

757 Placemaking & Marketing

Committee Action Plan

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Pandemic Impact

Some would argue COVID-19 has affected Placemaking and Place Marketing as much as other industries and sectors that rely on consumer spending. As a result, people are reevaluating the importance of community. What made a place attractive before may not be relevant now. Placemaking supports ongoing evolution by reimagining and reinventing public spaces. In this COVID-19 world, leaders have a responsibility to reinvent our spaces in a way that will encourage locals to enjoy safe experiences according to the new social distancing requirements. Place marketing is the strategy to promote a place by attracting people to visit or invest their money in a business at that place. Leaders and locals must adopt a unified regional brand to attract domestic and international visitors to work, play, and invest here.

The regional branding initiative, “Envision2020”, backed by a nine-month research effort including surveys of more than 3,000 people, found “The-757” regional brand resonates most strongly across communities in Hampton Roads. As this study concluded at the end of 2019, there were plans to secure public and private investors but the pandemic and tough economic times shifted plans to grassroots

efforts. Several 40-and-under young professionals have since built a social media presence using the handle @757Proud. It's become a platform for people, especially the next generation, to celebrate the region and cultivate thoughtful dialogue about how to keep the needle pointed in the right direction. Although the participants are volunteers, they feel that regional pride needs to remain relevant – especially in these challenging times.

One resulting project was the procurement of “757” themed face masks, paid for by the Hampton Roads Alliance who is spearheading the regional branding initiative. The 757 leaders distributed these masks to people in the community and encouraged them to share a photo on social media wearing their mask and stating why they are #757Proud. The social campaign and attractive masks were such a hit that the Alliance began taking bulk orders. To-date: over 4,000 have been distributed to business leaders, military members, and residents across the region. The artwork on the masks was designed by a class of Princess Anne High School Students who attended the 757 regional branding presentation. Inspired by the initiative, they organized themselves to work around the theme of regional unity and pride, and this artwork was a result. At the time, pre-pandemic, they imagined the design on stickers or t-shirts but now the face mask artwork seems to be the most in demand swag!

COVID-19 impacted place marketing plans historically proven to drive economic growth and regional unity. Festivals, such as the 2nd Annual Something in The Water (SITW) which planned to incorporate the 757 brand, were canceled before the summer peak. This festival was not only important to our locals but the many visitors coming from different cities. According to the Virginia Tourism company, residents from Virginia Beach, Williamsburg, Norfolk, Richmond, and Newport News visit cities in Virginia. The average spending per day by a tourist amounts to \$694 per trip and over an average of 2.8 nights per trip. Additionally, the months with the highest percentage of travel to Hampton Roads are April, June, July, and August, which is unfortunately the time when COVID-19 has been most prominent. On the positive side, more grassroot organizations and movements have gained traction and risen to the spotlight.

Organizations such as the *Voices of Virginia* came about because of COVID and the social justice movement to shed light on racism and police politics in the Hampton Roads Area. Our region was fortunate to have many peaceful protests, including when the Norfolk Police Chief Larry Boone marched with protestors rallying against the death of George Floyd and police brutality. *Voices of Virginia* and SITW have created spaces where marginalized groups can be heard and seen, which improves our placemaking. Whether these organizations focus on social justice or the betterment of our community, the pandemic has given them more recognition.

The increase in local pride and regional collaboration is one of the features that sets Hampton Roads apart from other coastal metropolitan areas. Our residents are resilient and, although the crisis has forced us to shift strategies, the overall morale remains optimistic. Despite COVID-19 and stay-at-home restrictions, more than two-thirds of respondents rated the quality of life in the region as excellent or good (67.4%). About one in four rated Hampton Roads' quality of life as fair (25.8%) and 4.1% rated it as poor.

Current State of Placemaking & Place Marketing

A major theme in place making and place marketing is pride in local ownership. In response to COVID-19, our residents and community organizations in the 757 have come together in unprecedented ways to help our neighbors and local businesses hit hard by the pandemic. For example, our region's restaurant industry was severely impacted, like many others in the country. In response, our community has rallied around our local restaurants as they re-opened for delivery and curbside service. In many cases, restaurants have had to re-invent their menu, their hours of operation, and even their business model to survive. A Facebook group called Hampton Roads Restaurants – Take out, Delivery & Dine In Options has grown to over 66,000 members. Cathy Lewis and a group of colleagues started a Facebook Page called Mask-Friendly Businesses in the 757 (more than 3,000 members) to help

educate people about local businesses who working to provide safe experiences for their customers.

