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Portland metro communities form regional development organization: Greater Portland Economic Development Corp.

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Greg Mitchell, Portland's economic development director, announced the formation of the Greater Portland Economic Development Corp. (GPEDC), an organization linking private, educational and public institutions on behalf of Portland, South Portland, Scarborough, Westbrook, Falmouth and Cape Elizabeth.

The new corporation, approved by each of the six communities, will serve as a single point of contact for businesses looking to locate, develop or expand in this six-community region. The organization will also develop the area's marketing program for business attraction.

Each community's economic development staff person serves as the designated municipal representative on GPEDC's board of directors. Filling out the board are representatives from educational institutions, from key industrial sectors and from the Greater Portland Chamber of Commerce.

The newly formed GPEDC launched its first marketing initiative at BIO 2011 in Washington, D.C. Both a trade show and a conference, Bio 2011 serves as one of the largest international meetings for the bioscience industry, bringing nearly 20,000 industry representatives together in one location.

"GPEDC's primary marketing goals for the show included the identification of people, entrepreneurs and businesses that could add to or strengthen our growing bioscience sector," said Mitchell, who serves as Portland's representative on GPEDC's board of directors.

"While our primary mission may have been to prospect for companies, pulling together to prepare for this show also served to strengthen our regional collaboration and commitment," Mitchell said.

"In a focused and affordable way, we pooled our resources and made a huge step forward in demonstrating our ability to unite to increase the economic prosperity of the region."

"We walked away from the show with new ideas, new contacts, and most importantly, the potential for bringing new businesses and jobs to our region," said Mitchell.

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