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Nov. 18, 2008

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### **GREEN VALLEY INITIATIVE LINKS CITIES WITH FUNDING OPTIONS**

*More than 50 high-ranking public officials attend a meeting with a federal Economic Development Administration representative to discuss the types of projects to qualify for grants.*

*RIVERSIDE, Calif.* – There is funding available to area cities and nonprofits building projects that will create jobs in their communities, a U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration official said Monday.

Speaking before a group of more than 50 city managers, economic development directors and other high-ranking officials from throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties, including the Coachella Valley, EDA representative Wilfred Marshall explained the criteria for securing federal funding made possible through the Green Valley Initiative.

“Let’s decide what we want to do, how you’re going to do it, and what money it will take to do what you want to do,” Marshall said. “If it doesn’t create jobs, I’m not interested.”

The federal funding now available through the Economic Development Administration was secured through a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) report commissioned by the Green Valley Initiative. A CEDS is required to qualify for EDA assistance under its public works, economic adjustment, and most planning programs, and is a prerequisite for designation by the EDA as an economic development district.

The Green Valley Initiative’s CEDS, encompassing all of the Inland Empire, was approved Oct. 8. To view a copy of the report or to learn more visit [www.greenvalleynow.org](http://www.greenvalleynow.org),

John Melville, an economic advisor to the Green Valley Initiative, who was also involved in the dot-com phenomenon of Silicon Valley in the 1990s, said other regions are watching the progress being made by GVI.

“This region is ahead of most,” he told participants at the meeting held inside the Inland Empire Economic Partnership offices in Riverside. “There are lots of places talking about clean and green technology, but not many of them have initiated a plan.”

Ali Sahabi, founding chairman of GVI, said the vision behind the effort isn't just about jobs or environmentalism. "It's about improving the quality of life for ourselves, for our families and our communities," he said.

GVI's CEDS, "A Framework for Green Technology Business and Job Creation in the Inland Empire," identifies potential economic clusters within the region, with a focus on solar and renewable power, trade and logistics, construction and other industries. These are all part of a comprehensive strategy being implemented by GVI, a regional economic development plan to promote clean and green technology in the Inland Empire.

The Green Valley Initiative is now focused on linking green tech with trade and logistics, which represent the region's strongest economic asset at this time. This month, it hosted meetings with representatives from both industries. Both sides strategized ways to link green tech to trade and logistics. A subsequent meeting will be held Dec. 3 to address specific aspects of the plan.

**ABOUT GVI:** The Green Valley Initiative is an unprecedented regional economic development plan to promote green technologies, renewable energy, alternative transportation and sustainable lifestyles to the Inland Empire. Launched in 2007 as a project of the Green Institute for Village Empowerment, (GIVE), the Green Valley Initiative began with 100 stakeholders from the region, and now boasts the involvement of more than 500 people representing government, education, business, transportation, utilities, environmental groups and the community-at-large. More than 25 cities and agencies have formally supported the effort.

**ABOUT GIVE:** The Green Institute for Village Empowerment is a nonprofit organization established in 2006 to promote balance in the way people live, how their choices impact the environment and others in their community. GIVE hosts events and initiatives, and sponsors college campus chapters to educate the public on issues related to sustainability, a term used to describe this social, economic and environmental balance. For more information visit [www.giveforthefuture.org](http://www.giveforthefuture.org)

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