Pharrell, the creator of SITW and a local from Virginia Beach, has shifted the festival's focus to COVID, voting, and helping locals in the community – and we are incredibly fortunate that Pharrell understands the larger role that the festival has to play in our community and our region as a whole. SITW is not just a series of concerts, it's about the community coming together, embracing one another for our differences, giving back, showcasing our local talent and other assets, and showing the world how the 757 can be a place where everyone can succeed and feel a part of the community, regardless of their background. Other people, including businesses, non-profits and governments, have adopted “stronger together” messaging platforms that also have a local-pride focus. Marketing campaign themes include “Stop the Spread”, #StrongerTogether, #FlattenTheCurve, #MaskUp757 and ways to “Keep the Normal” while this pandemic has shifted our everyday life.

Without a doubt, Hampton Roads is known for its incredible assets. It's not just the 3,000 miles of coastline, our rich and unique history as America's first region, or our diversity and unique polycentric area of 17 unique localities, but we have big city amenities coupled with the communal feel of a small town. Amidst the national migration from big cities to urban areas, our rich quality of life positions Hampton Roads to become the next region of tomorrow. [Wall Street Journal Article and VEDP] Hampton Roads is connected through its coastal lifestyle but also its diverse population. As a result, we have a growing quest for inclusion and are on track to be the big tent community where everyone belongs and thrives.

Challenges

1. Lack of Regional Identity, Pride, Shared Priorities and Collaboration

- a. We lack a regional image, “Hampton Roads” is hard to place on a map, and both HR and “The 757” are not place-based names. Local residents don't know our region is made up of 17

localities, from Williamsburg to Virginia Beach. There's an established belief that our localities do not work well together – and the perception has been well-deserved until recently, but the narrative that “we don't cooperate well” still persists.

b. We have a shortage of regional ambassadors and the public at-large is unaware of the significant advances leaders have made thus far. There is no clear, unified, public relations/marketing campaign to serve as a vehicle for celebrating our region's assets and informing the public about the great many offerings we have.

2. Lack of Personal and Professional Resources for Engagement, Opportunities, Necessities, and Growth

a. People from diverse backgrounds (age, gender, race, ethnicity, religious, economic, educational) feel they do not have equal access to meaningful opportunities for professional growth and community engagement.

b. We keep losing young talent because we don't market ourselves as, or embrace the notion that we already are, an “exciting” place to live, work and play. We also struggle to deliver the high-paying jobs that a talented workforce demands. Our region has been cited as having a “department store” problem where young professionals come here to “browse,” get educated, and then leave only to come back for retirement, or at a point in their lives when “settling down” becomes important.

c. As a region, our population is incredibly diverse, in the broadest sense of the word; however, we are not as successful as we should be when it comes to being inclusive. In particular, people who are under the age of 40, and those who come from diverse backgrounds, feel as though their

engagement is valued less, their lifestyles are respected less, and their opportunities for economic empowerment, security and growth are fewer.

3. Lack of Efficient Transportation

a. We lack a comprehensive, multi-modal, public transportation system. A longstanding problem, transportation is cited in nearly every report that has examined our region's shortcomings, but we still cannot muster the political will to solve this problem, together, as a region.

b. Air travel in and out of our region is a challenge and unpleasant experience. We need more direct flights to serve our market and an elevated place marketing customer experience upon arrival and departure that encourages visitors to stay and explore. Additionally, we need attractions closer to the airport and/or efficient connectivity to public transit to connect visitors to our regional assets.

4. Lack of Livable, Walkable, Bikeable and Affordable Communities

a. Sprawling residential development has dominated our region over the decades. Our land use and public infrastructure decisions have made it harder for people to connect with one another and experience all that our region has to offer. Young workers are looking for a 15-minute commute with car-free options and walkable/bikeable connection points to and from businesses, residences and recreational amenities.

b. Our region lacks affordable housing in close proximity to major employment centers. Coupled with poor public transportation, this makes our region less affordable and livable. The issue of affordable housing is historically tied to themes of inequality and racial discrimination and we haven't done a good job cultivating public awareness around what constitutes affordable housing and why it's critical to sustaining our regional economy.

