

Orange County Workforce Investment Board Conducting a Green Industry Analysis

With passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the Orange County Workforce Investment Board (OCWIB) partnered with the Orange County Business Council (OCBC) and Clean Agency, a sustainability consulting firm, to develop the Green Initiatives Steering Tactics (GIST) plan, which provides a framework for forecasting the emerging green industry and jobs based on a number of economic, regulatory, and environmental factors.

The GIST evaluated the county's existing and emerging top job clusters, as well as other important drivers of green industry, such as regulations and the region's natural resource landscape. Through development of the GIST, the OCWIB, OCBC, and Clean Agency have more accurately defined what green jobs mean to Orange County.

The GIST plan is an in-depth, tailored analysis and strategy document that serves as a guide for future green industry advancement activities. Not only does the study determine opportunities for greening existing industries, it also reveals how new green jobs can be fostered and evaluates synergies with the area's many and diverse educational facilities and programs.

Some specific examples of high potential green industries that emerged from the analysis are tourism, automotive design, retrofits and weatherization, and landscape architecture, as well as the manufacture and installation of solar hot water heaters, waste systems, energy-efficient windows, and fuel cells.

The OCWIB, along with the OCBC and Clean Agency, has employed the GIST in applying for an energy training partnership grant offered through the U.S. Department of Labor. The government estimates that ARRA funding aimed at green jobs will save or create up to 396,000 jobs in California alone; with Orange County accounting for roughly 9 percent of the state's labor force, this could mean more than 35,000 new jobs for the county (www.recovery.gov).

Further implementation of the GIST in the region will include partnership building, additional research, and monitoring and communications. This will enable Orange County to continue positioning itself as a leader in regional planning for a green economy

Contact: Andrew Munoz
Executive Director
Orange County Housing & Community Services Agency
1300 South Grand Avenue
Building B, Third Floor
Santa Ana, CA 92705-4407
(714) 567-7370
Andrew.Munoz@occr.hcs.com