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Greenlight Greater Portland welcomes new CEO

Sept. 5, 2007 – Portland, Ore. – Greenlight Greater Portland, a primarily private-sector group devoted to promoting the economic vitality of the greater Portland region, announced today it has hired its first full-time chief executive officer. Tim Priest, former executive director of the Greater Washington Initiative [District of Columbia], will define strategies for attracting national and international companies to greater Portland's four-county metropolitan area.

Priest comes to Portland after nearly a decade of experience with GWI, one of the 10 economic development groups in the country to earn *Site Selection Magazine's* "Top Group" award. The award is based on criteria such as jobs gained, innovative programs and customer service. He joined GWI in 1998, rising to become vice president of business development in 2001, and was named executive director in 2005. In his first year in this role, he oversaw the recruitment of 28 companies whose economic impact was calculated at \$350 million.

"For this first-ever business-led, business-funded regional economic development effort, it's impressive to land someone with Tim's background and record of accomplishment," said Mark Ganz, president and CEO of Regence and chairman of Greenlight Greater Portland. "His experience leading a regional group is a perfect fit with Greenlight's mission and makeup."

Under Priest's tenure, GWI benefited from his strong emphasis on research, which included studies of human capital and the knowledge workforce, as well as international commerce and culture. The research helped earn GWI high-profile stories in the *Los Angeles Times*, *New York Times* and *Washington Post* as well as on Bloomberg TV.

"Hiring someone with Tim's experience and knowledge is a big victory for our region," said Jim Mark, CEO of Melvin Mark Companies, and a Greenlight board member. "He has experience directing business development and marketing campaigns across the United States and Europe. This combination of economic development and strategic expertise will serve us well."

Priest will assume full-time responsibilities, which will include overseeing a staff of recruiters and guiding Greenlight's global marketing efforts. Priest will be meeting over the next few weeks with leaders in the business and economic development communities.

"My wife and I met when we lived in Oregon, so personally, my family and I are thrilled to be returning to the Pacific Northwest," said Priest. "Portland has become a global hub for high tech manufacturing, athletic apparel and sustainability business clusters. I believe this leadership can be leveraged to attract more of the right jobs for the region."

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Greenlight Greater Portland is a predominately private-sector group devoted to fostering the sustained economic vitality of the four-county region of Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah and Washington counties in northwest Oregon and southwest Washington. Led by the area's top business leaders, Greenlight Greater Portland introduces new businesses to the wide range of enviable resources here: industrial, human, natural, financial and technological. Visit us online at www.greenlightgreaterportland.com.