

Enterprise at Home for Progress at Large: The Economics of Sustainability

Chambers of Commerce as the
New Civic Players in
Environmental Sustainability



Partners for Livable Communities



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Introduction

Enterprise at Home for Progress at Large: The Economics of Sustainability is about economies in transition—economies that are threatened by the consequences of environmental changes. This report explores how key civic leaders, faced with the challenge of ensuring the future strength of their economies, have employed creative new agendas that not only help reverse the effects of environmental degradation but leverage the occasion for valuable economic gain.

In 1985, Partners for Livable Communities published a book called “The Economics of Amenity” asserting that quality of life amenities played a critical role in the economic future of our communities. Today, this is not only an accepted idea, but has become the bedrock of many successful community revitalization projects and a critical part of what most people understand as economic development. The same opportunity can now be found in the application of green business strategies.

While national debates rage over which production methods will lead to a stronger, more sustainable environment, and while research and development teams struggle to produce the next revolutionary technology, it is on the local level that incredible progress is being made in advancing sustainability measures beyond rhetoric. City governments and grass-roots activists are often the most obvious players, but there is a powerful—and perhaps unexpected—player in the green arena that is leading the charge in cutting emissions and conserving energy while boosting regional economies: **the business community.**

Chambers of commerce throughout the country are instituting green business recognition programs, working to attract clean industries, creating green jobs, and providing resources to local businesses to implement more sustainable practices. These activities are not wild expansions of their mission, but are essential to fulfilling it. Businesses that emit little emissions and consume fewer resources are the stronger, leaner and more agile businesses of America’s future and as the organizations that work to support economic development and improve local quality of life, many chambers of commerce have dedicated themselves to aiding in the success of green businesses. The ingenuity and forward thinking exemplified by the chambers highlighted here are the first bold steps toward a more sustainable and robust American economy.

What follows are stories of entrepreneurship and success. As leaders that stand in a unique position at the crossroads of the environment and the interests of business, chambers of commerce can play a vital role in ensuring the health and success of both. Over time, we hope all regions will approach the two interests not as mutually exclusive, but as ideal partners for livable communities.

Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce: Climate Protection Partnership



THE CHAMBER

Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce

It is common to hear about the dire effects certain production methods will have on ecosystems throughout the world, but what about the impacts a deteriorating environment will have on our businesses? What effects will poor air quality and changing climates have on our economies? Commitment number one of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce's Climate Protection Partnership (CPP) reads: "We will assess the potential impacts of climate change on the long-term economic value and vitality of our organization, and we will use that assessment to inform strategic decisions to minimize the business risk associated with greenhouse gas emissions and maximize the economic opportunities afforded by reducing emissions." Rather than becoming more sustainable solely as a matter of civic good, members of the Greater Kansas City Chamber are implementing green strategies as necessary and common sense steps to ensure the continued success of their company.



The preamble of the Climate Protection Partnership Agreement is straightforward in its conviction that membership in the CPP is simply good business sense. Companies are encouraged to sign on to join other businesses that have a shared interest in "making economic investments that can potentially improve the environment." As a member of the Climate Protection Partnership, businesses also commit to reducing their own greenhouse gas emissions, collaborating with other CPP companies to help the community support sound policies and legislation related to emissions and energy use, and to help grow and strengthen the Partnership.

Not all businesses have the same resources to employ sustainable practices, and thus those who choose to join the Partnership have the option of signing on with differing levels of commitment. Those that qualify as "Environmental Stewards," the basic partnership level, have implemented a company-wide recycling program and an emissions reduction employee education and

training course. These Partners commit to sharing their successes and challenges with the CPP. "Environmental Leaders" have implemented additional company-wide programs to qualify and also commit to reporting their emission levels to the Partnership. To be accepted in the highest level of membership, "Environmental Change Agents", businesses must have executed more challenging initiatives such as emission reduction plans and taking steps to curb company transportation usage. "Change Agents" also report emission levels to the Climate Protection Partnership and continue to exhibit regional environmental leadership.

