

In the 1990s Philadelphia was the slowest growing metropolitan area in the country after St. Louis—we grew only 3.6%.

The number of young people in our region age 15-34 declined at 9 times the national average.

Suburban job growth has been below the national average since 1993 and Philadelphia experienced even less.

From 1993-1998, Philadelphia topped the list of the 10 cities with the highest total state, federal and local business taxes.

Between 1982 and 1997, developed land grew by 33% while our population grew by only 3%.

CHANGE?

This isn't the way things have to be. *Flight or Fight* posed a simple question to metropolitan Philadelphia leadership: Are we going to continue to choose flight from our older communities and keep creating new developments on greenfields or are we going to fight for all our communities in the metropolitan area? The resounding answer over the last year and a half from business, political and community leaders across our five counties is **“YES, WE WANT TO FIGHT!”**

To date, we have made some hard-earned progress towards articulating common strategies, ideas and language to attain better growth. Significant leadership within our five counties agree that that we will all grow better if we capitalize on our unique assets to rebuild the city of Philadelphia, relieve some of the pressures of sprawl in the suburbs, and increase the livability of our older suburban towns.

Yet, can we come together as a region to build an agenda that has something for every part of the region? We believe the answer is again a resounding yes, because we all want to improve the quality of life in our communities.

This is not about some place called the region that nobody belongs to. This is about our communities and changing the rules of the game so that all of our communities can thrive and prosper. What's more, the time is right to achieve changes at the state level that will help our region. We have the first elected governor from our region in power since 1914. Many of the leaders in the state's legislature are from

this region and have the interest of Philadelphia and its suburbs at heart. In addition, the whole state has an interest in our region's success because we are responsible for almost 40% of Pennsylvania's economy.

Based on thousands of conversations with leadership across the region, we believe a compelling policy agenda for Metropolitan Philadelphia must be based on the following principles:

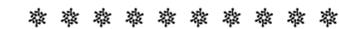
CONCENTRATE future development and infrastructure improvements in and around older areas and in newer suburban centers of growth;

CONSERVE much of our remaining agricultural and rural lands;

BUILD upon the region's rich history, culture, and abundant natural resource amenities;

REDUCE and equalize fiscal resources; and,

CONNECT regional growth through the right transportation, housing, and workforce development policies.



These common principles provide a framework for identifying significant policy changes to help us build an economically competitive Metropolitan Philadelphia with a good quality of life for all of its residents. The purpose of this publication, a follow-up to *Flight or Fight*, is to propose three tangible policy shifts that will have an immediate and significant impact on our growth patterns.

TAXES ➤ Pennsylvania Economy League provides the numbers to back up the rallying cry we have heard from business leaders, commuters, and others that the wage tax is destructive to Philadelphia's competitiveness regionally and nationally. The Economy League's analysis supports the proposition that wage tax reduction could significantly increase our future tax base by attracting new residents and jobs to the city. *Page 7*

HOUSING ➤ The Reinvestment Fund argues that legal reform and policy shifts could effectively turn our region's abandoned residential property into an asset for our cities and towns by encouraging redevelopment and growth within our older communities. *Page 14*

LAND USE ➤ 10,000 Friends of Pennsylvania asserts that the state must play a greater role in setting land use priorities and ensure that its policies and funding are targeted in and around communities with existing infrastructure rather than subsidizing the creation of new infrastructure on rural lands. *Page 21*

The three broad policy recommendations we outline are just the beginning of a metropolitan agenda. If Metropolitan Philadelphia's leadership can come together to support these reforms, then we can move forward to achieve a comprehensive agenda that will create strong growth, new and better jobs, greater wealth, and better quality of life we all can enjoy.