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Competitiveness and Jobs Are Key Opportunities in Sustainability Planning for Three U.S. Communities

Chamber BCLC and Siemens Present Sustainable Community Awards to San Jose, CA; Raleigh, NC; and Greenburg, KS

WASHINGTON – Three U.S. communities serve as the gold standard in 2011 for local-level sustainability planning. Through phrases such as “[model 21st century city](#),” “[city of innovation](#),” and “[resilience, integrity, and ingenuity](#),” it is clear that long-term competitiveness is what drives the three winners of the 2011 Siemens Sustainable Community Awards.

David Chavern, U.S. Chamber Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer, and Alison Taylor, Siemens Corporation Vice President of Sustainability - Americas, last night presented local leaders from San Jose, California; Raleigh, North Carolina; and Greensburg, Kansas with the Sustainable Community Award trophies. Nearly 90 different communities from 40 states applied for the 2011.

“With these awards, we are honoring cities that are pioneering strategies to create environmental and economic win-win solutions,” said Stephen Jordan, founder and executive director of the U.S. Chamber Business Civic Leadership Center. “We expect many more communities to build on their experiences in the years to come.”

In the category of large community, **San Jose, California**, won the 2011 Siemens Sustainable Community Award for its adoption of Green Vision, a 10-point roadmap for innovation and environmental responsibility that serves to strengthen economic opportunity and prosperity. With \$4 billion in venture capital funding for clean technology and a goal of creating 25,000 clean tech jobs – of which, more than 4,000 have been created since 2007 – San Jose shows how environmental innovation and economic opportunity can go hand in hand.

“Our Green Vision has helped San Jose become the global center of clean tech innovation,” Mayor Chuck Reed said. “Today, our city is home to world leaders in green technology, who are creating jobs, fueling economic growth and helping us build a sustainable community.”

In the midsize community category, **Raleigh, North Carolina**, won the award for a range of factors including its commitment to developing a “green economy.” The city established the Economic Development Group, comprising government agencies, businesses, and community organizations, to help make sustainability-based jobs more available to residents. Raleigh created a workforce development program to retrain workers with the skills needed to make them more employable in the green economy, training more than 200 people in the first year. Additionally, Raleigh is home to one of

the nation's two LEED Silver convention centers, attracting substantial economic activity that bolsters the entire community.

“Raleigh’s approach to sustainability addresses economic strength, environmental stewardship and social equity,” said Raleigh Mayor Charles Meeker. “The result is a thriving community that provides opportunities for all residents, is a careful steward of the environment and has a long-term vision for a prosperous future.”

The winner of the small community category, **Greensburg, Kansas**, overcame challenging odds to become one of the world’s first municipalities to build from the ground up with community master plan tied to sustainability principles. In May 2007, Greensburg, a two-mile-wide town, captured headlines when it was leveled by an EF-5 tornado. Its commitment to rebuilding and reinventing itself through sustainable living and a healthy environment is at the heart of the town’s recovery from the disaster. Among many accomplishments, Greensburg already has achieved the most LEED-platinum buildings per capita in the world. To date, more than 60 local businesses have re-opened or are in the process of re-opening. “The Greensburg Model” has led to new tourism opportunities, as people travel from across the world to experience the town’s green rebuilding projects.

“The citizens of Greensburg are honored to receive the Siemens Sustainable Community Award,” said Greensburg Mayor Bob Dixon. “Public and private partnerships have been instrumental in the recovery. The resilience, determination and vision of the citizens of Greensburg have enabled us to rebuild a sustainable community of the future.”

The Siemens Sustainable Community Awards are now in their fourth year. Created in 2008 by the U.S. Chamber BCLC and Siemens Corporation, the goal of the awards program is to give rise to U.S. communities that are taking proactive steps to improve quality of life, be a steward of the environment, and increase the ability to sustain a successful community for generations to come.

“We believe there is a clear tie between sustainable development and long-term success for communities,” said Alison Taylor, vice president of Sustainability - Americas, Siemens Corporation. “These communities are examples of how investment in sustainable solutions can benefit not only the environment and the bottom line – but also improve overall living conditions for residents.”

Other finalists in the large, midsize, and small categories in the 2011 competition included: Baltimore, Maryland; Columbus, Ohio; North Little Rock, Arkansas; Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Brea, California; and Burlington, Vermont. A [panel of five judges](#) selected the finalists and winners based on the communities’ approach to achieving economic, environmental and overarching sustainability.

For full information about the Siemens Sustainable Community Awards, visit www.sustainablecommunity.uschamber.com.

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