5. **Sea Level Rise and Vulnerable Infrastructure**

a. Sea level rise, recurrent flooding, and land subsidence make for an uncertain future and a challenging narrative for us to overcome as a region. “The 757” is second to New Orleans as the largest population center at risk from sea level rise in the United States. This affects assets, like Naval Station Norfolk, recently developed neighborhoods, and commutes across the region. There are currently over 45,000 properties at risk from tidal flooding in Virginia.” [sourced to sealevelrise.org]. Projected costs to address these challenges could cost tens of billions of dollars and will require strong partnerships between localities and the Commonwealth that do not yet exist.

Opportunities

1. ***Our Rich Quality of Life***

a. Our neighborhoods: Colonial Williamsburg, Ghent, Old Towne, Oceanfront VB, Fort Monroe, Phoebus, City Center, Yorktown, High Street, Downtown Suffolk, etc. are all unique and walkable. Water, trees, culture, and recreation are our strong points. What differentiates us from most other coastal regions is our climate and lifestyle variety (beach, farm, small town, urban, etc.). In the current pandemic climate and as we shift to working from home, “The 757” could attract teleworkers to set up here. We don’t have to land the big offices like Northern Virginia as long as we gain the employees.

2. ***Myriad of Natural Assets and Resources***

a. We have a tremendous variety of natural resources, including beaches, waterways, and 3,200 miles of coastline. Offshore wind could bring in more money for our cities and allow us to further

sustain ourselves using renewable energy. The Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind Pilot Project currently underway is projected to establish a grid-connected, 12-megawatt test facility on the Outer Continental Shelf roughly 27 miles off the coast of Virginia Beach. We also need to take advantage of our waterways for advances in transportation and entertainment opportunities.

3. *Historical Significance/ Identity*

a. Our region is among the thirteen colonies at the birth of our country. Colonial Williamsburg is a living history museum spread across 301 acres and is a registered United States Historic Landmark. Additionally, our region is replete with historical landmarks and museums that support our region's importance in U.S history. We have to find ways to make our historical assets more relevant, attractive and interactive with our residents and visitors.

4. *Diverse Population/ Renewed Focus on Social Justice*

a. We have the largest Filipino population on the East Coast and many residents are unaware of this. We also have a large Hispanic community and, like many minorities, these groups are often left out of conversations regarding our region. To remain competitive in a post-COVID-19 world, we must invite the Asian American, Hispanic, and Black Chambers of Commerce to the conversation and provide them with the same opportunities for growth as other communities.

5. *Growing Momentum for Regional Pride/ Collaboration*

a. We have advanced "The 757" as our regional brand and we should use it as a mechanism to connect with each other and unite under one regional flag. We must speak and act as one unified region - from the mayors to the elementary school principals. This single voice must reflect each locality's input and unique priorities. We also have the opportunity to collaborate with our regional military leaders to emphasize, and show appreciation for, their stake in keeping our

economy strong, and to find ways for our community to be even more welcoming and supportive of our servicemembers and their families.

The future

We have learned collaboration is essential to driving our economy and region forward. The Norfolk-Virginia Beach joint tourism/marketing campaign “Together At Last” is a perfect example of two localities working together to move both cities forward. We have missed opportunities for growth by working as individual cities instead of collaborating for shared success. The future entails more collaboration within our localities and less “us vs. them” mentality.

Strategic Goals

Build Resilient and Sustainable Infrastructure

- We need to prioritize Affordable Housing, Multimodal Transportation, Stronger Digital Infrastructure, Preserve/Enhance Natural Resources, Renewable Energy

Recommendations

- Affordable housing needs to be priced outside of the military’s BAH allowance to enable many types of incomes to live and flourish in our region. We have to develop regional strategies for deconcentrating poverty and equally distribute affordable housing options for families, hourly wage workers, young professionals, and various income ranges.
- We need to find ways to fund projects and community initiatives that allow us to confront the challenges posed by sea level rise and recurrent flooding. We can turn our biggest threat into one of our biggest opportunities by creating new industries and centers of excellence

around solutions and adaptations to sea level rise and recurrent flooding. Great examples of initiatives we should be supporting are: Norfolk's Ohio Creek Project; ODU's Center for Coastal Adaptation and Resiliency; Virginia Beach's work with Virginia Tech in the areas of Forest Conservation and Restoration Initiatives; and companies like RISE Resilience Innovations are continuously pushing our region to better sustainable infrastructure, among many others.

