



Office of Economic Development

Fall
2008

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GOING GREEN IN LOWELL!



The world today faces numerous global energy challenges. The City of Lowell has proven its determination and ability in meeting these challenges as shown by the cluster of "green" businesses that have sprung up in the city in recent years. As the demand for affordable, clean and secure energy sources increases,

businesses and agencies in the city have taken action in true Lowell fashion. Continuing its legacy of being a national and global leader in innovation and industry, Lowell has taken great strides in working towards a greener world, serving as an impetus for local, as well as state-wide economic growth.

The city of Lowell can credit its achievements in the clean energy and innovation industry in part to state-wide efforts and resources. According to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Industry Census of August 2007 (prepared by Global Insight of Lexington for the Renewable Energy Trust of the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative), Massachusetts' clean energy sector is one of the fastest growing industry clusters in the state. With over 14,400 jobs and a 15% compound annual growth rate in new company formations since 1995, the industry is poised for continued growth in years to come.

As put forth in a recent statement by Congresswoman Niki Tsongas, "Clean energy technology is expected to generate between \$1.8 and \$2.8 billion in investment in New England over the next five years. More than twenty clean energy companies are located in the Fifth Congressional District, which represents one of the highest concentrations of such employers in New England. Congress has a role to play in encouraging the further growth of these clean and alternative energy industries, and I look forward to continuing to work with these and other such companies in our region."

Lowell businesses and consulting firms such as Konarka Technologies, TRC Solutions, Watermark Environmental, Nobis Engineering, Metabolix, and Gagnon Plumbing, among others, have stepped up to the demand for sustainable economic growth. For example, Konarka Technologies is addressing global energy challenges through the development of an integrated light-activated Power Plastic®, also known as photovoltaics, that is inexpensive, lightweight and versatile, making it possible for everyday devices, systems and structures to have their own low-cost embedded sources of renewable power. Konarka's innovative technology has lead to

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Theresa Park, Director of Economic Development

Your success is our business!

Lowell's **Economic Development Office** offers a host of incentives and assistance to companies and commercial developers including site selection, workforce development, small business loan programs, traditional and non-traditional finance programs and other areas of technical assistance.

These services are provided both directly and in partnership with the Lowell Development & Financial Corporation, [Lowell Small Business Assistance Center](#), [Career Center of Lowell](#),

numerous industry awards and recognitions, including being one of 13 selected industry-led solar technology projects to be awarded funding by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) as part of President Bush's Solar America Initiative. Konarka's success can be traced to its roots in Lowell, and its affiliation with the University of Massachusetts-Lowell and its Business Incubator.

Another example of a Lowell business that is part of the clean energy cluster is Metabolix, an innovation-driven bioscience company providing sustainable solutions for the world's needs of plastics, fuels and chemicals. Metabolix, together with Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM), is now developing and commercializing Mirel Bioplastics, a sustainable and biodegradable alternative to petroleum-based plastics.

TRC Solutions is one of the nation's largest engineering, environmental, consulting, and construction management firms. TRC is a customer-focused company that creates and implements sophisticated and innovative solutions to the challenges facing America's environmental, infrastructure, power, and transportation markets. The Company is also a leading provider of technical, financial, risk management, and construction services to commercial and government customers across the country. TRC is annually ranked in the Top 20 by Engineering News Record with revenues of over \$400MM and 2,600 employees.

In 2001, Bob Gagnon of Gagnon Plumbing and Heating started working on a solar hot water system. Since then, Gagnon Plumbing has developed remarkable solar radiant systems demonstrating how innovation can lead to more efficient and sustainable ways of living.

Lowell green businesses are working to strengthen their positions in international energy markets, in addition to providing local services. For example, Global Energy Concepts (GEC) is a global leader in the wind energy industry. In the last three years, GEC has conducted direct work on wind projects representing more than half of the new installed capacity of wind energy in the U.S. GEC has recently joined with Det Norske Veritas (DNV), a global provider of services for managing risk and improving business performance in order to become a more prominent player in the international wind energy market.

Nobis Engineering, an environmental and civil engineering consulting firm, is currently renovating office space in Lowell to green standards. This effort is being led by Principal Ken Koornneef. Nobis Engineering has also been involved in an ongoing Green Building Commission and Lowell Film Collaborative project—a documentary called the Greening of Southie, which is about the first residential green building in Boston. The viewing of this film, and a professional panel discussion afterwards, will take place on October 21st from 6:30-8:30 at the Lowell National Historical Park Visitor Center.

Yet another example of a Lowell business working towards a greener world is Watermark Environmental. Watermark was founded in Lowell in 2001 by John Haley and Joseph Spangenberger and provides environmental and civil engineering, construction management, and operation and maintenance services to government, municipal and private sector clients throughout the New England area.

