



PARTNERSHIP GRAND STRAND SEPTEMBER UPDATE

An Update from Your Director, Peggy Masterson

Summer is officially over now, but we're excited about all the Partnership Grand Strand initiatives that will get underway this Fall.

As many of you know by now, we have welcomed Mark Shaaber to our team as our small business Entrepreneur Retention Manager. He has hit the ground running and is busy reaching out to entrepreneurs across the Grand Strand to conduct business interviews.

Since our last newsletter, our team has been busy building and executing multiple new initiatives.

Our new ***"Insiders" event series*** launched in late July. The Insiders events are intended to connect our Grand Strand young professionals with key leadership in the community. The purpose of these events is to deliver an exclusive opportunity to interact and get the most current updates from these professionals. Our first event was with the Myrtle Beach Downtown Alliance and upcoming events include an evening with Brian Tucker, Assistant Manager of the City of Myrtle Beach on September 19. We also have plans to deliver an inside tour of the new DC Blox facility on October 18. **These Insider events are also open to investors, should you be interested.**

Be sure to mark your calendars for the ***PGS Workforce Forum, Bridging the Gap*** between education and employment, on September 28. If you are interested in how to gain access to local talent, this is something you don't want to miss.

We are getting ready to kick off our pilot ***Career Readiness Showcase program*** in collaboration with the Horry County Schools. This will be a unique opportunity for employers to get connected (and visit) all area high schools. These field trips will allow employers to understand more about the curriculum in the HCS high schools as well as how to correctly access targeted talent.

Later this Fall, we will launch our ***"Start Something Amazing"*** Healthcare career education event. This program has been created in conjunction with all the

major hospitals in the Grand Strand. It will include education on healthcare careers that do not necessarily require a college degree as well an opportunity for students to tour a local hospital.

We conducted a **Grand Strand community survey** in August to gather data on all four of our pillar focus areas. Results of this survey will be shared in the weeks to come. This data will be used to fuel future programming.

Our **emergency evacuation study** is now officially underway. A team from Clemson University will be analyzing all aspects of our infrastructure as it relates to evacuation needs. This study should be completed in December of 2023.

These are just a few of our developing projects, but rest assured our team is continually identifying new opportunities to drive our mission of “Accelerating the prosperity of the Grand Strand”.

Website News

We are super excited to announce that our new website is now complete and ready for use!

Please visit us at www.partnershipgrandstrand.com.

We continue to populate content on the new website, so our goal is to make it a trusted, single source of knowledge for all things related to our pillars. We will be housing all our Blogs, informative articles, scholarships, internships and much more on our website. Be sure to check it out!

*NOTE: During this transition, you may need to "**clear the cookies**" in your browser so that your computer knows to take you to the updated site. Let us know if you need any help.*

So log on to www.partnershipgrandstrand.com and be sure to add it to your favorite sites!



Wanted - Your Business Profile

We value and appreciate all your support!

The Investors page of the new website has a link to your business website, and we are working to add your business profiles.

If you have not done so already, please answer these 4 short questions to add to your profile.

Please submit as soon as possible and email your responses to marianne.joy@partnershipgrandstrand.com.

[Download profile questions](#)

PILLAR UPDATE - PROSPERITY

Mark Shaaber, Entrepreneur Retention Manager

Entrepreneur Interviews

We have completed 25 formal entrepreneur interviews in the last 30 days and have talked to community business groups including GBN, BNI and Rotary Clubs representing 50 + businesses. The pace of scheduling these personal interviews and speaking opportunities is increasing and, as we get to know the local entrepreneur community, we are simultaneously gathering data to support firm data-based analysis.

HTC Aspire HUB and eMYRge

Partnership Grand Strand has developed a strong working relationship with eMYRge, a tech-focused organization seeking to support innovative and scalable tech ideas to create and grow an entrepreneurial minded technology ecosystem on the Grand Strand. Located within the HTC aspire hub co-workspace, eMYRge is getting traction.



Participation in Events

Fast Fast: PGS sponsored and participated in a first of its kind on the Grand Strand - a festival highlighting the Future of Art, Society and Technology.



This event featured workshops on the impact of artificial intelligence on society in the fields of art, fashion, and music, as well as the current state of virtual reality through a gaming competition.

- Start up now: A series of sessions designed to help entrepreneurial ideas move from concept to plan.
- Tech Stars: A national brand program that takes technology entrepreneurial plans to the next level and includes preparation for funding pitches.

