



## Region One Growth Strategies & Metrics

### Talent Development

***Alignment at all levels; coordinate programs across the educational spectrum, from Pre-K to post-graduate degree levels, as well as workforce initiatives; align with industry needs/expectations and economic development targets***

Access to quality workforce is fundamental to industry growth. Aligning educational programming with industry needs is a common theme of every regional economic development conversation. Improvement in this area will support existing and new regional employers.

Region One seeks to invest in the continued alignment at all levels of the educational infrastructure with the articulated needs of business and industry and strengthen the talent pipeline through the following strategies.

#### 2019 Strategies for Talent Development

- Strategy 1: Align education and training programs with needs and expectations of target industries; strengthen communication between educational providers and target industries
- Strategy 2: Build a strong pipeline of participants for programs (certifications, associates, bachelors or above) valued by the target market employers; promote career pathways
- Strategy 3: Increase awareness of occupational, educational, and workforce opportunities available in the region
- Strategy 4: Increase industry recognized certifications, credentials and degrees related to the target industries

Focused attention to the strategies mentioned above will directly underpin growth in the GO Virginia Region One targeted industries. As of the updating of this plan, a number of initiatives are underway which address one or more of the strategies above. Most notably, is the Ignite Internships initiative implemented by strategic partner, United Way of Southwest Virginia. For more details on the Ignite project and others addressing the talent pipeline, please see Region One Approved Projects.

Additionally, working groups aligned with the target industries and pipeline development activities generated by the Region One Council are beginning to yield broad regional projects, which include developing an action plan for use of reclaimed mine land for agricultural purposes, inventorying the technical education and training programs available throughout the region and exploring opportunities to build a virtual workforce skilled to address information technology needs of employers within the GO Virginia Region One geography and beyond.

Although not an exhaustive list of potential GO Virginia fundable projects, the following chart contains examples of projects which support the increase of the talent pipeline in Region One.

### Potential Funding Opportunities

- Activities which strengthen relationships and communication channels between educational entities and each target industry
- Activities which facilitate easy access to various programs such as establishing primary points of contact for coordinating workforce and economic development projects and assist businesses in navigating different programs – a champion to advocate for continuous alignment of programs with expressed needs
- Efforts to ensure pathways from various levels of educational programs to careers are clearly outlined and promoted
- Efforts which support innovative and flexible avenues for assisting existing training programs to recruit registrants helping to broaden mindsets to a variety of new employment cluster opportunities
- Initiatives which incentivize enrollment into programs identified as critical to the growth of existing businesses
- Activities which assist with designations as a Work Ready Community (WRC) to improve the region's ratings as it relates to industry recognized credentials; build credentials and certifications that are transferable between industries and geographic areas
- Activities which create and promote meaningful internship and apprenticeship programs engaging youth from high school to college in target industries
- Initiatives which introduce the region's youth to occupational career opportunities early – preferably in middle school
- Initiatives which educate career coaches, guidance counselors, parents and grandparents of occupational opportunities