- Environmental considerations and flood-risk should be key factors for our region's localities when it comes to approving new construction. A good example of a locality taking a proactive approach was Virginia Beach's recent disapproval of a subdivision based on future flooding projections for the surrounding area. The decision was challenged and upheld by the courts.

Build a Robust Multimodal Transportation System

- Create areas of development that connect the urban street pattern to water. [WPA UDA Downtown 2030 Update] Car-free zones and strengthened pedestrian infrastructure will allow for people to work and live without being restricted by transportation inefficiencies. We also need to promote water transportation between key regional destinations by using taxis, ferries, and landings.

Preserve and Enhance our Coastal Environment

- We should invest in projects that preserve and enhance our coastal environment and we should find ways to help our residents do the same. For example, the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission has adopted a Living Shoreline Incentive Program – a program that provides low-interest loans to assist homeowners to install living shorelines on suitable properties. Lynnhaven River Now, a Virginia Beach-based non-profit, has a “Pearl Homes” and “Sustainable Yards” program that provides residents with free rain barrels, rain gardens

who commit to using sustainable practices in their homes. Programs like these should be celebrated and enhanced.

- The offshore wind industry has tremendous potential for our region. In addition to the environmental benefits, solar and wind are the fastest-growing job categories in the United States and provide high-skilled and high-paying career opportunities for Virginians. Virginia's world-class infrastructure and workforce have gotten the attention of this \$70 billion dollar industry and we have the potential to become a service hub for the construction and maintenance of offshore wind developments – for Virginia's coast, and potentially for projects along the eastern seaboard.

Metrics of Success

- 60% increase in tourism from out-of-state/increase number of incoming flights.
- Establish higher walkability score of major neighborhoods and employment centers across the region by increasing network density of more than 12 per quarter mile squares, creating urban room and blocks less than 2.5 acres wide, and building active frontage to attract pedestrians.
- More affordable housing and living communities within 5-miles of major employment centers.
- Increase in public hotspots and virtual classrooms, particularly in low-income neighborhoods.

Lead the Way in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Initiatives (DE&I)

- We need a Cultural Resource Center, 757 Welcome Brochure, Leverage our Arts/Music & Sports Talent

Recommendations

- Our region is made up of some incredible, passionate, people who are proud of where they live. We need to make sure every voice in our diverse community has an opportunity to be heard and appreciated. We must engage new, young, diverse leaders on regional and city-level decision making bodies. A great example of doing so is ODU student involvement as part of this recovery plan.
- Businesses, government and the non-profit world need to be more succession minded. Mentorship programs and initiatives that reach into the schools are good ways to make sure our region retains its talent. Businesses should be mindful that being a part of the community, and encouraging their employees to participate in community initiatives, is not only good for our region, but it's good for their bottom line.
- Cultural Resource Centers allow different cultures to come together and openly thrive in spaces without someone feeling out of place. We should encourage and promote multicultural meetups, cross-community networking and providing more opportunities to develop interpersonal relationships outside of our traditional spheres of influence. Cultural Resource Centers can also provide resources for incoming and present populations to easily find opportunities to get connected and resources to help them feel part of the community.
- Creating a 757 Welcome Brochure and an accompanying/interactive map of regional attractions, by interest-category, would provide opportunities for businesses and community organizations to connect with a broader audience. The region needs a space, whether online or otherwise, to serve as a clearinghouse of "all things 757". Increasing awareness around our region's many unique offerings and experiences will help people have a greater sense of pride and appreciation of who we are and how we fit into the big regional picture.

Metrics of Success

- Increase elements of the BELONG score to 75% or higher.

- Survey the Hampton Roads population before the end of 2020 and then on an annual basis, to track the regional Net Promoter Score metrics for millennials, military, and minorities.
- Business, nonprofit, and organizational commitment to filling at least 25% of C-suite executive team or board seats with members from minority and/or LGBTQ+ communities.
- Chamber commitment to hosting 25% of events featuring a minority and/or LGBTQ+ speaker.
- Establish a 5-year goal to build more job training for low income communities and more racial prejudice and hiring bias training for businesses and organizations.
- Foster more cross-cultural opportunities and gatherings when circumstances permit doing so.

Empower Our Citizens

- We need to Support Entrepreneurship, Engage Young Professionals, Encourage Boards to include the Next Generation, 757 Ambassador Program, Broaden Partnerships with Local Schools and Universities.

