



# GREATER WASHINGTON PARTNERSHIP

FROM BALTIMORE TO RICHMOND.  
FOSTERING UNITY. ADVANCING GROWTH.

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## MEMORANDUM TO THE CAPITAL REGION OF BALTIMORE, WASHINGTON, & RICHMOND

FROM: Jason Miller, Chief Executive Officer, Greater Washington Partnership

SUBJECT: Vision for Our Future

Over the past several months, I have traveled our region to meet with and learn from many of you – the people working hard every day to make the place we call home a little bit better. I look forward to continuing to discuss with you the great things happening and the things that you think hold us back. We know that one thing is clear: collaboration is a must if we hope to make progress on the challenges we face. Unity and a shared vision – as one Capital Region – can help us move forward together.

### THE CHALLENGE

How do we translate that unity and commitment to our region into action? Let's first acknowledge our starting point: the Capital Region of Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond is an economic powerhouse. We are the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest regional economy in the United States and 7<sup>th</sup> largest in the world. Our diversity and history have resulted in a region with unparalleled strengths – highly talented and educated people, world-class universities and federal research facilities, global transportation gateways, 55 of the Fortune 1000 companies, and of course the seat of the U.S. federal government.

What some might not realize, or at times we are all less willing to acknowledge, is that unless we work to change our region's current trajectory, we will get left behind by our peers around the world and miss our opportunity to lead and prosper. The reality is that we are not fully harnessing our incredible strengths. Here are the facts. Neither our income growth, nor our productivity growth is keeping pace with other major metropolitan areas in this country and increasingly, people have been leaving for opportunity elsewhere. That is not good enough. And, in an increasingly competitive global economy, we risk falling behind and failing to deliver on being a place of opportunity – a place where hard work means you can get ahead, where businesses choose to grow, invest, and hire, where our kids can get the education and opportunities they need in a changing world, and where we can proudly say that the place we call home is one of the best in the world to live, work, and build a business.

### REACHING OUR POTENTIAL

Reaching our potential begins by redefining many of the big issues impacting our economic prosperity as a super-regional challenge, not a local one, with regional solutions, for three reasons:

1. Scale matters in the global competition for ideas, investment, and people – and connectedness between Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond is the scale we need to compete and win.
2. Jurisdictional boundaries have too often impeded progress on our region's pressing issues, and we must find new ways of collaborating for a better future.
3. Despite differences across our region, our economic futures are intertwined. Each of the metro areas in our region has experienced a similar slow-growth path, and as we look to the opportunities that will drive us forward, the District, Maryland, and Virginia are much more similar than our typical rhetoric would lead you to believe.

### BEING PART OF THE SOLUTION

How does this new organization, the Greater Washington Partnership, fit in? The Partnership is a first-of-its-kind civic alliance of CEOs in this region – drawing from the leading employers and entrepreneurs – that together employ



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more than 175,000 people in the Capital Region. We are committed to being *part of the solution* to making this region one of the world's best places to live, work, and build a business. We will leverage our CEOs and their organizations' capabilities, resources, and influence in service of the public interest. The leading employers and entrepreneurs in this region, of course, have a stake in the outcome, as all of us do, but never before have the CEOs from across the Capital Region been organized into a single organization focused on impact. The Partnership's formation is a recognition that the leading employers need to consistently be a voice at the table, so that working together we can help break down the barriers that hold back solutions. We are committed to tackling issues with fact-based solutions and partnering to make change happen. This region has tremendous potential, but only through collaboration can we achieve a better future.

What might our future look like? Our vision for it is this:

*By working together ...*

We will leverage our unique strengths, our diversity and the power of commerce to help make the 'Capital Region' of Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond the best place to work, raise a family and build a business

- ... a dynamic and inventive business environment with a purpose driven community
- ... a home for those seeking opportunity to fulfill their aspirations and thrive
- ... an economic power house that attracts the creatives, entrepreneurs, technologists and people who dream big
- ... a place with the transportation, housing, education, and healthcare systems designed and shaped for the 21st century
- ... a global magnet for talent and innovation

Establishing Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond as the model for a thriving super-region.

How do we assess whether our region is living up to that vision? There are three key areas where we must measure our region relative to our peers to assess whether we are moving in the right direction: First, are we creating a dynamic environment where small and young firms can thrive, grow and hire? Second, are we building an economy that when it grows it lifts all boats? And third, are we a place that people consistently choose to live, work, and raise a family? The data is clear, and today we are falling short. A shared, fact-based view of our performance against these measures will inform our work and help to prioritize our limited areas of focus. As an entity laser-focused on impact, defining and remaining true to these guiding measures will be critical.

### **WORKING TOGETHER FOR THE REGION**

We plan to start by focusing on two table-stakes issues for this region that together we must address in order to diversify our economy and drive inclusive growth: first, improving our transportation system to connect the region, ensure equity of access, and reduce the growing burdens of getting around; and second, ensuring we are developing, retaining and attracting people with the skills our region needs today and for tomorrow.

We look forward to working together with you in the months and years ahead. Change takes time, but it begins with urgency. It requires collaboration across sectors and jurisdictions. It requires relentlessness and focus. Our starting point is one of strength. Most places around the world would look at the assets of our region – starting with our incredible people – with envy. It is time we show them that we can deliver on our promise... by working together.