



Document #4 – EC Meeting

RVA757 Connects' 2023 Goals & Action Plan – January 2023 *Now with Performance Assessment for Year-end 2023*

This document (in black type below) are the goals and related action plan for RVA757 Connects' 2023 scope of work as presented to the Executive Committee (EC) in January 2023. As 2023 comes to a close, RVA757 Connects' staff has provided information on our progress on each goal. This staff input is detailed in **red** below.

2023 Performance Goals Recap

10 Major 2023 Goals:


1. **Priority Focus Areas:** Advance the board-approved priority focus areas
 - a. I-64 Gap
 - b. Global Internet Hub (GIH)
 - c. Bike/walk trails
 - d. Passenger rail
 - e. Advance 4 Target Industry Clusters: Life Sciences/Pharma, Logistics/Transportation, Cyber/National Security, and Data/Analytics.
2. **Legislative Agenda:** Advance our legislative agenda
3. **Member Initiatives:** Support members' initiatives as requested
4. **I-64 Innovation Brand:** Showcase innovation and collaboration in the I-64 Innovation Corridor
5. **RVA757 Connects' Committees:** Support the active work of RVA757 Connects' Committees
 - a. Governance and Nominations
 - b. Development
 - c. Government Relations
6. **MIC Development:** Reinvigorate the Megaregion Institutional Council
7. **Stakeholder Relationships:** Build RVA757 Connects' stakeholder relationships
 - a. Local governments
 - b. Economic development partners
 - c. General Assembly
 - d. Governor and Administration

- 8. **Operations:** Run the organization in the most effective and efficient manner
- 9. **Organizational Structure:** Establish RVA757 Connects totally separate from SIR
- 10. **What's Next:** Focus the strategic conversation on the big picture of how to make the megaregion more competitive

RVA757 Connects staff's comments on each specific goal follows:

- 1. **Priority Focus Areas:** Advance the board-approved priority focus areas.

The Directors and MIC Members gave RVA757 Connects a 98% top two box rating in advancing RVA757 Connects' signature priorities in 2023:

Please rate the operational performance of RVA757 Connects on several key areas throughout 2023.	Top 2 Box Score Don't Knows Removed
Organizational management: Running our 501(c)(3). (10% selected "don't know")	98%
Communications related to our organization : Keeping you informed about RVA757 Connects' operations – your contribution, new board members, where to find info, meeting dates, etc. (10% selected "don't know")	95%
Communications related to our cause : Keeping you informed about progress on our priorities and innovations advancing the I-64 Innovation Corridor.	100%
Meetings: Running effective Board/MIC meetings. (9% selected "don't know")	89%
Convergence 2023: Orchestrating our annual meeting with ChamberRVA and Hampton Roads Chamber – Sept. 28 in Williamsburg. (12% selected "don't know")	96%
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 Our Signature Priorities: Advancing RVA757 Connects' signature focus areas – I-64 Gap, Global Internet Hub, Passenger Rail, Bike-Walk Trails, etc. 2% selected "don't know")	98%
Partnerships: Cultivating partnerships with economic development leaders and officials in our priority areas. (5% selected "don't know")	91%

- I-64 Gap: Help secure remaining funds. Keep positive attention and buzz associated with the overall initiative. Note, several Op Eds now attacking the I-64 Gap.

Mission accomplished. Groundbreaking took place in November!

- Global Internet Hub: Create the GIH strategic plan.
 - Complete the GO Virginia grant
 - Tie into Administration and Virginia's 2024 state budget
 - Promote the plan

Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan was completed by the 60-plus-person Steering Committee and approved by the EC.

RVA757 Connects, as the GO Virginia planning grant grantee, raised the matching funds and completed all of the GO Virginia administrative responsibilities.

Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan was packaged as a full report, Executive Summary, and handout Map. We obtained a grant from Meta to produce the Map. Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan was showcased at Convergence 2023.

In 2023, we stood up the Global Internet Hub Council, a new subcommittee of RVA757 Connects. The core members, along with the Hampton Roads Community Foundation, have pledged \$119K to jump start the work of the Council.

Working with RVA757 Connects' Government Relations Committee, RVA757 Connects' staff sent a comprehensive "Budget Suggestions Document" to the Administration (to four Secretaries) for Virginia's 2024 state budget.

We identified and packaged a concept to give the Global Internet Hub initiative a soul – PCs for People. We convened companies and governments around this concept. Everyone is ready for the next step. In early 2024, we will introduce the CEO of PCs for People to RVA and 757 leaders.

Lastly, we proactively reached out to the Department of Housing and Community Development DHCD to see if our Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan and/or PCs for People initiative would qualify for DHCD funding. Virginia is about to receive \$1.2 billion in federal funding for Universal Broadband Access. DHCD will distribute these funds. We are meeting with DHCD this coming week. Preliminary conversations with DHCD have been promising.

