

For Immediate Release
March 3, 2026

Media Contact
Jon Keeling
614-657-5917
jk@columbuspartnership.com

**Jonas Peterson named Columbus Partnership's
Chief Economic Development Officer and President, One Columbus**
*National economic development leader brings deep regional expertise
and a track record of attracting next-generation companies*

Columbus, OH – Jonas Peterson has been appointed to the Columbus Partnership's executive leadership team in the role of chief economic development officer and president, One Columbus, effective April 7, 2026. He brings more than two decades of experience building high-performing regional economic development teams and winning competitive projects.

Peterson currently serves as CEO of Southwest Michigan First, a community and economic development organization serving a seven-county region, where he has doubled organizational resources while delivering record performance in regional engagement and capital investment. His team has supported the growth and expansion of major employers and transformational projects including Ford BlueOval Battery Park, Pfizer and the Kalamazoo Event Center.

Peterson also leads Consultant Connect, a nationally recognized for-profit consultancy within Southwest Michigan First that brings together economic developers and site selection consultants. Under Peterson's leadership, Consultant Connect expanded rapidly to serve clients in more than 40 states with a growing international presence, giving him deep industry relationships and competitive intelligence.

For nearly nine years, Peterson served with the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA), first as COO and then as president and CEO, where he led the start-up and rapid growth of a regional economic development organization serving one of the country's fastest-growing metro areas. With Peterson at the helm, LVGEA helped elevate Nevada from among the lowest-ranked states in national job creation rankings to first place by diversifying the region's economy beyond its historic tourism base, securing more than 26,000 jobs and major corporate investments from companies such as Barclays, Switch, Amazon, Google and Tesla Energy.

"Jonas has a strong drive to win and results that prove it. He's transformed metro areas into job-creation leaders and attracted billions in investment by building strong partnerships and delivering on commitments," said Jason Hall, CEO of the Columbus Partnership. "The Columbus Region is the Midwest's growth leader, and Jonas has the strategic vision and execution capabilities to help us capitalize on that. He shares our ambition for where this region can go."

Peterson's appointment follows a comprehensive national search conducted by BeecherHill that engaged stakeholders across the Columbus Region.

“Columbus is the gold standard in our industry. It’s the region economic developers across the country look to and benchmark against. When this call came, I had to answer,” said Peterson. “The collaborative culture, the strength of leadership and deep bench of engaged CEOs, and the opportunity to help advance one of the country’s most dynamic regional economies are extraordinary. I’m ready to get to work with this talented team.”

Peterson's leadership and influence extend throughout the economic development community. He served as one of the youngest chairs of the International Economic Development Council (IEDC) in 2023 and is one of the youngest professionals to be named an IEDC Honorary Life Member. He has been recognized as Nevada's Economic Developer of the Year, Arizona's Economic Developer of the Year, and named to Crain's Grand Rapids GR 200 list of Most Powerful Business Leaders.

“On behalf of the One Columbus Executive Committee, we're thrilled to welcome Jonas,” said Mark Berven, One Columbus executive committee chair and president and chief operating officer of Nationwide Property & Casualty. “His collaborative leadership style, proven track record, and commitment to building high-performing teams and partnerships align perfectly with our values and ambitions.”

Throughout his career, Peterson has demonstrated expertise in business attraction and retention, regional collaboration, workforce development and strategic partnerships. He has built sustainable public-private funding models, led international business recruitment efforts and navigated the complex challenges and opportunities of rapidly growing metro markets.

“The Columbus Region is essential to Ohio's competitiveness on the national and global stage, and Jonas's appointment strengthens our entire economic development ecosystem,” said JP Nauseef, president and CEO of JobsOhio. “Jonas is the caliber of leader this position demands, and his competitive edge will ensure continued exceptional results for Central Ohio.”

Peterson, a native of Warren, Minnesota, earned a B.S. in Agricultural Economics and an MBA from North Dakota State University. He also holds a master’s in community and economic development from Pennsylvania State University and has completed executive leadership programs at Stanford University, Oxford University and Harvard University.

###

About The Columbus Partnership

The Columbus Partnership brings together civic-minded business leaders to advance a shared vision to make Columbus the most prosperous region in the country. Columbus Partnership member CEOs are committed to the future of the Columbus metropolitan area through high-impact civic and philanthropic engagement. Through our One Columbus and Smart Columbus brands and investor support, our team works to help create jobs and attract capital investment, expand access to opportunity, and improve the economic competitiveness of the Columbus Region. Learn more at columbusregion.com.