To help businesses maintain and expand upon existing programs, the Partnership offers a variety of useful resources. Companies are able to access a carbon footprint calculator from the CPP website for a rough estimation of their emission levels, making it easier to set reduction goals. Partnership members may also receive technical assistance to help reduce their climate impacts in ways that could lower costs and open doors to new marketing opportunities.

The Climate Protection Partnership is modeled after a similar program in the Seattle region and was a major focus during the Chamber's 2007 Leadership Exchange to Seattle. Since its launch in Greater Kansas City, the program has been extremely successful, boasting over 170 member companies committed to reducing their impact on local environments and improving the sustainability of their own business.



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Membership in the CPP is simply good business sense.

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Chapel Hill - Carrboro Chamber of Commerce: Green Plus



CHAPEL HILL CARRBORO

Chamber of Commerce

It's smart business.

Despite the great impact more sustainable practices can make to a company's bottom line, many businesses have yet to 'go green'. It's not an unwillingness to become more sustainable that stands in the way of more environmentally friendly business methods; rather it's the simple dilemma of 'Where do we start?' Many businesses are stumped on how to implement greener practices, but what company wouldn't jump at the chance to cut costs and reduce waste if they had the assistance of a Fellow at the Institute of Sustainable Development to create a personalized sustainability plan? Through the Green Plus program, members of the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce receive just that.

Surveys deployed to over 20,000 companies in North Carolina, Ohio and Pennsylvania revealed that 97 percent of those polled are interested in being known as a successful business committed to their community and their environment. A mere eight percent of these same businesses know where to find affordable information online about improving their sustainable practices. In 2007 with this dilemma in mind, programs at Duke University and UNC Chapel Hill teamed up with the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce, local philanthropies, and other area business entities to help make triple bottom line sustainability accessible to small employers—meaning good business performance, and a commitment to the community and the environment. The partnership resulted in the creation of the Institute for Sustainable Development and the Green Plus program.

As a member of Green Plus, businesses are connected to a forum staffed with Institute Fellows and experienced companies; receive feedback and tips from Duke and UNC graduate students on environmentally friendly business methods; are connected to mentor companies; are issued a Green Plus How-to Guide including term definitions and easy, medium, and challenging practices; and have access to referrals and links to both regional and national resource organizations. The Green Plus program also offers informational webinars or partnerships with local community colleges for those businesses without internet access.

In order to become a member of the program, applicants must complete a survey addressing the areas of Performance, Planet

and People. Under Performance, businesses are asked about their written strategic plan, accounting practices, and other business methods. Plain and simple, Green Plus explains that to be sustainable, a company must be financially successful. The Planet section explores issues such as energy use, transportation, and water conservation. To assess a company's true level of sustainability, Green Plus also inquires about their commitment to people—an essential element of



Green Plus' vision. Businesses must demonstrate compassion for their employees and an awareness of community needs.

Upon completing the survey, if a company falls short of the program's requirements in any or all of the three areas, they aren't left at square one. Institute Fellows in law, business, environmental studies, or public policy will coach the enterprise in how to become more sustainable and improve their score.

In an effort to spread the program throughout the United States, Green Plus announced a new partnership this past July with the American Chamber of Commerce Executives, an organization of 1,250 chamber of commerce members who represent over 1.2 million businesses across the country. ACCE member chambers can join Green Plus at a discounted rate and offer membership to their own associates. Philanthropies are also able to license out the program to interested organizations. Through this expanding national network, businesses around the country are able to share their experiences of going green.

With the combined resources of local universities, charitable organizations, and the business community, companies throughout the Chapel Hill region are now equipped with the tools necessary to employ greener practices. Branding opportunities gained through association to the program also provide members a valuable edge in an increasingly competitive marketplace. Through the Green Plus program, businesses are able to synchronize their practices with the social and environmental needs of their community—all while watching their profits grow.

