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Mayor Villaraigosa and CRA/LA Announce Groundbreaking Initiative to Create Clean Technology Manufacturing Center in Downtown Los Angeles

Innovative, "Green" Firms Sought for 20-Acre, CRA/LA-Owned Site

Los Angeles — Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles (CRA/LA) joined forces today to announce a groundbreaking initiative to develop a CleanTech Manufacturing Center in downtown Los Angeles. The Cleantech Manufacturing Center will be a hub of innovative technology along the Los Angeles River.

Mayor Villaraigosa, CRA/LA CEO Cecilia Estolano and Councilmember Jose Huizar spoke today at the CRA/LA-owned 20-acre site at Santa Fe Avenue and 15th Street. The CRA/LA is actively seeking clean technology firms from around the world to locate "green" research, development and industrial manufacturing at the Center.

"Los Angeles will be the world's clean technology capital," said Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. "This is where innovators will create the jobs of a new economy for the 21st century."

Firms locating to the Center, which is part of the CRA/LA's Central Industrial Redevelopment Project Area, the California State Enterprise Zone and a Federal Empowerment Zone, will have access to city, state and federal financial incentives.

These incentives include the City's Department of Water and Power energy programs and rebates, significant employment and investment tax credits, permit expediting assistance, workforce recruitment and training and other incentives and programs. In addition occupants may qualify for favorable ground-lease terms, New Market Tax Credits, infrastructure grants and low interest CRA/LA loans. Companies will also have access to Los Angeles' market of cutting-edge consumer base and mandated environmental purchasing.

"We want top-notch companies with state-of-the-art and beyond manufacturing expertise, and are ready to help with substantial assistance," said City Councilmember Jose Huizar in whose council district the Center will be located. "The CRA/LA and the City of Los Angeles have a record of noteworthy developments and this will be yet another high-profile, ground-breaking project."

The city's efforts are being supported by longtime activists and business interests in downtown Los Angeles, including the Central City East Association. The project is also being developed in accordance with the goals of the LA River Revitalization Master Plan, a comprehensive community plan to preserve and protect the LA River.

“The CleanTech Manufacturing Center will accelerate Los Angeles’ development as the center for green manufacturing by attracting, incubating and promoting the growth of environmentally sustainable companies,” said Cecilia Estolano, CEO of the CRA/LA. “This groundbreaking initiative will bring together existing companies and innovators in our city, along with companies from around the world seeking to locate in Los Angeles.”

The CleanTech Manufacturing Center site has had a long, often contentious history. In 1984, Mothers of East Los Angeles formed to prevent the state of California from building a prison on the site. Their effective organizing and lobbying led the state to drop its plans for the prison in 1992. The group went on to stop an incinerator project at the site as well. The CRA/LA purchased the site from the State of California and has conducted extensive cleanup and remediation to prepare it for development.

“The site has been an unusable brownfield for more than 20 years,” said Estolano. “Today, we can come together with the residents and businesses of downtown and East Los Angeles and celebrate its rebirth as an environmental and economic engine for the 21st century.”

The CRA/LA recently released a Request for Interest (RFI), available online at www.crala.org/ct. The RFI lists the companies being sought for the site, including both established firms and emerging companies engaged in the assembly, manufacture or development of products in clean energy generation, sustainable building materials and furnishings, clean water technology, reduced emissions vehicle technology, manufactured products using recycled or organic materials and similar cleantech initiatives.

Firms with space requirements of 40,000 to 400,000 square feet or more are the primary focus. They may participate as owners/users in a build-to-suit development or as tenants in developer-owned buildings. Future opportunities for smaller users, including incubator space for start-ups, may also be available. All Center buildings are envisioned to be LEED certified at the highest level practicable. Occupancy may occur as early as 2011. RFI responses are accepted until Dec.1, 2008.

About the Central Industrial Redevelopment Project Area

CleanTech Manufacturing Center is located in the Central Industrial Redevelopment Project Area, which is comprised of 738 acres of land in Downtown Los Angeles east of the commercial center.

About CRA/LA:

CRA/LA (www.crala.org) is a public agency regulated by the State of California and operating within the City of Los Angeles. It attracts private investment into economically depressed communities to eliminate blight, revitalize older neighborhoods, build housing for all income levels and create and retain employment opportunities. CRA/LA manages 32 redevelopment projects areas and three revitalization areas in seven regions: East Valley, West Valley, Hollywood & Central, Downtown, Eastside, South Los Angeles, and the Harbor.

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