Watermark's success is remarkable—between 2003 and 2006, Watermark's revenue grew by 280%. In 2007, Watermark's success was recognized by Inc. on its list of 500 Fastest Growing Private Companies and by Zweig Letter the 200 Fastest-Growing A/E/P & 2007 Environmental Consulting Firms, as well as ranked number 15 in the Inner City 100 program (see page 4 for more information). Lowell's achievement in the clean energy and innovation industry has attracted top-notch out-of-state clean energy businesses to the area. For example, Borrego Solar, a California based company, specializing in solar photovoltaic projects, has recently opened an office in Lowell, furthering Lowell's commitment to accelerating the adoption of renewable energy sources.

Lowell's green cluster has been able to thrive under an environment of innovation that State agencies work towards creating. The Massachusetts Technology Collaborative (MTC) is the state's development agency for renewable energy and the innovation economy. MTC works to bring together leaders from industry, academia and government to support the expansion of the economy through sustainable technological solutions while working towards a cleaner environment. MTC believes

[Massachusetts Office of Business Development](#), [MassDevelopment](#), and other local and regional partners.

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STATE FINANCIAL INCENTIVES FOR GOING GREEN

Corporate Deduction

- [Alternative Energy and Energy Conservation Patent Exemption \(Corporate\)](#)
- [Excise Tax Deduction for Solar- or Wind-Powered Systems](#)

Corporate Exemption

- [Excise Tax Exemption for Solar- or Wind-Powered Systems](#)

Industry Recruitment/Support

- [MTC - Business Expansion Initiative](#)
- [MTC - Sustainable Energy Economic Development \(SEED\) Initiative](#)

Production Incentive

- [Mass Energy - Renewable Energy Certificate Incentive](#)

Sales Tax Exemption

- [Renewable Energy Equipment Sales Tax Exemption](#)

State Grant Program

- [MTC - Clean Energy Pre-Development Financing Initiative \(Grants\)](#)
- [MTC - Large Onsite Renewables Initiative \(LORI\) Grants](#)
- [MTC - Matching Grants for Communities](#)

State Loan Program

- [MTC - Clean Energy Pre-Development Financing Initiative \(Loans\)](#)

State Rebate Program

that investments in the clean energy market stimulate new economic activity and job growth across Massachusetts. MTC is positioned to provide such development by working with the Governor and State Legislature. The MTC administers the John Adams Institute, the economic development division of the MTC, which aims to improve Massachusetts' competitive edge in the innovation economy through a variety of research guided support programs.

The second division of the MTC is the Renewable Energy Trust, which looks for ways to promote clean energy technologies and sustainable markets for electricity generated by renewable energy sources. The Trust offers financial and technical assistance to individuals, businesses and communities in becoming greener in their development. Through a range of programs, the Renewable Energy Trust is able to provide avenues for growth and success. For example, rebates granted under the Commonwealth Solar program offer businesses and non-profits an incentive to build photovoltaic systems in their buildings.

An additional resource available for businesses is MTC's Business Expansion Initiative, a \$15 million program, provides secured loans of up to \$3 million, to expansion-stage companies that produce renewable energy products, with interest rates reduced according to jobs produced or investment made in the state, covering up to half a firm's capital spending over a two-year period. The Renewable Energy Trust is working with the Patrick administration to make investments to help clean energy firms expand, providing a strong source of job growth in Massachusetts. For a full list of state financial incentives visit the Database of State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency.

Agencies within the city of Lowell, such as the Green Building Commission, hope to counter the myth that "going green" is expensive. The Green Building Commission seeks to promote and advocate for "green" design, construction, and development practices in the city of Lowell through research, identification, and implementation of policies, programs, and education in order to reduce the environmental impacts of development and increase sustainability.

As the nation and the world face an increasing demand for a cleaner, more sustainable environment and better sources of renewable energy, becoming more competitive in the innovation economy is a high priority for state and local leaders. The city of Lowell has demonstrated a commitment to that demand. Through both bottom-up and top-down initiatives, the city of Lowell is working to promote clean and sustainable innovation and economic development, making our city and our world a greener place to live.

MADE IN LOWELL

The City of Lowell is presenting its first annual "Made in Lowell" event on Friday, October 3rd, 2008 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. The "Made in Lowell" event will showcase and celebrate the superb productivity of Lowell companies by demonstrating the wide-ranging industries and variety of goods made right here in Lowell.

This event will be attended by elected officials, the business community, media outlets and the general public interested in learning more about the companies that have kept the City of Lowell's economy churning all of these years.