“ It's not an unwillingness to become more sustainable that stands in the way of more environmentally friendly business methods; rather it's the simple dilemma of 'Where do we start?' ”



Over 20 million dollars: this is a conservative estimate of the total amount of **annual** savings and increased profits the City of Bridgeport, Connecticut could accrue over the next twenty years if all sustainability goals are reached. In their efforts to achieve such targets, some cities rely on heavy investments in high-tech industries, others turn to federal regulations. The key to success in Bridgeport is collaboration. Through an extensive public-private partnership between local government, the Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BRBC), and a great variety of community stakeholders, Bridgeport is well on its way to lower emissions and higher returns.

In October of 2008, Mayor Bill Finch delivered an executive order that set an initial framework of green goals and action items for the City. The programs identified by the Mayor are not only vital to the environmental health of Bridgeport, but will result in colossal savings for local businesses and to municipal budgets. In addition to outlining scores of ambitious objectives, the Order acknowledged that to effect real change and progress in social, environmental, and economic arenas, the City would have to work with a diverse coalition. To start, Bridgeport recognized that it needed a strong, influential partner; one with community-wide reach and great impact on local quality of life. The Bridgeport Regional Business Council (BRBC) stepped up to the plate, and thus, the City's Sustainability Initiative, B-Green 2020, was launched as a public-private partnership.



One of the first steps under the directive of the City and the BRBC was the formation of a Community Advisory Committee made up of over 40 individuals representing neighborhoods, businesses, city and state agencies, and other stakeholders to guide the direction of the Initiative. B-Green 2020's focus on collaboration did not end there, however. The five technical committees formed to address diverse areas of concern such as green buildings, water resources, and sustainable transportation are made up of over 100 individual stakeholders from the private sector, community groups, and municipal staffs. Incorporating a wide variety of participants has not only contributed to greater community support for the initiative, and therefore greater chances for its success; it has also brought additional resources to the table and helped avoid unnecessary and overlapping efforts.

Through the leadership of the BRBC, the City of Bridgeport has already made significant strides toward improving local sustainability. Although it has been under a year since B-Green 2020

first commenced, a partnership with the EPA is currently underway, a City energy plan is on the drawing board and a draft sustainability plan is being prepared. With help from the EPA, the Water Pollution Control Authority of Bridgeport and a local utility company, B-Green 2020 is working toward energy upgrades and a biomass gasification study at two local sewage treatment facilities, the largest carbon dioxide emitters in the City. Plans for a Green Energy Park are also being prepared. The Park would be located in a closed landfill site and supply energy to the grid through renewable sources. And an Energy Improvement District is being created to help lower costs and support renewable energy development. Other significant projects include the creation of a green business incubator, a career-ladder green jobs training continuum through the local workforce board, and a green purchasing program

Smaller programs able to be implemented more quickly have already begun such as the Street Tree Adoption Program, municipal building retrofits including the greening of the historic Burroughs Library, residential and commercial recycling, and rain barrel distribution. Finally, B-Green 2020 created the Mayor's Conservation Corps, a group of 20 – 30 door-to-door canvassers promoting energy conservation, recycling and storm water management issues. With the combined forces of local government, civic groups, and the business community, B-Green 2020 is quickly advancing Bridgeport's social, environmental, and economic agendas—sustainability's triple bottom line.



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The programs are not only vital to environmental health, but will result in colossal savings for local businesses and to municipal budgets.

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Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce: Clean Industries—Cleaner Air



CHATTANOOGA
AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
The Best Business Connections Around!

During an evening news broadcast in 1969, Walter Cronkite announced to a national audience the most polluted city in all 50 states. A report released that January from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) named Chattanooga, Tennessee the most heavily polluted city in the country. As a major industrial center, the city had some of the highest concentrations of particulates ever recorded; material from factory smokestacks and trains often caused smog so thick drivers were forced to flick on their headlights in broad daylight. In the four decades since, Chattanooga has relinquished its grimy throne to become a city known for its high quality of life, healthy environment, and bustling economy—a feat that would not have been possible without the leadership of a strong business community.

