance goals around training expectations and outcomes since this has been identified in at least the two-sector partnerships that have been launched. Further, the South Coast Regional Team will look at creating performance goals that affect both areas of businesses such as transportation for the workforce.

   Listed below are the Performance Measures as outlined in the WIOA Law that the programs will be held accountable for and evaluated on.

   1. **Employment Rate 2nd Quarter After Exit**: Percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program

2. **Youth Education or training, or employment 2nd quarter after program exit:** Title I Youth Program Only: "percentage of program participants who are in education or training, or unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program"

3. **Employment Rate 4th Quarter After Exit:** Percentage of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program

4. **Youth Education or training, or employment 4th quarter after program exit:** Title I Youth Program Only: "percentage of program participants who are in education or training, or unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program

5. **Median Earnings 2nd Quarter After Exit** Median earnings of program participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program Median is the middle number of a series. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 20

6. **Post-secondary credential attainment during program participation or within 1 year after program exit or secondary school diploma or equivalent:** Percentage of program participants who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma or its recognized equivalent during participation in or within 1 year after exiting from the program. Secondary School Diploma/Equivalent Diploma: Counts only if the participant is employed or enrolled in a training program leading to a recognized postsecondary credential within 1 year after exiting from the program.

7. **Measure Skills gains:** Percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary credential or employment and who are achieving measurable skill gains toward such a credential or employment. Percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized postsecondary.

-   **Indicator(s) of effectiveness in serving employers**: Based on State Instruction number 17-01, Change 1, one of the primary indicators of performance required by WIOA is Effectiveness in Serving Employers (ESE). The performance measures currently used in South Carolina include:
-   Employer Penetration Rate and
-   Repeat Business Customers

The new ESE performance indicator makes tracking employer services in SC Works Online System (SCWOS) vitally important. Employers that receive services outlined in the employer service activity codes must be registered and approved in SCWOS.

Regional Plan Signatures

Local Workforce Development Boards:

Lowcountry Workforce Development Board
Name: Chair

_____ _____
Signature   Date

Trident Workforce Development Board
Name: Dottie Karst   Chair

_____ _____
Signature   Date

Local Grant Recipient Signatory Officials:

Lowcountry Workforce Development Area

Name: **Title:**

_____ _____
Signature   Date

Trident Workforce Development Area

Name: Ronald E. Mitchum   **Title:** Executive Director of the BCDCOG

_____ _____   _____ _____
Signature   Date   Signature   Date