



***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

## **Two of Minnesota's largest regional chambers of commerce plan to consolidate**

*New organization formed by Minneapolis and TwinWest chambers will focus on helping businesses thrive in a new economy in wake of COVID-19*

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. – May 21, 2020 – The Minneapolis Regional Chamber and the TwinWest Chamber of Commerce today announce that they plan to consolidate their two organizations into one unified chamber to better serve members and the business community in a new economy. The boards of directors for the Minneapolis Regional Chamber and the TwinWest Chamber unanimously approved joint resolutions this morning that formally state their intent to consolidate.

While this consolidation was being seriously considered before the COVID-19 pandemic, the current business environment has increased the need for innovation and partnership. The chambers have complementary strategic initiatives and programming, and this consolidation will allow them to work together on their shared goals of helping businesses prepare for a changed economy and strengthening the region's workforce. [Read more about the consolidation here.](#)

The president and CEO of the merged chamber will be Jonathan Weinhagen, the current president and CEO of the Minneapolis Regional Chamber. TwinWest Chamber President & CEO Shannon Full will assume the role of executive vice president for the new organization.

"The Minneapolis Regional Chamber and TwinWest Chamber deliver value in different ways and combining our strengths and building on them is a win for the business community," said Weinhagen. "I have long admired Shannon's leadership of the TwinWest Chamber and look forward to what we can accomplish together with a strong, shared voice."

Chambers across the country are restructuring or consolidating to ensure they are delivering top value to member businesses. The Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives states that 25-30% of U.S. chambers will not be operating in the same form post-pandemic. Weinhagen and Full believe this new chamber will deliver improved member experiences, increased connections and better outcomes that benefit our region's business community.

“By leveraging collective resources and relationships, together we can bring forward innovative programs for our members and solution-based strategies for the region,” said Full. “We are excited to increase the value that we bring to members and stakeholders at a time when it is most needed.”

The new combined chamber will now represent more than 2,000 businesses – large and small, urban and suburban – across the greater Twin Cities metro area, making it the largest regional chamber in Minnesota. The Minneapolis Regional Chamber currently serves the 11-county metro area (Hennepin, Ramsey, Scott, Carver, Wright, Sherburne, Isanti, Anoka, Chisago, Washington and Dakota counties). The TwinWest Chamber serves the cities of Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Golden Valley, Hopkins, Maple Grove, Medicine Lake, Minnetonka, New Hope, Plymouth and St. Louis Park.

“Times like these require new thinking and innovation. As a member of both of these chambers, we at General Mills are excited to see two of Minnesota’s most reputable chambers come together to support businesses in this new economy,” said Lee Anderson, director of global issues management and public affairs for General Mills.

“As a longtime TwinWest member, we are thrilled about what this consolidation means for our business,” said Dave Meyer, president of BizzyWeb, a small marketing business in Champlin. “With membership growing to more than 2,000 businesses, BizzyWeb will be able to connect with a much wider network of businesses and offer ways to help them grow online.”

A joint subcommittee will be formed that will prepare recommendations regarding the consolidation for the consideration and approval of the boards of directors. Their work will include developing the new chamber’s core values, mission, governance model, bylaws and board composition. It is anticipated that the consolidation will take about 30-60 days.

###

**Media availability:** Jonathan Weinhagen and Shannon Full will provide brief remarks and answer questions from the media via [this Zoom link](#) at 1 p.m. today (Thursday, May 21). The meeting ID is 426 909 8278 and the password is 220143. If you have any problem accessing, contact Chris Duffy at [duffy@goffpublic.com](mailto:duffy@goffpublic.com).

**Contact:** Chris Duffy | 612-599-7982 | [duffy@goffpublic.com](mailto:duffy@goffpublic.com)