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PARTNERSHIP

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Press Release

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Houston Metro Export Plan Aims to Spur Economic Growth

Plan to Increase Number of Local Firms that Export, Creating Jobs

HOUSTON –With Houston’s status as America’s next great global city, the Partnership today released a new plan to drive economic growth by helping Houston businesses connect to international markets. The [Houston Metro Export Plan](#) applies six key findings from an in-depth market assessment to develop targeted export-related strategies to create jobs by helping companies increase their reach with global markets and customers. The plan was released at the organization’s state of Houston’s Global Economy event.

The Houston Metro Export Plan is the result of the Houston business community’s participation in the Global Cities Initiative (GCI), a joint project of the Brookings Institution and JPMorgan Chase. The plan, developed by the Houston Global Cities Initiative Steering Committee, builds on the opportunity to continue to strengthen and diversify the region’s economy and outlines specific steps regional public, private and civic leaders can take to cultivate a job-growth strategy in Houston.

“Houston is already a leading exporter, and our exports have increased 189 percent since 2003,” said Bret Scholtes, Houston Global Cities Initiative Steering Committee chair and president & CEO, Omega Protein Corp. “A plan to boost goods exports can further diversify our economy, helping existing companies grow, and create more jobs.”

“Leaders across the Houston region have committed to take tangible action on what our research shows is key to a strong, diverse economy,” said Marek Gootman, fellow and director of strategic partnerships and global initiatives at the Brookings Institution. “With this export plan, Houston will determine how to better help local firms and the region take advantage of opportunities in the global marketplace. Houston joins a select group of metro areas working to strengthen their international connections and competitiveness through the Global Cities Initiative, where executing regional trade strategies is yielding measurable results.”

The Greater Houston Partnership works to make Houston one of the world’s best places to live, work, and build a business. It represents 11 counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, San Jacinto, Walker and Waller. With more than 1,200 member organizations, the Partnership represents approximately one-fifth of the region’s workforce. Visit the Partnership at houston.org



“In today’s global economy, a region’s success depends upon its ability to compete in world markets,” said Gina Luna, Houston chairman for JPMorgan Chase. “By encouraging local firms to connect to resources and services identified in the metro export plan, the region will capture more international economic growth.”

Houston is the number one metro exporter in top energy-related industries. The plan emphasizes the need to support existing exporters’ entry into new markets and increasing goods exports from small and medium-sized enterprises to stimulate economic growth.

“As the most diverse city in the nation, Houston looks today like the rest of the nation will look tomorrow,” said City of Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner. “The entire world is represented here and our approach to economic development, trade and job growth must recognize this so that we remain competitive in the global market. The City has been at the table during the development of the Houston Metro Export Plan and is fully supportive of the strategies outlined within it. It is blueprint for attracting more trade and investment.”

“Companies from around the world conduct business in Houston due to our internationally competitive business environment, worldwide access and highly-skilled workforce,” said Bob Harvey, president and CEO, Greater Houston Partnership. “The Houston Metro Export Plan will guide the next step in our city’s evolution as a great global city.”

Now that the plan is complete, the GCI Houston Steering Committee will focus on the implementation. The Committee will deploy four core strategies:

- promote and market Houston’s global advantages to grow exports and attract trade and investment;
- facilitate and enhance Houston’s international trade ecosystem by coordinating export resources and strengthening support systems;
- catalyze exporters, focused on targeted small to medium-sized goods-producing firms; and
- ensure that the needs of freight are integrated into the regional transportation planning process

The [2016 Global Houston Trade Profiles](#) document also was released at today’s event, which details each of Houston’s top 20 trade partners. The trade profiles highlight Houston’s commercial and cultural connections and identify emerging export opportunities.

For the full Houston Metro Export Plan and the 2016 Global Houston Trade Profiles, go to <http://www.houston.org>. For more information on the Global Cities Initiative, please visit www.brookings.edu/projects/global-cities.aspx or www.jpmorganchase.com/globalcities.

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