Columbus Partnership Announces Executive Leadership Transition, Heightened Focus on Economic Development Opportunities

Columbus, OH – The Columbus Partnership today announced plans to boost its focus on economic development during a pivotal time of growth and transformation for Central Ohio. To accelerate efforts, Kenny McDonald, president and CEO of the Columbus Partnership, will resume his role as president and CEO of One Columbus, transitioning to lead the regional economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region.

"As we completed a mid-year strategic review, Kenny proposed that given challenges in the current environment – the economic slowdown, lowering of inflation, tight labor market – he increase efforts to drive economic development opportunities for the Columbus Region," said Steve Steinour, Columbus Partnership co-chair and chairman, president, and CEO of Huntington Bank. "We have the vision and dedication of one of the nation's foremost economic development leaders in Kenny McDonald. His commitment to concentrating efforts where we need them most will better position us to expand Central Ohio's economic growth."

Under McDonald's leadership, One Columbus rose to prominence as a national leader in the economic development industry. The organization has been ranked a top 20 economic development group for seven consecutive years, based on projects generated, jobs created and capital invested. For over a decade the Columbus Region has been one of the fastest-growing metro areas in the Midwest and has continued to diversify its economy with new industries such as semiconductors and life sciences.

McDonald led One Columbus as president and CEO until 2022 before taking on responsibilities to lead the Columbus Partnership.

"The current conditions in our region demand an exceedingly effective economic growth strategy," said Kirt Walker, Columbus Partnership co-chair and CEO of Nationwide. "We believe one of the most important ways to become a more prosperous region is to be laser-focused on economic development."

McDonald added, "I look forward to working full-time with the One Columbus team, bringing forth even more resources to drive growth and improve the quality of life in our region. Together we will help our communities prepare for the future and work with businesses to expand, grow and locate new operations."

The Columbus Partnership will undertake a national search for its next president and CEO. McDonald will continue to lead the Partnership while a search is underway, ensuring a seamless transition when a successor is named.

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About the Columbus Partnership
The Columbus Partnership is a CEO-led nonprofit organization of over 80 top-ranking executives from Columbus' leading businesses and institutions, each committed to improving economic opportunity and quality of life across the Columbus Region. Through its membership and other ally organizations across Central Ohio, the Columbus Partnership upholds a shared vision to make Columbus the most prosperous region in the United States. Learn more at columbusregion.com.

About One Columbus
As the economic development organization for the 11-county Columbus Region, One Columbus' mission is to lead a comprehensive regional growth strategy that develops and attracts the world's most competitive companies, grows a highly adaptive workforce, prepares our communities for the future and inspires corporate, academic and public innovation throughout the Columbus Region. One Columbus expertly guides companies through the location decision process. Through strategic business outreach and customized research, the One Columbus team leverages public, private and institutional partnerships to grow the Columbus Region's economy and strengthen its national and international competitiveness. Funding is received from more than 300 private organizations, local governments, academic institutions and JobsOhio. Learn more at columbusregion.com.