

**CyFair Chamber of Commerce
October 30, 2007**

**Remarks
Jeff Moseley
President and CEO
The Greater Houston Partnership**

“Keeping Greater Houston A Region Of True Opportunity”

I appreciate the invitation to be here and to join so many respected business leaders in a discussion of our future.

These are exciting times for the Greater Houston region – times of great opportunity and growing prosperity.

Our annual job growth rate is 33 percent higher than that of Texas as a whole and more than twice the national rate. During the 12-month period that ended in June, we added 76,500 jobs.

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis has ranked our MSA fifth nationally in terms of regional Gross Domestic Product, totaling \$316.3 billion – the highest in Texas.

We’re ranked No. 1 in the country for fastest-growing companies. No. 1 in job growth. No. 3 for businesses and careers. No. 5 for best business opportunities. And I assure you, that is just a *partial list*.

Make no mistake: We’re in a great place right now. But the challenge we face, as individual businesses and as a region, is how do we get to a better place in the future? How do we ensure that our reach continues to extend in all the right directions? How do we raise the aspirations for what we can become, and then marshal the resources necessary to get us there?

At the Greater Houston Partnership, we have begun to answer those questions.

In 2005, we created a 10-year strategic plan whose goal is to keep this region on a path that encourages our growth, expands our opportunities, and enhances our lifestyle.

It’s big, bold, and ambitious, and it is going to stir the lifeblood of our economy – job creation, capital investment, business prosperity, and international trade.

To begin with, it sets some clear targets for the coming years: 600,000 new net jobs, \$60 billion in new capital investment, and \$125 billion in new foreign trade.

It also identifies multiple industry clusters that will be the focus of our efforts to hit those targets:

- Aerospace and aviation;

- Medical and biotechnology;
- Energy and petrochemical;
- Information technology; and
- Nanotechnology.

We believe strongly that the sustained development of these sectors will bring new jobs, establish new areas of economic leadership, and attract new talent. That's especially true in this area, where biotechnology, healthcare, and energy are significant contributors to both the local and the regional economies.

By capitalizing on our collective core strengths and resources, our strategy will drive prosperity throughout the Cy-Fair area – and throughout the entire region. It's a good, sound, smart game plan.

But you know as well as I do that good game plans don't automatically translate to victory in the end. You have to execute. That's how you turn success into reality.

I think we have put ourselves in a strong position to achieve that kind of success, too – now, and in the long run.

Last year, we launched Opportunity Houston. It's a \$40 million fund-raising initiative designed to generate leads, create jobs, and help spread the word – nationally and internationally – about everything this region has to offer. Led by Astros' owner Drayton McLane, it has already passed the \$28 million mark.

I can't overstate the importance of this effort – to this area and to the region as a whole.

The economic development marketplace is tough. We are being challenged by other countries, regions, states, and metro areas that are offering hundreds of millions of dollars in tax breaks as an incentive to attract investment. Some are even giving companies a blank check – literally – to locate in their areas.

A moment ago, I referenced three clusters that are important to this area – biotechnology, healthcare, and energy. Here are just a few examples of how competitive the climate has become in those sectors:

- Phoenix is targeting bioscience and technology companies. The mayor there has proposed a mile-long biomedical district that would allow hospitals, specialty clinics, and research institutions to expand or locate in the city.
- Dallas-Fort Worth has a strategy that focuses in part on the technology and healthcare sectors.
- Earlier this year, Kansas City was pursuing 19 different bioscience companies. One local official was quoted as saying, "We're really going after this industry."
- Maryland trumpets itself as the No. 2 location in the *world* for attracting and retaining biotech companies.

- In Canada, large biotech clusters have emerged in Quebec and Ontario; Edmonton, Alberta, is the self-described “world hub” for the oil, gas, and petrochemical industries; and the Atlantic Canada region proclaims itself as a “world leader” in the energy sector.

That’s just a glimpse – a snapshot – of what we’re up against. And the key to achieving our goals in that economic environment is not simply having the “will to win.” We have that.

The key is being “prepared to win.”

With this strategic plan, supported by Opportunity Houston, we are. We will be one of America’s Top 5 locations for business growth, capital investment, and job creation.

The Greater Houston Partnership is made up of 2,000 of the top business and community leaders in this region. The annual sales and other receipts by firms and organizations represented on our Board of Directors alone is more than \$1.92 trillion.

To put it that number in some perspective, it is larger than the Gross Domestic Products of all but six nations and equivalent to nearly one-fifth of U.S. GDP.

So I can say with confidence that we’re placing a large part of the responsibility for our region’s future in the hands of individuals, institutions, and businesses that understand the imperatives of success.

But they cannot do it alone.

They need the support of people like you – business leaders who have contributed to the growth and prosperity of this region, and who share our commitment to creating a more abundant life for everyone.

So I hope each of you will continue your efforts to keep us on the road to a better, more prosperous tomorrow. Together, we can ensure that Greater Houston remains a region of bright, broad horizons and a land of true and endless opportunity for everyone.

Thank you.