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Pittsburgh Region Celebrates Three Years of Progress Since Steelers' Last Run at the AFC Championship, Super Bowl

Region has become an even better place to live, work and raise a family since 2006

(PITTSBURGH – January 15, 2009) The Pittsburgh region has made remarkable progress since the Steelers last made a charge toward the Super Bowl in early 2006, say leaders at the Allegheny Conference on Community Development. During the past three years, Pittsburgh was named the most livable place in America, total employment in the region reached an all-time high, and business climate improvements enabled hundreds of private sector investments across all 10 counties of southwestern Pennsylvania.

“This was a great place to live, work and play when we watched the Steelers make their triumphant Super Bowl run in 2006, but we’ve made tremendous progress as a region in the three years since,” said Mike Langley, CEO of the Allegheny Conference. “The sense of ownership and pride that we all feel when it comes to the Steelers – whether we live in the city of Pittsburgh or in Armstrong, Greene or Westmoreland County – is the same ownership and pride we take in tackling the challenges we face as a region.”

Here are just a few signs of the progress we’ve made in advancing the region’s economic development game plan:

New roads and business sites are in place that didn’t exist three years ago, attracting investment and creating jobs. We now have 2,000 acres of land ready for construction in the airport area with major development, such as the new headquarters for Dick’s Sporting Goods, underway. We’ve completed the “missing ramps” between I-79 and Future I-376. And we opened the Findlay Connector, creating a new conduit to development in fast-growing Washington County.

We’ve attracted billion-dollar investments by United States Steel and Allegheny Technologies. More competitive regulation has helped to level the playing field for large consumers of electricity and streamlined the permitting process for Air Quality in Allegheny County.

We’ve saved employers almost \$1 billion in taxes, prompting investment and job retention and creation. Employment in our region is out-pacing the national average in part because our business climate is more competitive than it was just three years ago.

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Our more competitive region has attracted unprecedented levels of business investment.

Since January 2006, more than 550 companies have announced expansions or new operations in the region and creation of more than 33,500 jobs. And there's more to come, with more than \$4.5 billion in completed, active and planned investment in the urban core alone and private sector development continuing in nearly every corner of the region.

The work done by leaders in the private and public sectors over the past three years – and, in fact, over the past three decades – to create a more diverse and stable regional economy and a better place to live, work and play has made the Pittsburgh region one of the best places to ride out the current global economic crisis and one of the most likely locations for job growth in 2009, according to publications including *TIME*, *BusinessWeek*, *The New York Times* and *Forbes*. Even our most-fierce NFL rival city has recognized the bright future of the Pittsburgh region with a glowing story headlined “Pittsburgh's renaissance holds lesson for Cleveland” in a November issue of the *Cleveland Plain-Dealer*. (See below for links to the coverage referenced in this release.)

“We have an awful lot to celebrate about where our region is and where we're headed while we cheer our Steelers on in the playoffs this year,” said Mr. Langley. “Of course, like the Steelers, we've also got a lot of challenges left to overcome if we're going to maintain the momentum we've created in recent years. We can't let a battered economy and shortsighted concerns about recession brutalize our region with new or higher business taxes that kill jobs. We have to capitalize on opportunities, particularly in the energy sector. And we have to keep our focus on the trophy at the end of the struggle – a more prosperous region for our children and grandchildren.”

The Allegheny Conference on Community Development and Affiliates – the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Economy League of Southwestern Pennsylvania and the Pittsburgh Regional Alliance – work in collaboration with public and private sector partners to stimulate economic growth and improve the quality of life in southwestern Pennsylvania. For more information, visit www.alleghenyconference.org.

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