- **Bike/walk Trails: Follow RVA757 Connects' plan. Advance a Smart Scale-like approach – create a whitepaper. Support HRPDC and the HR Trail Alliance (Tom Cosgrove as champion). Secure funds from VDOT.**

We created a Bike-Walk Plan in late 2022. We followed the EC-approved plan. We met with officials from VDOT's newly created State Trails Office. We encouraged the Secretary and Commissioner. Our conclusion - this Administration is not convinced that bike/walk trails are worthy of investment.

We are now deploying our I-64 Gap advocacy approach, creating a "call to arms white paper/report" and convening and collaborating with partners (Sports Backers, HRPDC, Tidewater Trails Alliance, and others).

We are now leading the development of a white paper that makes a strong ROI case for intercity, long-distance bike trails. Our partners are providing input. The paper will be finished by the end of 2023. We will use this paper in early 2024 with the General Assembly and create communication materials for our 2024 bike-walk advocacy work.

- **Passenger Rail: Follow RVA757 Connects' plan.**

We followed the 2022 RVA757 Connects' EC-approved passenger rail plan.

This included forming a planning relationship in 2023 with Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT).

We brought together three planning district commissions (Plan RVA, HRPDC/HRTPO, and Crater District) for meetings with VPRA and DRPT. It is important to note that RVA757 Connects was the convener.

We supported VPRA's successful federal grant request for Franconia-Springfield Rail Bypass Project. It was awarded \$100 million.

We had VPRA attend our board meeting and Convergence 2023.

We were invited by Virginians for High-Speed Rail to be part of its 2024 rail advocacy plan document. This document is now being sent to every General Assembly member.

This week, major rail investments were announced – all Long Bridge funding is now in place, more rail in I-64 Corridor, and higher-speed rail to Raleigh is advanced (\$1 Billion).

- **Advance 4 Target Industry Clusters: Life Sciences/Pharma, Logistics/Transportation, Cyber/National Security, and Data/Analytics.**

We featured these four industry clusters throughout 2023 in RVA757 Connects' meetings, Innovation Spotlight webinars, and Convergence 2023.

This is perhaps one area where we can further improve in 2024 with more specific plans and resources for each cluster.



2. **Legislative Agenda:** Advance RVA757 Connects' legislative agenda.

- Follow RVA757 Connects' Government Relations' plan.
- Support RVA757 Connects' Government Relations Committee's work.
- Hold legislative joint caucus.

See below – Government Relations Committee

3. **Member Initiatives:** Support members' Initiatives as requested.

- Offshore wind
- Phlow/Medicine 4-All
- VNG
- Jefferson Lab

RVA757 Connects provided support as requested and directed for these initiatives and others.

- **VNG pipeline expansion moved forward.**
- **Phlow/Medicine 4-All received a huge multi-million-dollar grant.**
- **Jefferson Lab was awarded the funds from General Assembly for the shell building and won the Department of Energy contract for a new High Performance Data Facility.**
- **Franconia-Springfield Rail Bypass Project was awarded \$100 million.**
- **757 Collab received \$1.5 million grant.**

RVA757 Connects wrote support letters for all of these initiatives.

4. **I-64 Innovation Brand:** Showcase innovation and collaboration in the I-64 Innovation Corridor.




- Continue to ramp-up all communications

Outreach increased. Frequency of communication increased.

Directors' and MIC members' communications ratings in 2023 Performance Survey were very positive:

Please rate the **operational performance** of RVA757 Connects on several key areas throughout 2023.

Top 2 Box Score
Don't Knows Removed

 Organizational management: Running our 501(c)(3). (10% selected "don't know")	98%
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- Grow database from 3,500 to 5,000

Database hovers at 3,500. Some people left; others joined.

This is an area we can grow in 2024. We need partners to provide access to their email lists/members

- Hold 10 Innovation Spotlights webinars focused on priority focus areas

Mission accomplished! Our audience continues to grow.

- Increase earned media coverage

Earned media coverage was garnered for I-64 Gap, Global Internet Hub, Convergence 2023, and from various Innovation Spotlight webinars.

This was our best year ever in terms of earned coverage.

- Ramp up social media –

400 followers on LinkedIn – up more than 140 percent in the past 12 month

Of our followers:

- **51 percent from the RVA region**
- **32 percent from Hampton Roads**
- **24 percent in senior level jobs**

- 17 percent in director level positions
- 16 percent at the vice president level

Our top two posts on LinkedIn:

- **Members of the Global Internet Hub Steering Committee taking a tour of the Meta data center: . more than 1,450 views**
- **Convergence 2023: more than 1,000 views**
- Mail GIH plan to all stakeholders – 3,500 list, including GA –

RVA757 Connects' general brochure and GIH Executive Summary foldout document are being mailed now to all General Assembly members - newly elected/re-elected members.