Air quality was an urgent matter following the release of the 1969 HEW report and Chattanooga quickly approved the creation of the Chattanooga/Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Bureau. Aside from the vital issue of healthy residents and environments, air pollution also posed a threat to the economic health of Chattanooga. Under the Federal Clean Air Act, the EPA is required to set ambient air quality standards for a number of air pollutants along with deadlines for county and state governments to achieve these standards. Failure to do so will result in a “non-attainment” status. Despite its mild wording, this designation can be detrimental to a region’s economic growth and prosperity. Consequences range from the payment of large fines to the withdrawal of federal highway funds and increased federal regulation. In some cases, new industries are banned from locating in non-attainment zones or must have a detailed plan for offsetting emissions, which can be a big deterrent to new development.

From Mr. Cronkite’s 1969 news segment to the present day, the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce has played a vital role in meeting EPA standards. The threats posed by non-attainment spurred the Chamber to join forces with the Chattanooga/Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Bureau back in 1969, a collaboration that is still strong today. Most recently in 2002, the two organizations teamed up to submit an Early Action Compact to the EPA. This voluntary program provided a flexible approach to

reducing pollution in which potential non-attainment designations that were to be given in 2004 were deferred, as long as all communities met agreed upon milestones by 2007. Through the Chamber’s work with local businesses to implement voluntary emission reduction measures, Chattanooga easily met all EPA markers by the December 31, 2007 deadline.

With the path cleared for new businesses to settle in the region, the Chattanooga Area Chamber has dedicated a great deal of effort to attracting major clean energy industries. Focused on firms involved in the manufacturing of hydroelectric power, wind energy, LNG (liquefied natural gas), hydrogen fuel cells, geothermal and other related energy sources, the Chamber recognizes that these industries not only provide jobs and a clean source of energy, but most are clean manufacturing operations that will not harm local air quality. Volkswagen AG is in the process of constructing their first US manufacturing facility in Chattanooga, which will produce low emission vehicles specifically for the North American market. Three leading nuclear power corporations have also recently announced major expansions in the Chattanooga area.

The efforts of the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce have allowed the region to thrive economically and shine environmentally. Equipped with a dedicated business community and strong collaborations throughout the region, Chattanooga can breathe easy while continuing its tradition of industrial might.



“ The Chamber recognizes that these industries not only provide jobs and a clean source of energy, but most are clean manufacturing operations that will not harm local air quality. ”

Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce: Green Business Initiative



Consumers are increasingly looking for that telltale green sticker stamped “made from recycled materials” and other decals confirming green practices and production methods. These eco-labels have slowly made their way from retail shelves to the community at large. Now, more than seventy Chamber of Commerce businesses within the greater Indianapolis region boast their own bright green sticker right on their front window. These same businesses are featured in monthly publications, on green business websites, and are promoted during trade shows and conferences. Although impressive on their own, these are just a few of the great practices that have been put to work in Indianapolis to both boost bottom lines and protect the environment.

The Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce recognizes the tremendous marketing value of green business and is working hard to promote member companies engaged in environmentally responsible practices. Through the Green Business Initiative, The Chamber has devised an innovative program that not only helps consumers identify which chamber member businesses are engaged in sustainable activities, but encourages local companies not previously involved in green efforts to implement more sustainable practices of their own. By joining the Initiative, businesses have access to a wealth of resources to help their green efforts and are advertised to the community as a company committed to improving local environments and quality of life.

Membership to the Green Business Initiative is based on a point system. Businesses are assessed in six areas: waste prevention, recycling, purchasing, water conservation and quality, energy conservation, and transportation. Awarded points vary based on the complexity of the programs. For example, a business can earn one point for recycling paper but may earn up to five points for composting landscape waste. Companies that implement strategies to improve fuel efficiency such as idling requirements or avoidance of high ozone times can earn five points in transportation; those that provide bike racks and showers for employees can earn three. Applicants must earn between 15 to 20 points to gain membership, depending on the size of the company and number of employees. Before a business is even considered for membership, however, it must meet all local, state and national environmental regulations and be a member of the Central Indiana Clean Air Partnership, a coalition of local government, universities and businesses dedicated to improving regional air quality.