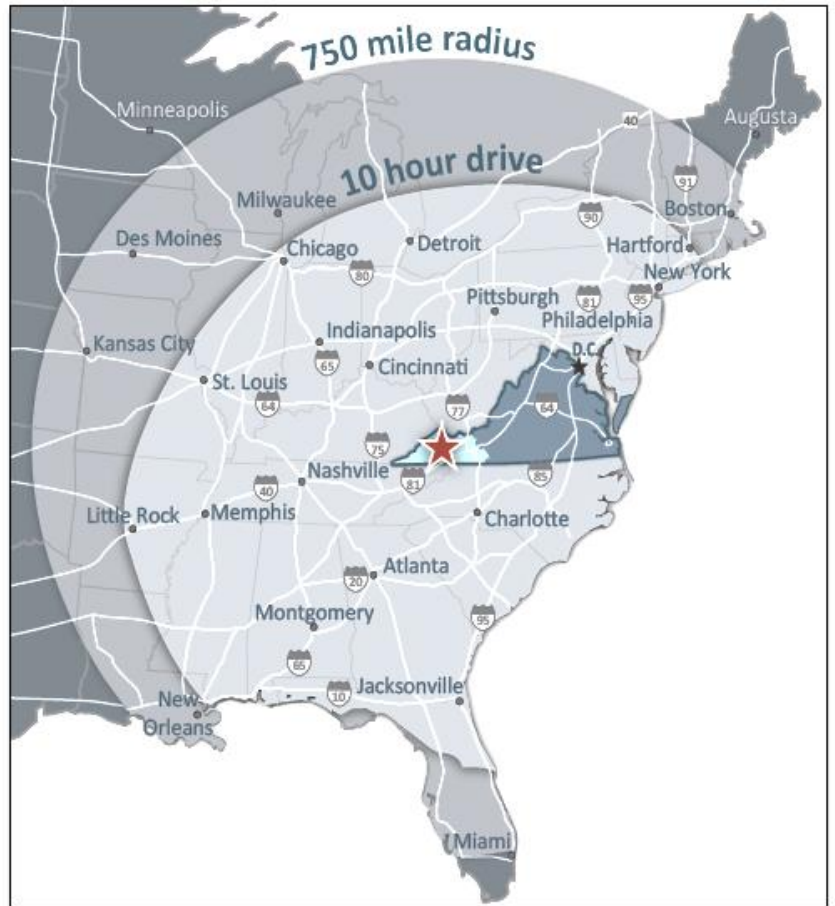
Projects that are eligible for GO Virginia funding will be measured using the Talent Development metrics listed below.

Talent Development Potential Metrics	
# of students trained	# of credentials awarded
# of upskilled employees	% of students receiving credentials
# of new jobs created	# of students enrolled in dual enrollment programs
# of existing jobs retained	Average wages of jobs created
# of businesses served	Average increase in wages for trainees/graduates
# of internships completed	Leveraged private investment
# of apprenticeships completed	Leveraged public investment
# of new programs/credentials implemented	

## Sites & Infrastructure

### **Invest in “ready-to-go” industrial sites which are certified for target industries**

A priority of GO VA Region One is to enhance the availability of development-ready sites across the three planning districts. The size and characterization (tier rating) of industrial and technology sites vary across GO VA Region One and since the development of the original Growth and Development Plan, progress has been made within this area of focus. The result of the VEDP Site Characterization Study will be used to make investment decisions in the existing and potential sites across Region One. Second only to an adequately trained and abundant workforce, development-ready sites are the most critical factor in site selection decisions.



Southwest Virginia's location offers access to 14 state capitals within 500 miles and is strategically positioned to reach half of the U.S. population within a day's drive. The region, which borders North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky and West Virginia, has market access to the eastern and Midwest United States and a robust transportation network that connects with major North-South and East-West roadways.

### **2019 Strategies for Sites and Infrastructure**

- Strategy 1: Ensure existing and new sites are certified for targeted industries; advance existing sites based upon the VEDP characterization study and fully leverage the Virginia Business Site Readiness Program (VBRSP)
- Strategy 2: Assess and upgrade utilities and broadband to remain competitive
- Strategy 3: Leverage newly created and existing Regional Industrial Facility Authorities (RIFAs) to establish larger, regional industrial sites attractive to target industries

Leveraging resources to address the underpinning strategies referenced above create a foundation on which all four of the GO Virginia Region One targeted industries may grow. The region has numerous ongoing efforts which address one or more of the strategies above. Most notably, work is underway to assess the best and highest uses of reclaim mine land for industrial and agricultural purposes. An action plan is being developed to specifically support the region's opportunities to expand in the cattle and grain industry and a solar playbook is under construction.

Once completed, the playbook will inform decisions made in the advancement of various industrial and technology sites across the region.

The following chart highlights a few examples of potential GO Virginia fundable projects which will aid in the effort to enhance the supply of industrial and technology sites available for economic development purposes.