- Attend Chambers' intercity visits –

Accomplished – we attended both Chambers' 2023 intercity visits and created a recap report shared with both Chambers.

- Update major B2B groups and associations in both markets –

Overview presentations of RVA757 Connects were given to organizations. Estimated number is at least 15-plus presentations.

5. RVA757 Connects' Committees: Support the active work of RVA757 Connects' Committees.

- Governance and Nominations
 - Support Committee meetings
 - Recruit 8 to 10 new RVA members by March 31

Nine new board members added in 2023, including six from RVA. Employee Handbook was created.

- Development
 - Support Committee meetings - **accomplished**
 - Reconstitute/recharge the committee **accomplished**
 - Approach directors up for pledge renewals in 2023 **accomplished**
 - Get all new directors' 3-year pledge forms **accomplished**
 - Get all 2023 gift invoices out by March 2023 **accomplished**
 - Get community foundations to extend 3-year startup commitment

- Tie into GIH for additional funding sources **accomplished**
- Approach university foundations for funding opportunities

Mission accomplished on all of the above except for the 2 following:

- Get community foundations to extend 3-year startup commitment – **HRCF re-up-ed and directed their new 3-year gift to the Global Internet Hub Council. Unfortunately, we could not convince the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond to do the same. They are hyper-focused on and are leading RVA's visioning work.**
 - Approach university foundations for funding opportunities - **We did not have time to do this.**
- Government Relations
 - Support Committee meetings and plan rollout - **Mission accomplished!**
 - Hold joint caucus meeting – **held meeting with 757 caucus**
 - Prepare needed materials - **yes**
 - Advance legislative agenda - **yes**
 - Coordinate with RVA757 Connects members' GA work - **yes**

6. MIC Development: Reinvigorate the Megaregion Institutional Council.

- By March 31, work with co-chairs (Bryan Stephens and Brian Anderson) to understand the sentiment of MIC members
- Formulate an action plan
- By year-end, have a reinvigorated or redesigned MIC


MIC Co-chairs worked on #6. This is an area for additional work in 2024.

It should be noted that the MIC was more satisfied in 2023 than in 2022 according to the 2023 year-end survey findings.

The Convergence 2023 attended by and featuring some of the MIC was successful – record attendance and sponsorships.

7. Stakeholder Relationships: Build deeper relationships with RVA757 Connects' stakeholders.

Directors and MIC members gave RVA757 Connects a 91% top two box score in partnerships.

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- Economic development partners VEDP, Alliance, and GRP
 - Set up meeting the VEDP, Alliance, and GRP executives and have them jointly make a presentation at the February board meeting

Throughout 2023, we formed a much closer relationship with VEDP.

We need to continue to develop closer relationships with the Alliance and GRP, delivering value to each group. This is a topic we need to address in 2024.

- Presidents of institutions of higher education

This is an area of growth in the partnership category for 2024.

- Local government leaders in both RVA and 757


Through Chambers' trips and presentations on the Global Internet Hub initiative, we are becoming closer to local government leaders.

- Governor and the Administration

Through the I-64 Gap, Global Internet Hub, events, and request for Convergence 2023, we are getting closer to the Governor and the Administration

8. **Operations:** Run the organization in the most effective and efficient manner.

Board directors and MIC members gave RVA757 Connects a 98% top two box score in running the organization.

	Top 2 Box Score Don't Knows Removed
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We delivered on all of the specific operational tactics in our goals document:

- Finalize this document – 2023 scope - **accomplished**
- Finalize 2023 meeting dates - **accomplished**
- Finalize 2022 EC approved budget recap - **accomplished**
- Create and obtain 2023 EC-approved budget - **accomplished**
- Create board member and MIC handbook (includes profiles) – **accomplished - handbook will be emailed out in mid-December.**
- Create board onboarding book - **accomplished**
- Ensure all pledges are invoiced by March 2023 - **accomplished**
- File 1099s with PBMares' assistance - **accomplished**
- Purchase Directors' insurance - **accomplished**
- Get supplier contracts in place for 2023 - **accomplished**
- Manage GO Virginia grant - **accomplished**
- Provide financial flash report updates - **accomplished**
- Support 3 board meetings and the MIC - **accomplished**
- Support monthly EC meetings - **accomplished**
- Support Convergence 2023 - **accomplished – 96% satisfaction rating**
- Conduct and report year-end member satisfaction survey **accomplished**
- Update and maintain website – **accomplished – the big overhaul was a success**
- Maintain and keep current the board portal resource center - **accomplished**

9. Organizational Structure: Spinout RVA757 Connects organization from SIR.

To date, SIR has donated six figures in in-kind professional services, free office space, and use of support services (computers, phones, and copy machines). This support is well-documented. RVA757 Connects' employees and related benefits have been paid by SIR and reimbursed with no markup. In 2023, RVA757 Connects will be more clearly separated from SIR.