Following a company’s admittance to the Initiative, the Greater Indianapolis Chamber immediately and enthusiastically promotes their accomplishments to the greater community. Accepted busi-

nesses are allowed use of the Green Business Initiative logo on all marketing materials, are featured on the program’s website, www.IndyGreenBusiness.com, and receive a Green Business window cling.

Members of the Chamber that may require a little more help greening their practices also have access to a great deal of useful resources. The Green Street Institute, a quarterly, half-day educational conference sponsored by the Chamber and a local law firm, is open to all members of the Chamber and is held to educate local businesses on energy and water conservation, natural gas conservation, and emerging green technologies and innovation opportunities. The Chamber’s weekly newsletter, which reaches over 5,000 members, includes green tips and features a business that has embraced the initiative. The Initiative’s website, open to all visitors, also provides suggestions on how to become more sustainable—have you thought of using native plants in your landscaping? They use less water.

The Green Business Initiative provides Indianapolis businesses the tools needed to become more sustainable and greatly rewards those companies that choose to use them. Member businesses enjoy the tremendous value of the Initiative’s marketing campaigns and can continuously improve their green practices via the Green Business forums, conferences, and websites. Through the creativity and extraordinary efforts of the Greater Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, area businesses are truly profiting from the process of going green.



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Area businesses are truly profiting from the process of going green.

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Greater Waco Chamber: Green Business Network



What was once an overlooked expanse of parking spaces is now the site of the nation's first LEED certified chamber of commerce headquarters in Waco, a Central Texas city of 118,093. Attaining U.S. Green Building Council LEED Gold certification with 46 of a possible 69 points, the new building boasts a 1,400 square-foot living roof, reduces water use by up to 30 percent and consumes 22 percent less energy than a standard building. In addition to leading by example through a state of the art headquarters, the Greater Waco Chamber directs an innovative network that provides area businesses the resources necessary to employ more sustainable practices of their own.

After the Chamber announced it would design and build the first building in Waco to meet LEED certification standards, others followed suit. McLennan Community College, for example, welcomed students this

fall with three new buildings totaling more than 200,000 square feet—all designed to be LEED certified. Caterpillar Logistics, Wells Fargo and Baylor University are also seeking LEED status for new buildings in Waco.

Inspiring the local business community through sustainable building design is just the beginning of the Waco Chamber's green initiatives. In chairs made from recycled materials and under skylights admitting natural light, Chamber employees are working to help member businesses become more environmentally friendly while cutting their costs and reducing waste. The Chamber's Waco Green Business Network educates, identifies, recognizes and promotes the sustainable practices of local businesses.

As the first of the Network's five steps to sustainability, companies can review a green practices checklist complete with 78 activities they can incorporate into their day-to-day activities. The list offers suggestions such as buying recycled toner cartridges, using marketing materials that don't require envelopes, and using recycled material in manufactured products. Step two encourages Greater Waco businesses to complete a green business survey to identify all sustainable activities in which they are engaged. Companies that exhibit action in all categories of the survey are highlighted in Chamber publications, both online and in print, have access to the Network's electronic logo, and receive a window sticker to display their designation as a green business.

Green businesses identified by the Chamber are invited to join WacoGreenBusiness.com as a fourth step toward sustainability. This business networking website gives members a forum to share ideas, methods and ask questions. As the grand finale to greening their practices, Waco businesses are featured on Gen Green Life, a national online directory to help consumers track down businesses that share their concern for our climate and ecosystems.

The Greater Waco Chamber promotes green member businesses not only to improve and protect Waco's environment but to help companies cut costs and avoid waste. Chamber leaders believe the city's commitment to sustainable development will help make Waco a magnet for the businesses, jobs, and young professionals of the future—and it all started with the goal to build the nation's first LEED certified Chamber building.



“Inspiring the local business community through sustainable building design is just the beginning of the Greater Waco Chamber's green initiatives.”

Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce: Green is Good for Business Conference



The impressive efforts put forth by the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce to improve local air and water quality are not simply matters of environmental stewardship, but are essential to maintaining the competitive edge of the Greater Columbia region. Cities nationwide are contending for the attention of an increasingly mobile creative class looking to settle in areas with a high quality of life—a vital element of which is a clean climate. The Greater Columbia Chamber recognizes that reducing emissions and conserving energy not only keeps the environment healthy, but also contributes to a healthy business community. Through informative conferences, strong partnerships, and a dedicated task force, environmental programs have become the stalwart of the region's progressive business edge, putting Greater Columbia on the map for the next generation of skilled and creative workers.

In partnership with the City of Columbia's Climate Protection Action Campaign, the Greater Columbia Chamber proudly sponsors the *Green is Good for Business Conference*. The latest of these annual gatherings, held in September of 2009, introduced more than 400 statewide business leaders to innovative green programs, products and methods. The South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control was also an event partner. Under the banner of "Environmental Values at Work: Saving Money, Saving Time, and Increasing Business," conference participants attended sessions focused on sustainable landscaping, measuring carbon footprints, and green purchasing among others. Attendees left the conference armed with the knowledge necessary to scale back their own emissions and employ more resource efficient strategies.

Throughout the remaining 364 days of the year, the Greater Columbia Chamber focuses much of its attention on improving local air quality through the work of its Environment and Quality of Life Task Force, an essential component of the Chamber's five-year community development and prosperity initiative: "Navigating from good to Great." Air quality is not only a health factor but also can have big effects on the economy of a region. If EPA standards are not met due to local air pollution, regions can incur a "non-attainment" status, a designation with more than muffling effects on local economies. Non-attainment areas are often faced

with limitations to production capabilities of existing industries, withdrawal of federal highway funding, and can be subject to more stringent federal controls.

Due to changes in EPA standards for local air quality, the Columbia area is at risk for a non-attainment designation. In collaboration with the Central Midlands Council of Governments, and the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, the Chamber's Task Force quickly responded with the Midlands Air Quality Forum, a gathering in the Chamber's headquarters to inform member businesses about current EPA regulations and what impacts "non-attainment" could have on their profits and procedures. The forum provides an opportunity for the local business community to examine new emission standards and exchange information and ideas regarding their contribution to better air quality. The chamber is working with multiple partners to develop a clean air strategy for the region.

Beyond the many accomplishments already made by the Chamber's Environment and Quality of Life Task Force, plans are in the works for the creation of a Chamber Green Business Council. This entity will further advance the tenets of the Chamber's recently adopted environmental policy statement, namely that "environmentally conscious practices and business success are not mutually exclusive." Advocating legislative change regarding air and water quality, providing a forum to introduce new green technologies and programs, and recognizing business leaders employing sustainable practices are just a few of the charges identified for the Green Business Council.

Through the programs and educational resources provided by the Chamber, Columbia businesses are maintaining their efficiency and agility in the ever-evolving world of business. The steadfast dedication of the Greater Columbia Chamber of Commerce to both environmental and business values is transforming the region into a hub for creative thinkers and a rapidly developing center for green business.



“ Environmental programs have become the stalwart of the region's progressive business edge, putting Greater Columbia on the map for the next generation of skilled and creative workers. ”

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce: Climate Policy and the Clean Tech Corridor



Los Angeles Area
Chamber of Commerce

As a part of their mission to advocate governmental policies and programs that help local businesses flourish, the Los Angeles Chamber has taken giant leaps out of the normal activities of a chamber to actively pursue environmental policies that marry economic growth with reducing emissions and conserving vital resources. They see this agenda as both critical to the future economic health of the city and as an opportunity to grow new industries.

There are two key ways the Los Angeles Chamber works to achieve green growth goals. The first is by actively educating members about the impacts of new or proposed environmental regulation and then working with businesses and elected officials to develop workable policies with achievable environmental goals. The second is to work with local municipal agencies and universities to develop and grow Los Angeles-based companies to solve environmental challenges with innovative business practices and products. Both of these methods are working to maintain a strong economic base for the city.



