

The Columbus Dispatch, Local Government Insider: O'Grady In Canada For Economic Conference, Sells Toronto on Franklin County

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Franklin County Commissioner John O'Grady recently spent a few days in Niagara Falls, Canada, talking about how collaboration between local governments and businesses has allowed Columbus to thrive even in an economic slump.

The "Collaborating to Compete — Metro Regions as Drivers of the Economy" conference was intended to share ways community partnerships can boost development. O'Grady and Kenny McDonald, the chief economic officer at Columbus 2020, described how the public and private sectors can work together to create jobs.

Columbus 2020's own scorecard says more than 81,000 jobs have been created in its 11-county region since the organization began in 2010.

O'Grady, who also spent an afternoon in Toronto to sell Canadian business leaders on the idea of opening markets to Columbus' products and services, said the invitation to speak is proof that word is getting out about central Ohio's collaborative approach to job growth.

"Five years ago, no one was asking Columbus to talk about economic development," O'Grady said.