Potential Funding Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts to inventory and assess industrial and technology parks and identify needed infrastructure benchmarking against industry target needs (for sites not included in the VEDP Characterization Study); maintain inventory</li> <li>• Initiatives supporting certification of industrial parks for specific industry targets</li> <li>• Activities encouraging collaboration for joint site development for shared revenue opportunities</li> <li>• Activities which leverage tools such as Opportunity Zones, Enterprise Zones, HB222 and the Collaborative Jobs Act</li> <li>• Efforts to upgrade/maintain utilities including broadband to industrial and technology sites</li> <li>• Strengthen the existing and newly formed Regional Industrial Facility Authorities to enable the development of revenue sharing opportunities for regional parks; encourage collaboration between the RIFAs</li> </ul>

Projects that are eligible for GO Virginia funding will be measured using the following Sites and Infrastructure metrics.

Sites & Infrastructure Potential Metrics	
# of jobs created	Investment in marketing site
# of existing jobs retained	# of projects (active company recruitment files)
# of businesses served	# of prospects (active company visits)
# of acres advanced to higher tier per VBRSP	# of businesses attracted
Total square footage of new space developed	Average wages of jobs created
# of linear feet of water infrastructure constructed	Leveraged private investment
# of linear feet of sewer infrastructure constructed	Leveraged public investment
Water capacity – million gallons per day (MGD)	Revenues increased from export-sales
Sewer capacity – million gallons per day (MGD)	

## VEDP Site Characterization Study

Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) is undertaking a site characterization study to include all 25+ acre sites in VEDP's Virginia SCAN. This work is part of the Virginia Business Ready Site Program (VBRSP) that will characterize sites into a tier system and make recommendations and cost estimates of what is needed to advance sites to a Tier 4 status. The final report is expected to be available fall 2019.

Working with localities and economic development organizations within Region One, VEDP has identified 23 sites in the region that are still available and meet the criteria to be included in the study. Of the 23 sites, 21 sites have opted in to be included in the study. Three of the 21 sites contain parcels that will be studied to determine if they qualify for a different tier than the overall industrial or technology park they reside in.

Two parks in Region One are graded Business Ready Site Program Tier 4, which include Wildwood Commerce Park and Bluestone Regional Business and Technology Center. Wythe County Progress Park's main park is graded Tier 3, while two of its parcels are each Tier 4. Two additional sites in Region One have been previously graded to include Leatherwood and Wildwood II, which are both Tier 1. The total acreage of sites in Region One that have been graded is over 4,000. The remaining sites in Region One have not been graded.

The characterization will produce a report for each site that will include the following:

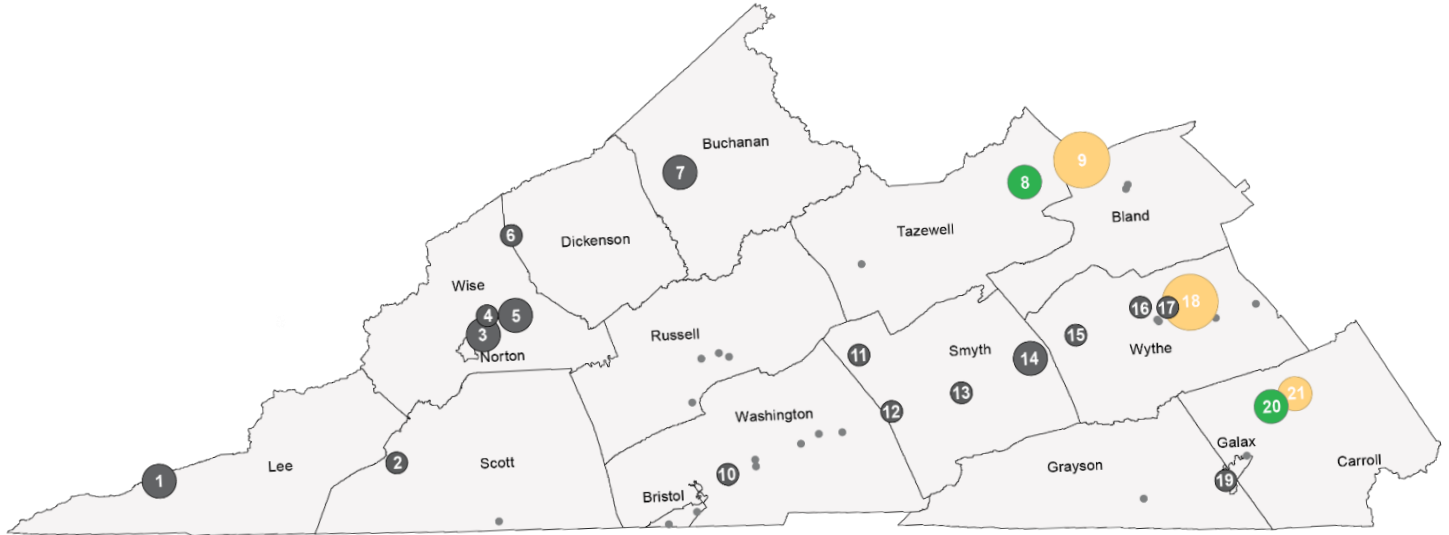
- Summary of the site including site attributes integral to development and selection
- Current Tier Level (1-5) to provide a rating for site readiness
- List of items and next steps to advance tier levels and cost estimates for each step
- Site diagram with the potential build-out of the site