Recommendations

- We need more regional projects, like the 757 Recovery Framework and the Envision2020 Regional Branding Initiative, that place an emphasis on regional collaboration and involving new, young, diverse voices should be implemented.
- Increasing the entrepreneurial platform to help those who want to start businesses here beyond SWaM workshops, 757 Angels, Start Wheel, and Shark Tank will entrepreneurship in resilience innovation. We need to make sure we are connecting entrepreneurs to the capital

they need and that we are doing so in environments that are non-threatening and conducive to the creative process.

- Broadening partnerships with local schools and universities will help our region's students have a clearer sense of how they can contribute to our regional economy once they are no longer in school. We need to start as early as kindergarten by showing our children all the reasons why they should be 757 proud.
- Implementing a 757 Ambassador program to train new voices to help promote the region and raise our Net Promoter Score. We can draw upon our colleges and universities, our military community, and our community of Next Gen's to help tell our regional story and to engage with others in their personal and professional networks. Ambassadors could help welcome new visitor groups and/or companies to the area, promote the region on social media, out of town, and at events. Ambassadors can potentially join local Convention and Visitors Bureau CVB's teams to help pitch the region to visitors and potential investors. Ambassadors could also take part in committee work, or community impact initiatives that improve the 757.

Metrics of Success

- Business, nonprofit, and organizational commitment to at least 25% of C-suite executive team or board members under the age of 40 by year end 2021.
- At least 40% of C-suite executive team or board members under the age of 40 by year end 2023.
- Increase in internships opportunities for college and high school students with at least 25% offered full-time employment at the end of their term.
- 30% increase in specialty schools by 2026 to allow students to explore future career paths prior to graduation.

- Multiply STEM programs, like STARBASE Victory Camp and Code Ninjas, across the region.
- At least 30% of content for the @757Proud social media channels is submitted by local citizens.
- Increase number of minority, LGBTQ+, and/or small business owners by 15% before year end 2021.

Think Regionally, Act Locally

- We need to Promote 757 Pride Internally and Externally, Regional Restaurant Month, Regional Destination Map, Use Technology to Connect People to Local Experiences

Recommendations

- Celebrating the region from the inside-in by sharing content from local citizens and promoting ourselves from the inside-out by sharing regional victories.
- Standardize branding/leverage the “757” by providing local businesses with a 757proud logo (or some other visual indicator that they are a part of a greater-whole) and encouraging them to post the hashtag on their websites.
- Creating a 757proud app would showcase our local restaurants, artists, festivals, trails, etc. To be featured on the app, you would have to put the 757proud somewhere on your business’ website or storefront.
- Promote what we already know makes us a great and unique place: our Beaches, place in our nation’s History, our military pride, our diverse culture, our emerging entertainment districts, near limit-less outdoor activities, and our emerging science/technology sector on the Peninsula (NASA/Jefferson Lab).

- Promote the Food and Culinary scene. We have many different cultures with delicious foods and restaurants. The Culinary Arts Institute of Virginia is located in Hampton Roads, we need to retain the talented chefs they are producing and promote them when they open restaurants. Recently, Commune, converted their Norfolk restaurant into an educational space for aspiring chefs. Hampton Roads is also known for its coffee and craft brewing scene. We need to find ways to showcase more of these talented local culinary artisans.

Regional Marketing Plan

- At least \$2 million dollars contributed from the 17 localities and/or the private sector to support a regional marketing fund by the year 2021.
- At least \$10 million dollars contributed from the 17 localities and/or the private sector to support a regional marketing fund by the year 2025.
- Develop a regional brochure that can be used by job recruiters, company HR and marketing departments, and our non-profit community, to tell the story of our region when they are talking to a candidate, journalist or visitor – to place their company or their organization in the greater regional context. Engage businesses and other organizations to adopt the language of the region in their marketing and recruitment efforts.
- Create a homebase for the 757 campaign and a region wide task force to help manage the brand and implementation of the plan.
- Engage the creative community for support to create a 757-branding resource center, develop an iconic logo and regional slogan. Allow/encourage/promote the use of all regional themes (Military/History/Beach/Environment) “Hampton Roads,” “Coastal Virginia,” and “Tidewater”.
- Develop programs like a 757 Ambassador program to engage residents and help improve our region’s internal and external perceptions.
- Encourage government agencies and nonprofits to embrace and promote the 757 brand.

