



NEWS RELEASE

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Christi Branscom rejoins Partners Development

Christi Branscom, who has served as Commissioner of the Department of General Services (DGS) for the State of Tennessee for nearly six years, has rejoined her former firm, Partners Development, located in downtown Knoxville, as principal, general counsel and managing broker.

After joining DGS in January 2019, Branscom made notable strides in efficient management of the department's services. Under her watch, the Department of General Services and its divisions of Vehicle and Assets Management, Document Solutions, Central Procurement Office and Real Estate Assets Management have been honored with industry-leading awards in their respective fields.

"Christi has faithfully served state agencies and her fellow Tennesseans since day one of the Lee administration," Tennessee Gov. Bill Lee said. "During her tenure, she has led significant capital improvement projects, wisely stewarded taxpayer dollars by reducing the state's real estate footprint and secured the Department of General Services' standing as a 'Top Tennessee Workplace' for five consecutive years. Maria and I wish Christi continued success and pray God's richest blessings over her in the days ahead."

During Branscom's tenure, she oversaw the most significant capital budget in state history, prioritizing completing deferred maintenance of existing facilities and reducing and reconfiguring the state's real estate footprint. This historic budget included the Multi-Agency Law Enforcement Training Academy, the state's largest capital budget project ever at \$415 million. Several high-profile capital improvement projects were completed during Branscom's tenure, including renovations to the historic John Sevier State Office Building, the new Tennessee State Library and Archives building and the opening of several new facilities at popular Tennessee State Parks.

"I am very happy to be back home in Knoxville and to be rejoining Partners Development, which is family for me – literally and figuratively," Chrisi Branscom said. "While I enjoyed managing state operations, I am excited to leverage all I experienced during my tenure to the benefit of our many clients at Partners."

"We are thrilled to have Christi returning to Partners," said Russ Watkins, president and CEO of Partners Development. "Christi's experience, especially in managing large and significant capital projects across the state, will greatly support the work we do at Partners. At any point in time during her tenure, she was responsible for managing over \$4.5 billion in capital improvement projects."

In 2023, Branscom was named a Woman of Influence by the *Nashville Business Journal*, and she was awarded the prestigious National Ray Walton Leadership Award by the National Association of State Chief Administrators (NASCA). She is the first woman to be elected as president of NASCA. In 2024, Branscom also was honored with the Top Leader Award for Mid-Sized Organizations by the Tennessean's Top Workplaces Awards. She serves on several boards, including the University of Tennessee Haslam College of Business Dean's Advisory Council and the Leadership Tennessee board of directors.

Branscom is a native of Knoxville and began her career in public service when she served as deputy to the mayor/COO for the City of Knoxville following a promotion from senior director of public works – making her the first female to be named to either position in Knoxville history. Before her tenure in public service, Branscom enjoyed a successful career as COO/general counsel and principal managing real estate broker at Partners Development for 25 years.

Branscom earned a Bachelor of Science in finance cum laude from the University of Tennessee and a Juris Doctorate from the University of Memphis. She is a 2009 graduate of Leadership Knoxville and a 2017 graduate of Leadership Tennessee.

ABOUT PARTNERS DEVELOPMENT

Partners Development, located in downtown Knoxville, is a 50-year-old full service, diversified real estate firm specializing in comprehensive facilities planning, financing, development and management. The firm's work has resulted in more than \$2 billion in commercial, education, industrial and residential projects covering over 20 million square feet of space.