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Detroit Region Aerotropolis Development Corporation Announces CEO, New Name & Marketing Plan

Taylor, Mich., July 18, 2013 — The Detroit Region Aerotropolis Development Corporation (ADC) today announced it has hired a CEO, has completed a strategic marketing and organizational plan, and is rebranding itself as VantagePort.

Verna McDaniel, Washtenaw County Administrator and Interim ADC Chair, said “It took us longer than we had hoped but we’re pleased to have a highly qualified CEO dedicated to leading our efforts. We conducted a public search, received over 60 applications and after a complete review, we are confident that Tim Keyes is the best candidate to accomplish what we want done. Tim is very familiar with the Aerotropolis as he has been engaged to some degree with our work from the beginning, which will enable him to jumpstart the initiative and re-energize our efforts.”

“The Aerotropolis is a major driver of economic development in Wayne County and the state of Michigan as a whole,” said Wayne County Executive Robert Ficano. An ardent supporter of the concept from the beginning, Ficano added: “I am happy to see someone who has been involved in the project since day one, be named CEO. I have no doubt that Tim will be able to jump right in and continue to move the Detroit Region Aerotropolis forward. We look forward to working with Tim to make this happen.”

The ADC Board worked with Applied Storytelling, a brand management firm, to select the VantagePort name.

VantagePort hired Greyhill Advisors, a global site selection and economic development consulting firm, to prepare a strategic plan for the organization. The Greyhill report will be used as a guide for VantagePort's next steps. Some of the recommendations include:

- Implementing a marketing and business development program, incorporating the new name
- Identifying business targets by industry sector
- Creating a formalized land development program
- Developing the brand and value proposition and related materials

These recommendations will be executed by the newly hired CEO, Keyes, who said, "I am honored and excited to be a part of moving this vision for Southeast Michigan forward. With our new VantagePort brand and our strategic marketing and organizational plan, I'm ready to hit the ground running. I look forward to working with our many partners to achieve success."

"The development of the Aerotropolis was identified as a key component in accelerating growth in Southeast Michigan in Business Leaders for Michigan's New Michigan strategy and in Detroit Renaissance's Road to Renaissance initiative," said Doug Rothwell, President and CEO of Business Leaders for Michigan. "We have tremendous assets we can leverage to grow our state's economy, including a world class airport, surrounding land available for development, a unique geographic location and a skilled workforce. Now that we have a CEO of Tim's caliber in place, we can move with lightning speed to implement this effort."

Wayne County Executive Ficano had long envisioned an Aerotropolis for the Detroit Region and the Detroit Region Aerotropolis was a part of the Detroit Renaissance (now Business Leaders for Michigan) Road to Renaissance strategy to help grow the economy for the entire Detroit region. The goal was to develop the area between and surrounding Detroit Metro and Willow Run airports into a global logistics hub for the movement of people, products and information. Over the long term, the Aerotropolis is projected to attract more than 60,000 jobs to the region and more than \$10 billion of additional annual economic activity with an aggressive business attraction effort.

Members of the ADC include: Wayne County, Washtenaw County, Belleville, Huron Township, City of Romulus, City of Taylor, Van Buren Township, City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, Wayne County Airport Authority, Business Leaders for Michigan and DTE Energy.

Additional information is included on the enclosed VantagePort Fact Sheet.

The Detroit Region Aerotropolis Development Corporation, VantagePort, was formed in February, 2009 through an Interlocal Agreement between Wayne and Washtenaw Counties and seven local communities surrounding Detroit Metropolitan/Wayne County and Willow Run Airports. VantagePort will provide a coordinated, regional approach to economic development for the VantagePort Region. It is governed by a public/private sector Executive Committee which includes Business Leaders for Michigan, DTE Energy and the Wayne County Airport Authority.

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