Start up now and Tech Stars are separate initiatives that have a mutually supporting role within the eMYRge programing. PGS is proud to support eMYRge and the entrepreneurial community through these two upcoming events.

Business Start-up Guide - Helping Small Business Flourish

PGS hosted an introductory meeting with SC Commerce, SC SBDC, MBDA, City of Myrtle Beach, SCORE, and Clear Message Coaching and Consulting to socialize the idea of developing a small business guide that is complementary to all other business guides/references available to the small business community. As a result, PGS will develop a simple and easy to follow guide, primarily in collaboration with SCORE, that will leverage their existing pamphlet. The new product will be circulated to other small business support organizations for input and advice. This effort also serves to bring these and other organizations to collaborate on synergistic small business support efforts in coming months and years. The plan is to complete a "Beta" version in the December time frame.

PILLAR UPDATE - TALENT

BJ Beaver, Workforce Talent Manager

Workforce Update

As inflation rises, it is typical to see an increase in layoffs and unemployment in the economy. However, the labor shortage gap is not closing. ***The U.S. Chamber of Commerce reported in July there were 9.6 million job opportunities, but only 5.8 million unemployed individuals.*** As we move forward businesses are still feeling the hurt from not finding qualified help. Below are some upcoming activities to help build the workforce pipeline in the Grand Strand.

Workforce Development Pipeline Program

Partnership Grand Strand has teamed up with the **CCU Rise Center** to start our Workforce Development Pipeline Program. The CCU Rise Center is currently offering paid internships that align with the United Nations **17 Sustainable Goals**.

These highly motivated individuals are taking local internships in healthcare, public service, marketing, accounting, and graphic design. ***If you have interest in a summer 2024 Intern, please contact BJ Beaver at bj.beaver@visitmyrtlebeach.com***

Horry County Schools Career Readiness Showcase

If you are a business who is looking to engage with Horry County Schools for your future workforce, we have just the program for you! ***HCS has opened its doors to businesses interested in partnering with their Career Technology Education (CTE) programs.***

Below is a quick description of the purpose of the program.

Goals of the Initiative:

- Provide industry participants with an “awareness” of existing workforce within high schools.
- Showcase the diverse CTE programs that are offered within each high school.
- Highlight programs and industry certifications that model career readiness indicators and prove that our students are a pipeline for the workforce.
- Identify partnership opportunities for student shadowing, internships and job placement during and after high school.



Creating Tomorrow’s Workforce Forum: Bridging the gap between education and employment.

As the need for quality employees increases, [join us on September 28](#) to learn best practices on how to recruit young talent in our local community.

Hear from our academic institutions on [how they are growing young professionals and discover how we can retain that young talent in our communities.](#)

Representatives from Coastal Carolina University, Horry County Schools and Horry Georgetown Technical College will present the best ways to engage with students/graduates who are looking for employment. Topics to be discussed will be [internships, summer employment, career days, best times to recruit and how to get involved directly in the classroom as an employer.](#)

What to expect: Each school presents best practices for their institution followed by a short Q & A at the end of their presentation. After all three institutions have presented, they will all join us on stage for a panel discussion and Q & A.

What you will learn: After attending this session, you can expect to learn the best time is to recruit graduates, points of contact for each institution, and how you can successfully attract young talent to your business.

Please sign up by September 22

[Register Now](#)

PILLAR UPDATE - PLACE

PGS is proud to be the sponsor of the Myrtle Beach Downtown Alliance. MBDA is working with the city on a Broadway Street streetscape project. We are excited to see that work is going to begin on the project this month.

We believe this is the beginning of many great things to come for downtown Myrtle Beach!



Mark your calendars for the return of the popular Nights at Nance.

Our beautiful fall weather should make these FREE evening concerts even more enjoyable. We hope to see you there!

PILLAR UPDATE - INFRASTRUCTURE

James Toy, Public Policy Manager

RIDE IV Sales Tax Commission Begins Review of Potential Infrastructure Projects

The RIDE IV Sales Tax Commission held its inaugural meeting on Thursday, August 24. The commission is composed of six members, three of whom are representatives from Horry County's three largest municipalities: Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, and Conway. The remaining three members were appointed by Horry County Council.

