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Using Green to Go Green

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Sustainable development is “job one” for CRDA



The Casino Reinvestment Development Authority is developing several projects with significant green components. Let’s walk through four key projects:

Atlantic Cape Community College Hospitality Studies Center for Workforce Training. The center will train 1,200 individuals annually. With a new training center in Atlantic City, city and downbeach residents will have access to some of the training that was only available on ACCC’s Mays Landing campus.

The facility itself will have a “green roof” with a rooftop culinary garden. Among the benefits: reduced energy costs, reduced urban heat island effect and better management of storm water runoff.

The CRDA approved \$5 million for the project in 2008; Atlantic County has agreed to provide the \$5 million balance.

Solar Garage. The Christopher Columbus Parking Garage at the foot of the Atlantic City Expressway is within easy walking distance of the Walk, a dynamic urban retail and entertainment center. By creating nearly 1,200 parking spots in this key corridor, CRDA continues to be a catalyst in integrating and supporting Atlantic City’s convention, casino, transportation, retail and restaurant businesses.

Encouraging people to park in one location and walk in a pedestrian-friendly environment is certainly green. The CRDA Garage goes a significant step further with the inclusion of a 400-kilowatt photovoltaic solar rooftop array that will provide renewable energy for the garage. This system, with 27,000 square feet of solar panel grids, will make the garage energy-neutral, supplying all the electric required to run it. That means a zero annual electric bill with an anticipated \$51,000 in annual savings.

Workforce Housing. In 2008, CRDA approved \$20 million for the Workforce Housing Development/Investment Project in South Jersey. Opportunities will include long-term permanent financing for rental and mixed-use housing projects, and a shorter-term revolving construction loan fund. Two of the green goals of the project include:

- Development of housing near transit hubs
- Incorporating green-build best practices for construction with an objective to obtain LEED certification, the nationally recognized benchmark for building sustainability

Aviation Research and Technology Park. CRDA has supported the concept since it was first discussed several years ago. The Aviation Park will provide opportunities to develop and test technologies related to the Federal Aviation Administration NextGen Initiative. It's a congressionally mandated initiative to modernize the national airspace system to:

- Increase capacity and reliability
- Improve safety and security
- Minimize the environmental impact of aviation

When NextGen is implemented, commercial aircraft will be able to fly more directly from point to point, spend less time taxiing, and spend less time circling waiting to land, all of which contribute to the efficiency of air travel, including using less fuel for airflight across the system.

In addition, the Aviation Park has designed its footprint under the direction of the South Jersey Economic Development District and the Pinelands Commission to minimize its impact on the site. Construction of the seven building projects will seek to meet LEED requirements. Finally, it is our belief that the Aviation Park will be a key project that shapes the economic future of the state.

From parking to flying, from training to housing, CRDA has gone green.

By Thomas Carver



Tom Carver was appointed executive director of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority in September 2005. Prior to joining the CRDA, he was the New Jersey Commissioner of Labor. From 1984 to 1993, he was the president of the Casino Association of New Jersey.

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