At the "Made in Lowell" event, participating companies will be able to exhibit their wares, as well as network with other business leaders. Participating companies in this year's event include Segue Manufacturing, Metabolix, Unwrapped Inc, Konarka Technologies, Xenith, Ymittos Candles, and Specialty Materials, among many more of Lowell's finest manufacturing companies. For additional information, or to RSVP to attend, please email madeinlowell@lowellma.gov or call 978-446-7200 ext. 1437.

ICE STREETWISE PROGRAM

Lowell is pleased to announce the expansion of the Boston based InnerCity Entrepreneurs (ICE) StreetWise MBA program. ICE's StreetWise program, a 9-

• [MTC - Commonwealth Solar Rebates](#)

• [MTC - Small Renewables Initiative \(SRI\) Rebates](#)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The **Office of Economic Development** presents the first annual **"Made in Lowell"** event on **Friday, October 3rd, 2008**

in the Lowell Memorial Auditorium Hall of Flags, 50 E. Merrimack Street

Time: 10am to 1pm

Parking: Validated parking will be available in the Lower Locks Parking Facility

InnerCity Entrepreneurs

invites you to participate in the program launch celebration. The event will be held **October 8, 2008** at 8 a.m. in the Mayor's Reception Room, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 375 Merrimack Street, Lowell. Continental breakfast will be served.

Mayor Edward Caulfield will host a **Harvest Ball** to raise money for the Merrimack Valley Food Bank on **Saturday, October 4, 2008** from 7:00-11:00 pm at **Lowell Memorial Auditorium.**

Tickets cost \$25. For more information call the Mayor's Office at 978-970-4040

[Biofach America](#) **October 16 -18, 2008**

Boston, Massachusetts

NEXUS Second Saturdays: Green homes tour, seminar & clinic

August 8 - December 12 2008
Boston, Massachusetts

Do you have an event you would like to be listed in our fall newsletter? Send an Email to: Newsletter@lowellma.gov

LOWELL'S GREEN BUSINESSES

[Gagnon Plumbing](#)

month, award winning small business development program that began in 2004 and is currently taught in Boston and Worcester, will now also be offered in Lowell beginning in January 2009. An introduction to this program will be held on October 8th at 8 am in the Mayor's Reception Room in Lowell City Hall.

The StreetWise program is comprised of class lectures as well as peer-to-peer learning sessions, using real life case studies. Additionally, participants engage in professional networking with lawyers, CPAs, bankers, angel investors, HR, and other volunteer expert services. Entrepreneurs from all types of businesses (retail, professional services, manufacturing, technology, etc.) are encouraged to apply. Businesses making between 250 K to 10 M can especially benefit from this program.

StreetWise classes begin in January and end in November. Classes are usually held between 6-9 pm. Upon completion of the program, entrepreneurs are awarded a Certificate in Small Business Entrepreneurship from Boston University's Entrepreneurial Management Institute. Moreover, each entrepreneur leaves the program having developed a strategic 3-year growth plan with set milestones and access to a network of peers and experts that will continue to provide support as the plan is implemented.

The cost of the program in Lowell in 2009 is \$1,500. Entrepreneurs may be able to receive a reimbursement for half the cost (\$750) via the Workforce Development Fund. The actual cost is \$7,000 per participant, but ICE raises the funds to cover the additional costs from a variety of private and public sources. For more information on Lowell's StreetWise program please contact Kay Paine at kpaine@innercityentrepreneurs.org or at 617-649-1524.

America's Inner Cities--opportunities for economic growth

The Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) is a non-profit organization devoted to providing avenues for economic growth and development in America's inner cities through extensive research and proactive development programs. The ICIC aims to engage leaders and drive public and private investment as a way of continually harnessing new opportunities for business development.

One way in which the ICIC has highlighted inner city economic potential has been through the Inner City 100. The Inner City 100 is a ranking of fast-growing, competitive companies located in America's inner cities. Inner Cities provide unique prospects for economic growth if given the right opportunities. The Inner City 100 has demonstrated how countless urban businesses are serving regional, national, and international markets; generating valuable new jobs; and making an incalculable difference in their communities.

A second venue used by the ICIC to promote inner city and overall economic development is the Inner City Capital Connections (ICCC), a national program designed to stimulate equity capital flow to underserved inner city markets by matching inner city businesses with investors. This year will mark the fourth successful ICC event, and will be held on November 19, 2008 in New York City. Businesses located in urban areas, making over \$2 million in annual revenue and looking to expand; as well as capital venturists, angel investors, and private equity providers, are encouraged to apply by September 17th, 2008.

Please visit www.icic.org for more information.

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