Members of the RIDE IV Sales Tax Commission:

- Cecil Patrick – Appointed by the City of Myrtle Beach
- James “Jay” Baldwin – Appointed by the City of North Myrtle Beach
- William Goldfinch IV – Appointed by the City of Conway
- Jody Prince – Appointed by Horry County Council
- Chad Prosser – Appointed by Horry County Council
- Robert Wilfong, Jr. – Appointed by Horry County Council

The commission is responsible for determining which road improvement and expansion projects will be funded by the RIDE IV Program. The RIDE IV Program is a proposed seven-year, one-cent sales tax that would generate an estimated \$800 million to fund transportation projects in Horry County.

Over the coming months, the commission will review and prioritize a list of potential projects. The projects will be evaluated based on a variety of factors, including need, cost, and impact on traffic congestion.

It is important to note that the commission will not be starting from scratch. The previous 18-member RIDE IV Sales Tax Advisory Committee has already laid the groundwork by creating a list of potential projects, which encompasses everything from paving dirt roads to environmental mitigation for new roadways. The commission will now review this list and make its own recommendations to Horry County Council.

The RIDE IV Sales Tax Commission is an important step in the process of improving transportation in Horry County. Their recommendations will help to ensure that the RIDE IV Program is used to fund the most important projects for the community.



Coast RTA and Commute with Enterprise Partner to Launch Vanpool Program

Coast RTA and Commute with Enterprise are partnering to ***offer local businesses a new and efficient way to get their employees to work: a vanpool program catered to employers.*** The vanpool program is a cost-effective way for employers to ensure their employees have safe, reliable transportation to and from their job site.

The vanpool program is available now and is open to businesses of all sizes. To participate, employers simply need to identify a group of employees who live and work in the same area and are interested in carpooling. Coast RTA and Commute with Enterprise will then work with the employer to set up the vanpool and provide the necessary vehicles.

Did you miss our vanpool program webinar? ***Partnership Grand Strand is committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to learn about the vanpool program and see if it is right for their business.*** We will be hosting future information sessions with Coast RTA and Commute with Enterprise, so please keep an eye on your inbox for an invitation to these events.

If you have any questions about the vanpool program or to apply, please contact CJ Asmus, Commute Sales Executive with Commute with Enterprise, at **Christopher.J.Asmus@ehi.com**.

Insiders Event Series – The Future of the Beach

Join PGS and the Grand Strand Young Professionals for an exclusive networking event with Brian Tucker, Assistant City Manager of Myrtle Beach on September 19 at

5:30 to 7:30 pm. It will be held at The Grove at Coastal Grand, 1749 Sea Pines Blvd, Myrtle Beach.

Brian will share his insights on the city's current goals and priorities, and you'll have the opportunity to ask him questions and learn more about how you can get involved.

This is a rare opportunity to connect with one of the city's most influential leaders and learn about the future of Myrtle Beach.



RSVP today and don't miss out!
Please register [here](#).

INVESTOR SPOTLIGHT



Angie Goeppinger, Regional Manager

Since 2011, SkyWheel has been an iconic landmark along the coast of the Grand Strand. We have shown millions of visitors and residents stunning views of our beaches. The heart of our mission is bigger than the 187 foot tall SkyWheel, and includes being a positive light to help our community prosper.

Within the 4 pillars, SkyWheel's focus as a small hospitality business is creating a welcoming atmosphere for our guests. The excellent guest service SkyWheel provides comes from a positive workplace to help our crew soar to success. Many of our crew have started as crew members, working their way up to trainers, supervisors and management. Recognizing our young talent, SkyWheel has created opportunities for internships for several local Coastal Carolina students, resulting in at least 3 full time positions in HR, Marketing and Training and development. We

have a mix of generations in our SkyWheel crew, each helping to share their values, work ethic and fun.

SkyWheel also has passion for service to the growth and opportunity that exists within the Myrtle Beach downtown. The SkyWheel team serves on multiple boards, including Partnership Grand Strand, Myrtle Beach Area Chamber Board of Directors, Leadership Grand Strand Board of Directors and several other councils in the community. In an effort to help beautify downtown, SkyWheel does monthly beach cleanups and partners with other organizations for community cleanups. Our team also serves to help not just our place, but people as well. Since 2020, the SkyWheel Cares program has done a monthly meal, cooking and serving dinner to hundreds at the New Directions Men's Shelter. Through our service, commitment to our guests, crew and residents, our mission is to continue to shine a positive light in our community.

**SAVE THE DATE
FOR THE NEXT
TOWN HALL MEETING!**

FEBRUARY 21, 2024



**In case you missed it, here is a preview of
Episode 1 - The Story of the Grand Strand:**



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