

Press release: Announcement of Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NOVA EDA)

Ten Virginia Localities Join Together to Form Brand-New Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance

The agreement heralds unprecedented cooperation across jurisdictional borders in Northern Virginia.

Northern Virginia: Today, ten jurisdictions from Northern Virginia have come together to announce the formation of the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NOVA EDA). The Alliance is comprised of the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, Arlington County, City of Fairfax, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority, City of Falls Church, Fauquier County, Loudoun County, City of Manassas, City of Manassas Park, and Prince William County Department of Economic Development.

In recent years, localities in Northern Virginia have occasionally banded together on projects or marketing missions when an opportunity arose. These efforts were sporadic and unstructured, but demonstrated the impact of collaboration to the participants. In 2017, when Amazon released its Request for Proposals for their HQ2, the company strongly encouraged a regional response—a move that inspired four Northern Virginia jurisdictions to come together to bid on the project jointly.

Through the proposal process, the four jurisdictions, together with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP), created the first Northern Virginia regional brand—**innovation lives here**—which included collateral, a website, and a wealth of information that highlighted the strength of the region as a whole. Amazon’s desire to evaluate regional assets mimics trends seen across various industries—companies do not see jurisdictional borders and are looking for regional workforce, transportation, housing and livability assets. Highlighting these things from a regional perspective makes Northern Virginia one of the most competitive places in the country for business attraction and growth. Ultimately, the regional pitch to Amazon resulted in Northern Virginia winning the biggest economic development project in modern history. Additionally, it bolstered the case for creation of a Northern Virginia regional economic development effort, proving that Northern Virginia localities are stronger together. Building a robust, recognizable regional brand for Northern Virginia will propel our communities to the top of site selection lists that will generate new leads, resulting in more business investment.

The local economic development leadership have also been encouraged to collaborate by local and statewide leaders. Over recent years, Northern Virginia elected and appointed leaders have been working across borders and aisles to tackle affordable and workforce housing, transportation, education, and other challenges facing our region, collaboratively. At the state level, Stephen Moret, who took the helm as President & CEO of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership in 2017, has supported the telling of regional stories, providing additional resources to regional groups throughout the Commonwealth.

Moret said, “Recognizing that collaboration is a hallmark of successful economic development, I am delighted that localities in Northern Virginia are taking this important step to further regional collaboration in an area of the Commonwealth poised for significant growth. VEDP already works closely with 16 other regional economic development organizations in Virginia, and we are excited to now be

able to work with the NOVA EDA to help accelerate employment growth and business investment in Northern Virginia.”

Today, these ten jurisdictions are acknowledging the importance of coalescing formally together on regional business recruitment efforts. Regional economic development organizations are common across the United States—in fact, the NOVA EDA joins sixteen other regional groups from across the Commonwealth of Virginia. This gives the Northern Virginia localities access to the same opportunities and benefits as their peers, keeping the region competitive and relevant both nationally and internationally.

Moving forward, the NOVA EDA will be working closely with VEDP to take advantage of access to more economic development tools, while working together to create a strong brand and story that showcases all of the talent and benefits of doing business in Northern Virginia. Stay tuned for more exciting news from this powerhouse team.

For more information about the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance, please visit novaEDA.org.

For general press questions or inquiries, please contact Adrienne Griffith, NOVA EDA Communications Lead, at griffith@alexecon.org or 703.652.5349. For jurisdiction-specific inquiries, please contact:

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