- Rollout RVA757 Connects from SIR – **This is on track.**
 - **RVA757 Connects' payroll and benefits are now handled by and through RVA757 Connects.**
 - **Independent IT company now supports RVA757 Connects directly.**
 - **Computers are owned by RVA757 Connects.**
 - **SIR still provides free rent and copy machine use.**
- Set up benefits and payroll process - **accomplished**
- Set up SIR 2023 contract in place **accomplished**
- Create RVA757 Connects employee handbook (work with Governance and Nomination Committee) **accomplished**
- Create RVA757 Connects operating policy handbook (work with Governance and Nomination Committee) - **Pushed to 2024**
- Implement outcome of MIC planning – **Ongoing**
- We also upgraded our financial accounting system – **Moved / upgraded to QuickBooks 2.0 for non-profit accounting and worked very closely with PBMares.**

While RVA757 Connects is further separating from SIR, SIR still contributed significantly to RVA757 Connects in 2023 that was above and beyond the contracted time. A final memo report will be provided to the EC in late December 2023 that documents SIR's total 2023 financial contribution.

10. What's Next: Identify and promote the big picture on how to make the I-64 Innovation Corridor – both RVA and the 757 regions – more competitive over time.

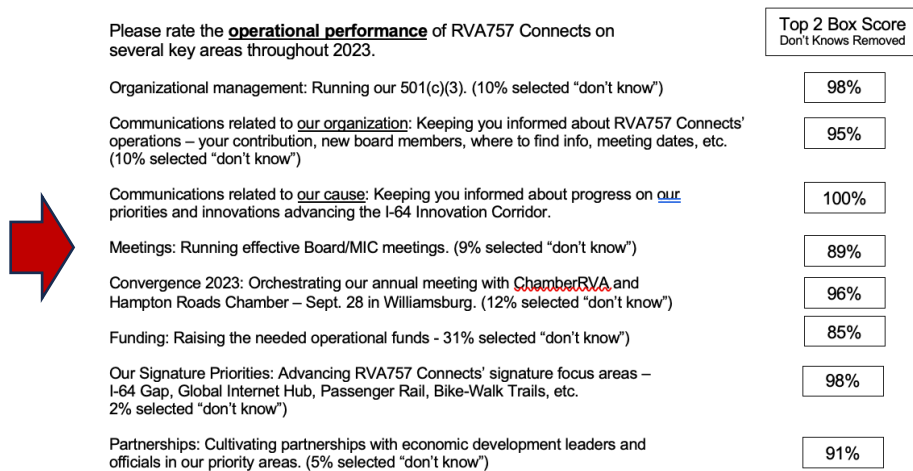
The last Board meeting's generative topic was dedicated to this overall topic- *what's next*. We need to build on this in 2024.

- Establish Strategic Task Force
- Hold two meetings in 2023
- Issue white papers from Task Force
- Have Task Force tied into Convergence 2023

Board Meetings / Generative Discussion / Featured Speakers

- February 22: Topic: I-64 Innovation Corridor Economic Development (with speakers from VEDP, HR Alliance, and GRP)
- April 26: Topic: Global Internet Hub plan (invite the Governor and Secretaries to attend)
- September 27: Topic: Convergence 2023
- November 15: Topic: Year-end and possibly with speakers from Cascadia and/or Texas Triangle megaregions; and from Greater Washington Partnership

The 2023 Board/MIC meetings throughout 2023 covered much of these topics, but not in this specific order. The 2023 RVA757 Year-end Performance Survey provide insights on how directors and members rated RVA757 Connects' 2023 meetings: 89% top two box score.



Overall, RVA757 Connects received high ratings from Board directors and MIC members:

Respondents are very satisfied with RVA757 Connects Overall



95%

top two box score – combined "4s" and "5s"

For comparison purposes – 2022 overall performance was 79%

Please rate the overall performance of RVA757 Connects in 2023. Use a 5-point scale where "1" is "did not perform well at all" and "5" is "performed very well."

"A plus in all ways."

"Great job! Proud to be part of it."

"Keep up the good work!"

"Exceptional job growing and developing the programming and the work of RVA757 Connects. Really well done to the team who execute in such a professional manner."

"I think you all are doing a wonderful job."

"Amazed by the amount of work accomplished by such a small staff team!"

"You all do a great job, thank you!"

"This is a great group to be a part of."

"You guys do great work!! Glad to be a partner."