

## Prominent regional civil engineering firm on verge of being acquired

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Christopher Consultants Ltd., one of Greater Washington's largest building engineering firms, is on the verge of being acquired by Illinois-based IMEG Corp.

Fairfax-based Christopher consultants said in a recent note to clients that a deal has been reached and is expected to close July 29. Neither company disclosed the sale price.

The deal would be IMEG's 28th since 2015 and second in the D.C. region. In 2020, IMEG acquired the structural engineering division of Cardno, a publicly traded international consulting firm based in Australia that had offices in Reston.

Christopher consultants will operate as IMEG's Greater Washington civil engineering team, one of nearly 70 such regional teams under the IMEG banner. It will work in collaboration with, but remain separate from, the region's structural engineering division, led by Bob Pronier.

The local operations will retain the Christopher consultants name for the time being, but eventually will become part of the IMEG brand.

All Christopher employees are being retained, said Marie Purkert, the local firm's senior director of corporate strategy. Bill Zink, Christopher's president, will continue to lead the civil engineering team, reporting to an IMEG executive vice president, said Molly Foley, an IMEG principal and chief marketing officer.

In a joint interview Friday, Purkert and Foley said the deal emerged out of a friendship that developed between Zink and Paul VanDuyne, IMEG's president and CEO, a couple of years ago.

Purkert said that joining a national company with more resources and reach will allow Christopher consultants to achieve its "aggressive" growth objectives more quickly.

IMEG, meanwhile, is gaining a civil engineering team in the D.C. region that complements its Reston-based structural engineering team, as well as considerable expertise in landscape architecture, planning and surveying that Foley said enables IMEG to "deepen our bench" in those capacities.

In an email Friday, Zink said the deal will provide "stability and growth" for Christopher's employees, clients and partners, but "with the added resources of a nationwide company."

Christopher consultants is the 14th-largest firm of its kind in the D.C. region, ranked by 2021 billings, which were about \$20 million and reflected nearly 60% growth from the firm's \$12.6 million in billings in 2015, according to Washington Business Journal research. Founded in 1982, it has roughly 160 employees in six offices in Virginia and Maryland.

*Link to original press release:*

<https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2022/07/15/imeg-corp-christopher-consultants-acquisition.html>