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Milwaukee Region selected to join Global Cities Initiative's new Exchange Network

Milwaukee – Today, the Milwaukee Region is joining a new exchange network created by the Global Cities Initiative, a joint project of Brookings and JPMorgan Chase. The Exchange is a network of metropolitan areas committed to establishing actionable plans that will promote greater global trade and economic competitiveness. Brookings selected metropolitan areas to join the network after an extensive application process that evaluated regions' readiness and capability to pursue the Exchange's curriculum and commitment to fulfill its goals.

The Milwaukee Region is one of eight inaugural Exchange metro areas that will design and implement a regional export plan in 2014. The network will expand over time to include additional U.S. and international cities working together to strengthen their local economies through increased engagement with the rest of the world. This builds on the Global Cities Initiative's work, which equips metropolitan leaders with the information, policy ideas, and global connections they need to bolster their regions' positions in the global economy.

"For the Exchange, we selected metro areas that are committed to expanding their global economic reach by working together to identify regional competitive strengths and increase exports," said Brad McDearman, Brookings fellow. "The eight metro areas selected for this round represent a growing group of U.S. metro areas that understand the need to embrace the global market to remain competitive in the 21st century economy."

Rapid urbanization in mature and developing markets is creating a new consumer class and 85 percent of global GDP growth is projected to occur outside the U.S. between 2013 and 2018. This is a great opportunity for U.S. firms and local economies to achieve economic growth to capitalize on their distinctive assets and expand their global trade and investment strategies.

"We're delighted that the Milwaukee Region will be a part of this new network – it's exactly the kind of innovative planning that is needed to ensure our community's long-term economic success," said Jim Popp, Wisconsin market president at Chase. "We have a long history of helping businesses connect to

global markets and now the Exchange brings additional resources to help our region's leaders design strategies to further create jobs and grow our economy through greater global engagement."

Metro area leaders play a critical role in promoting trade and developing infrastructure. The Milwaukee Region is uniquely positioned to make exports and global engagement a central, consistent part of broader regional economic strategies. Regional economic development leaders representing both the public and private sectors can help local firms access new markets and align existing export services because they know their regions best. These leaders are also best equipped to coordinate regional assets—such as skills training, innovation capacities, and freight and logistics—to better support global trade.

The Milwaukee Region will join Atlanta; Greenville, S.C.; Indianapolis; Jacksonville, Fla.; Phoenix; Sacramento, Calif.; and Wichita, Kan., in the Exchange's inaugural class, which will work together over the next four years to establish new metro-to-metro relationships and to share best practices in global economic development.

Milwaukee Region representation in the Exchange is led by Pat O'Brien, executive director of the Milwaukee 7 Economic Development Partnership, with key core team members including Buckley Brinkman, executive director/CEO of the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership; MMAC's World Trade Association board with co-chairs Kurt Prange, Bentley World Packaging, and Lauren Morrow, M.E. Dey & Co.; and Lora Klenke, vice president of International Business Development, Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.

"The Milwaukee 7 is ideally positioned to lead the Global Cities Initiative's Exchange network for our region," said Gale Klappa, chairman and CEO of Wisconsin Energy Corp., and Milwaukee 7 co-chair. "Weaving a best-practice export initiative into M7's broader strategy will support foreign direct investment, entrepreneurship, workforce development and other initiatives that have been the driving focus of the M7."

As part of the Exchange, the Milwaukee Region will first develop a regional export plan and later integrate a foreign direct investment strategy. Together these plans, which may also grow to include logistics and advanced industries, will comprise a customized global engagement strategy to strengthen the region's global economic connections and competitiveness.

The leaders of the Milwaukee Region's Exchange team will join those of the other accepted metropolitan areas at Brookings in Washington, D.C., in December to participate in their first working group session, where they will learn how to develop an export plan as part of a global economic development strategy. Throughout the four-year Exchange, participating metros will periodically convene for in-person working groups and will continually engage in curriculum via conference calls and webinars.

The inaugural cohort of eight metropolitan areas will join twelve that are already involved in Brookings-led metropolitan export planning. Charleston, S.C.; Chicago; Columbus, Ohio; Des Moines, Iowa; Los Angeles; Louisville-Lexington, Ky.; Minneapolis-Saint Paul; Portland, Ore.; San Antonio; San Diego; Syracuse, N.Y.; and Tampa Bay, Fla., are all existing members of the Brookings Metropolitan Export Initiative and have been invited to continue their work as part of the Global Cities Exchange.

In addition to these 20 metro areas, the Global Cities Initiative will support strategic economic engagements in select international markets. Last week in México City, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel and México City Mayor Miguel Ángel Mancera announced the first international engagement of the Exchange by signing an [agreement](#) to formalize and strengthen their cities' economic partnership. The two cities will work together to expand exports, foreign investment, skilled workforce and research endeavors.

*Launched in 2012, the **Global Cities Initiative** is a five-year joint project of Brookings and JPMorgan Chase aimed at helping city and metropolitan leaders become more globally fluent by providing an in-depth and data-driven look at their regional standing on crucial global economic measures, highlighting best policy and practice innovations from around the world, and creating an international network of leaders who ultimately trade and grow together. For more information please visit <http://www.brookings.edu/projects/global-cities.aspx> or www.jpmorganchase.com/globalcities.*

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