The following map displays the 21 sites in Region One that qualify for the characterization study, including their current Tier Level. The map also includes the Region One sites that are available and marketed, but did not qualify for the characterization study.

## VEDP Site Characterization Map

### 25+ acre industrial sites involved in current batch characterization process

- Business Ready Site (previously certified)
- Previously characterized site (Tier 1-3)
- No previous assessment
- 25-99 contiguous acres
- 100-499 contiguous acres
- 500 or more contiguous acres
- Other available sites not involved in current characterization project



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|---|---|
| <p>1 Constitutional Oaks Industrial Park</p> <p>2 Scott County Regional Business and Technology Park</p> <p>3 Project Intersection</p> <p>4 U.S. 23 Site</p> <p>5 Lonesome Pine Business and Technology Park</p> <p>6 Coalfield Regional Industrial Park</p> <p>7 Southern Gap Business Park</p> <p>8 Bluestone Regional Business &amp; Technology Center</p> <p>9 Leatherwood Site</p> <p>10 Oak Park Center For Business and Industry<br/>(full park and 5 parcels)</p> <p>11 North Fork Site</p> | <p>12 Pathway Park</p> <p>13 Hull Property</p> <p>14 Former Brick Plant</p> <p>15 I- 81 Smyth Holdings Group Site</p> <p>16 Fairview Park Commerce Centre</p> <p>17 I-81 Campbell Site</p> <p>18 Wythe County Progress Park (full park and 3 parcels)<br/>(two interior parcels were previously certified)</p> <p>19 Blue Ridge Crossroads Commerce Park</p> <p>20 Wildwood Commerce Park (full park and one parcel)<br/>(interior parcel was previously certified)</p> <p>21 Wildwood II</p> |
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## Innovation & Scale Up Support

### ***Build an ecosystem to encourage innovation and to support the creation and expansion of new, emerging and existing businesses***

Rural regions are often characterized by having low entrepreneurial and innovation activities. However, most measures used include number of patents, research dollars spent and R&D activities. A recent study conducted by the Economic Research Services and the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development indicates that innovative companies in rural areas actually increase hourly wages and expand markets. Small business start-ups are an important source of job creation in a region, spurring innovation and competition and driving productivity growth.

In 2017, jobs created by small businesses in SWVA contributed to 41.6% of the job growth in GO VA Region One, above their average contributions in Virginia (36.1%). This is an increase from 36.9% in 2010. The region has placed an emphasis on entrepreneurial support since the creation of the Blueprint for Entrepreneurial Growth and Economic Prosperity in 2012 and the establishment of Opportunity SWVA, a network of small business support organizations. The next step for the region is to invest in supporting scale up activities and build a culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, which leads to the creation of high-growth companies.