- Collaborate with high schools, colleges, and universities to promote and celebrate the region.
- Empower our regions next generation groups to take a more active role in their communities.
- Leverage national events and home-grown celebrities to help promote the 757 brand.
- Start with internal tourism, showcasing our less-visited/ well known attractions to our local residents

Regional Constitution

- Develop a list of shared regional values and priorities.
- Create a task force of mayors to implement a detailed communication/engagement plan for the public.

Measure of Success

- 2-year goal to increase 757 brand use.
- Each municipality recommends 1 new representative from elementary, middle, and high school to participate in the 757 Ambassador program for a school year. Each community college, university, trade school submits 3 representatives to participate in the 757 Ambassador program for a school year.
- At least 40% of all Chamber members (including Hampton Roads, Peninsula, Asian American, Hispanic, and Philippine American Chambers of Commerce) adopt and promote the 757 brand on their websites and social media pages by June 2021. At least 60% by June 2023.
- A 40% increase in followers and post reach by year-end 2020 to social media platforms such as 757 Proud, 757 Makerspace, and other regional pride sites.
- 7,570 downloads of the 757 App within the first 90 days of launch.

Repurpose and Reimage Our Communities

- We need Outdoor/Public Benefit Spaces, Mixed-use Facilities, Land Use and Zoning Re-envisioned on a Regional/Resilient Basis

Recommendations

- We have plenty of land that is the typical suburban setting but, in order for us to be unique, we must repurpose. We need more businesses to celebrate the outdoors by providing rooftop and outdoor dining, and entertainment spaces, specifically near our waterfront.
- We need to re-invent existing spaces and adapt them for better uses that encourage more public benefit. A suggestion is to close Granby Street to cars for 2-3 weeks allowing people to freely walk around. If it receives a positive reception, we can consider fully closing it or closing on weekends and holidays.
- Reimagine abandoned warehouses and shopping centers with a focus on green infrastructure to promote connectivity, fill voids in underserved communities, and address food deserts.
- Revisit the decision not to include outdoor space in real estate subject to assessment/appraisal. It was reported that it is difficult to finance projects with outdoor amenities because the loan to value ratio does not take into account those outdoor/roof-top improvements.

Measure of Success

- Reimagine methods and modes of public transportation that make use of our geographic assets, for example, more connection between our cities by water.

- Designate 5-10 blocks of each major downtown for car-free, pedestrian traffic.
- Increase community gardens, solar-powered and waste-conservative buildings, and regenerative environments.
- A minimum of \$250,000 of each city budget allocated for biophilic architecture to create regenerative environments by 2023.
- Promote and better understand the use of urban development areas in comprehensive planning. For example, Virginia Beach’s Strategic Growth Areas Plan encourages density in places that have the infrastructure to support it, while alleviating the pressures of sprawl and overdevelopment of environmentally sensitive and flood prone areas.

Ultimately, we need to advance the recommendations of the Regional Branding Task Force by marketing ourselves better as one big tent region welcome to all. Once we do this, marketing to the external “outside world” will be much easier. We need to inventory our assets in each of our localities; there are so many unique amenities and attractions in the 757 and most people don’t know about them because they aren’t marketed well. Citizens who have lived here their entire lives don’t know about all the activities they can take part in. For example, how many folks in VB have enjoyed the 5--mile Noland Trail in Newport News? Or how many Peninsula residents have taken a day trip to bike/walk the ERT or hit a trail at First Landing State Park? Our placemaking could use some improvement, but we don’t have to wait to be perfect. Marketing for this upcoming year should be dedicated to unifying, celebrating, and showcasing our region to our local community. One of our first steps should be to take an inventory and develop a list of 50-60 things we can all be proud of and explore.

Iconography

Images that best tell our regional story are those associated with our beaches and waterways, our connection to the military, our place in our nation’s history, and the diversity of our population and geographical experiences. The Envision2020 Regional Branding Initiative recommended that we embrace

“The 757” as a way of coming together and celebrating our youth, our future, our arts, food, culture, sports, music, and all of the amazing lifestyle amenities our region has to offer – as a place. We should engage our students and our creative community, among others, to develop a new regional icon, themed around “The 757”. Whether in the form of a regional competition or some other collaboration, we need to make sure the result is expressive of our region’s unique genetic makeup and \ can serve as a symbol of all our 17 localities.

Resources

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