In its effort to inform environmental regulations, the Chamber has been a constant commentator, among other things submitting a list of recommendations last fall to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) calling for a market-based system to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The recommendations advocated that such a system would create sufficient incentives for facilities to determine and implement cost-effective reduction measures and suggested CARB refrain from imposing costly and restrictive control measures. The Chamber has also contributed substantive recommendations to other entities regarding the California Renewable Energy and Alternative Fuel Act, the City's *Green Energy*, *Green Jobs Initiative*, and a host of other legislative issues. The Chamber's voice has had a positive impact on local businesses, helping to harmonize business and sustainability goals.

As a green growth leader in Los Angeles, the Chamber partnered with the City of Los Angeles and three major research universities, UCLA, USC and CalTech to develop a network and set of business incentives that will grow local business talent, making

Los Angeles the home of clean tech in the US. With over 900 clean tech companies already identified, the Los Angeles Chamber recently partnered with the Los Angeles Community Redevelopment Agency and UCLA to tour the Los Angeles Clean Tech Corridor, the epicenter of Los Angeles' clean tech plan. Some of the highlights of the tour included the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Research Center, which will provide office and lab space for projects researching renewable energy technology and the CleanTech Manufacturing Center, a former school bus manufacturing site repurposed for manufacturing related to clean technologies. Finally, the Los Angeles Chamber has also been pushing the City and department leadership relentlessly to use innovative financing models to help Los Angeles meet its climate change and sustainability goals. The Chamber views the opportunity to develop a robust solar portfolio in Los Angeles, one of the sunniest cities in America, as the best way to show its true star power.

Most recently, the Chamber in partnership with the Los Angeles Community College District is working to launch a voluntary green business certification program to help small and medium businesses become environmentally friendly. Businesses are assessed based on their performance in the areas of recycling, water conservation, energy reduction, and employee training and education efforts. While the program is voluntary, businesses that successfully complete it can save over \$1000 a year and have a marketing advantage to the green conscious consumer base in Los Angeles.

Los Angeles is breaking away from its old stereotypes of sprawl and smog by making huge strides in clean-tech investment. The insistent advocacy of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce for both business-friendly environmental policy and sustainable company practices is leading Los Angeles to a cleaner and more vital industrial future.



“ Businesses that successfully complete [the program] can save over \$1000 a year and gain a marketing advantage to the green conscious consumer base in Los Angeles. ”



Knoxville Chamber: Green Business Recognition Program

Recycling one aluminum can is equivalent to saving six ounces of gas. This figure was introduced to the Knoxville Chamber during a presentation by a Tennessee materials management company, and after hearing the case for the importance of recycling to this local business and to the nation at large, the Knoxville Chamber was eager to jump on board.

In its effort to employ greener operations, the Chamber concentrated on the three tenets of sustainability—reduce, reuse, recycle—and has made significant strides to date. In the second quarter of 2009, from March 6th through June 6th, the Knoxville Chamber saved 42 pounds of aluminum, the equivalent of 19.8 barrels of oil; 560 pounds of plastic, or 11.8 cubic yards of land-fill space; and 4,200 pounds of paper, saving approximately 36 trees. With their own organization on track to a more sustainable future, the Chamber turned its energies to encouraging member businesses to do the same.

In July 2009, the Knoxville Chamber launched the Green Business Recognition Program to bring due praise to local companies engaged in green strategies. Membership to the program is based on performance in the areas of recycling, waste reduction, purchasing, water and energy conservation, involving stakeholders, and transportation. To help Knoxville companies get started, the Chamber's recognition program provides a "tip sheet" and works with GoGreenET.com, an online resource created to provide eastern Tennessee companies basic information about products and services that are more sustainable.

Once admitted to the program, companies are featured in a monthly newsletter published in the Greater Knoxville Business Journal that is distributed to over 13,500 readers. Members are also highlighted on the Chamber's website and receive a window cling for their business. The powerful marketing and branding opportunities provided by the Chamber's Green Business Recognition Program are making going green the clear choice for companies in Knoxville, Tennessee.



Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce: Environmental Innovations Conference & Expo

The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce is working hard to advance more sustainable business methods throughout the region. The Chamber's Energy and Environmental Task Force was recently created to develop "long term business-sensitive strategies for sustainable energy efficiency initiatives, environmental protection and infrastructure development that will improve the business climate and quality of life for business owners, employees and their families." In order to advance this challenging mission, the Task Force concentrates its resources on educating and engaging the business community and collaborating with local, state and federal organizations to promote sensible energy policies.

The Energy and Environmental Task Force has made sure that useful information for the local business community is easily found. Many helpful resources are publicized on their website such as the Small Business Energy Efficiency Grant Program run by Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection. The program provides matching funds up to \$25,000 for small businesses in Eastern Pennsylvania to employ strategies that improve energy efficiency and prevent pollution. In addition to highlighting programs available through other local organizations, the Lehigh Valley Chamber provides a valuable annual resource of their own through a regional convening.

In September 2009 the Chamber hosted the third annual *Lehigh Valley Environmental Innovations Conference & Expo*. Roughly 200 regional business leaders attend the conference every year to learn about cutting edge strategies and technologies to improve energy efficiency and green performance. "This conference focuses on cost cutting, money saving, energy reducing business practices that can improve any businesses' bottom line and have a more positive effect on the environment." Attendees are invited to explore the annual Environmental Tradeshow featuring exhibits of local green product and service providers. Through the hard work and dedication of the Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce, area businesses are saving money and shedding pounds of waste and inefficiencies while improving local quality of life for employees and residents.



Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce: Energizing the Future

Washington State is well known to the rest of the country for its progress in green activities and support of clean technologies. Thanks in large part to the advocacy of business organizations such as the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce, Washington is home to roughly 400 clean tech companies that provide over 5,000 well-paying jobs. This concentration of green employment is 64 percent higher than the national average and is expected to grow to 25,000 jobs by 2020.

The Business Sustainability Committee of the Greater Seattle Chamber is one of the most active of the Chamber's committees and strives to educate member businesses about the benefits of operating in more socially and environmentally responsible ways. The committee is "working to demonstrate the connection between sustainable business practices, long-term economic success and [the] region's future as a world leader in economic vitality and quality of life." In an unwavering effort to further advance the region's green economy, the Greater Seattle Chamber is dedicating their next leadership conference, scheduled for late October 2009, to addressing green jobs and industry.

Regional Leadership Conference 2009

Entitled *Energizing the Future: How our Region Can Expand our Clean Energy Sector to Fuel a Job Growing Economy*, the Chamber's 2009 Regional Leadership Conference will focus on how to harness the area's strengths to become a world leader in renewable energy, alternative energy, energy efficiency, and smart grid technology. Sessions will address public and private sector opportunities; saving money through higher energy efficiency; how the Seattle region is uniquely positioned to receive significant federal investments; and vital leadership and collaborations needed for success. The efforts of the Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce are not simply a leap toward healthy environments, but—in the words of the Chamber—are designed for "jumpstarting an economic engine that can drive our prosperity and ensure our quality of life during this economic cycle and for decades to come."

ENERGIZING THE FUTURE

*How our Region Can Expand our Clean Energy Sector
to Fuel a Job Growing Economy*

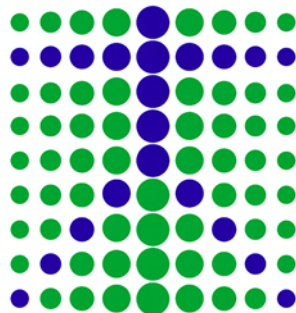




About: Partners for Livable Communities

Partners for Livable Communities, incorporated in 1977, is a national, non-partisan civic organization working to improve the livability of communities by promoting quality of life, economic development and social equity. Partners helps our nation's communities set common visions for the future, discover and utilize their cultural and natural resources, and build public/private partnerships to realize their goals.

Serving as a national resource and information center, Partners is a catalyst for civic improvements through technical assistance, leadership training, workshops, research, advocacy and public awareness. More than 1,200 organizations throughout North America and abroad comprise Partners' resource network. These alliances produce a powerful force to affect positive change in our communities.



**Partners for Livable
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