TEconomy Partners' assessment of growth and scalability of entrepreneurship in Region One pointed to the region's strength of entrepreneurial development in industry target growth.

<b>Industry Cluster</b>	<b>Economic Development Position in Region</b>	<b>Contribution of Entrepreneurship</b>
Agriculture & Food Processing	Emerging Strength	<b>Very Significant</b>
Energy, Natural Resources, & Finished Products	Specialized/Declining	<b>Very Significant</b>
Information Technology & Communications Services	Emerging Strength	<b>Significant</b>
Manufacturing	Specialized/Declining	<b>Very Significant</b>

**GO VA Region One is focused on supporting existing employers, encouraging innovation through research and development, new market/product development as well as encouraging entrepreneurial ventures.**

### **2019 Strategies for Innovation and Scale Up Support**

- Strategy 1: Develop approach to addressing recommendations in the Spring 2019 TEconomy Partners Report listed below. Select slides from the full report are included in the appendix.
- Promote and develop stronger ideation programming, resources targeting traded sector opportunities.
  - Establish intensive accelerator programming and domain-specific resources to advance, scale promising early-stage startups.
  - Address need for more startup risk capital for early-stage market entry by traded sector companies in the region.
- Strategy 2: Determine the region's approach to identifying a regional entrepreneurship and innovation "coordinating entity" to focus on high-growth company development
- Strategy 3: Develop programming at all levels of the educational infrastructure supporting innovation and entrepreneurship

The region has made strides in coming together around the support of entrepreneurs and small businesses through Opportunity SWVA, a network of entrepreneurial support organizations operating in the region. The work of this group has yielded growth in the lifestyle businesses formed in the region, however, little activity in the scalable and innovative business sectors has taken place. This underscores the importance of access to capital and the need to establish a "coordinating entity". Numerous business challenge competitions take place in the region annually and most are associated with training related to small business startup needs.

The development of The Oxbow Center accelerator will address recommendations made by TEconomy in that no accelerator program exists in GO Virginia Region One.

The innovation and scale up strategies support all four GO Virginia Region One target industries. Opportunities exist for individuals to start their own businesses in the region, but there is a need for existing industry to increase R&D activities leading to new products and new markets.

Examples of activities and initiatives which support the development of the innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem in Region One are included in the following chart.



### Potential Funding Opportunities

- Programs designed to assist existing companies with evolving their business focusing on accelerated product, service, market and operational initiatives leading to new profitable growth opportunities
- Activities analyzing supply chains serving existing industry and new outlets for local agricultural assets
- Efforts to leverage HUB Zones and Opportunity Zones, educating existing businesses of the benefits and emphasize their presence in economic development outreach/marketing
- Activities to increase Research and Development activity including SBIR/STTR grants
- Encouraging the development of programs supporting intrapreneurship – innovation within existing and growing businesses
- Establishing accelerator programs
- Programs encouraging mentorship and peer-to-peer networks among entrepreneurs
- Activities encouraging GO VA 1 business-to-business relationships
- Enhancing K12 entrepreneurship education
- Activities leveraging opportunities for tech transfer and commercialization of university and college discoveries

Projects that are eligible for GO Virginia funding will be measured using the Innovation & Scale Up Support metrics listed below.

Innovation & Scale Up Support Potential Metrics	
# of jobs created	Total capital deployed
# of existing jobs retained	Research and development funding deployed
Average wages of jobs created	New products completed/released to production
Increase in average employee wages	Total patents filed
# of new programs/credentials implemented	Total patents pending
# of credentials awarded	Total patents awarded
# of businesses attracted	# of fund investments
# of businesses retained	Average deal size
# of existing businesses expanded	# of businesses applying for fund investments
# of new businesses created	# of businesses interviewed for fund investments
# of businesses served	# of businesses evaluated for fund investments
Leveraged private investment	Return on Investment (ROI) for deployed funds
Leveraged public investment	Internal Rate of Return (IRR) for deployed funds
Total capital raised	Revenues increased from export-sales