

2007 Potomac Conference

Conference Outcomes:

At the end of October 2007, more than two hundred leading Washington region business, government, and civic executives assembled at the Greater Washington Board of Trade's 2007 Potomac Conference to address "*Green*" as a *Competitive Advantage: Advancing a Regional Leadership Agenda for the Environment*. The Conference advanced the notion of opportunities associated with the environmental agenda, including energy efficiency, new technologies, alternative sources of power and more.

The full day event began with morning briefings by Virginia Governor Tim Kaine and DC Mayor Adrian Fenty who noted the strengths and weaknesses of the region in relation to "green" and spoke of why the region should act in collaboration rather than in competition to achieve more. The day continued with panel presentations on green finance, real estate and energy. Initial findings from the *Greater Washington Green Benchmarks* were presented before lunch. Lunch was keynoted by Andrew Winston, co-author of *Green to Gold*. Afternoon proceedings were dedicated to a thought-leaders panel and facilitated discussions to identify and vote on draft priorities for a Regional Leadership Action Agenda. At the end of the day, Conference attendees selected four priorities to be considered by the Board of Trade and participating organizations:

1. Promote sustainable business practices by working with federal, state and local governments to increase incentives such as tax credits, subsidies and expedited permitting processes.
2. Utilize research, education and best practice campaigns to raise awareness of Greater Washington's green assets and business practices.
3. Support regional transit-oriented development and alternative transportation.
4. Establish a regional greenhouse gas reduction target.

Next Steps:

The Board of Trade will establish a Green Committee. Subject to review by Board of Trade leadership and the development of a mission statement, committee activities will include:

- Completing and advancing a Regional Leadership Action Agenda.
- Developing Board of Trade policy on issues of regional sustainability.
- Serving as a forum to engage government officials and NGOs in developing and advancing legislative initiatives consistent with the Regional Action Agenda.

An organizational meeting of the Green Committee is scheduled for mid February.

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