

# IMAGINING NEWARK'S GREEN FUTURE



A Year Building  
The Green  
Economy



NEWARK'S  
GREEN FUTURE  
SUMMIT



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On the cover: Graphic facilitation artist Brandy Agerbeck attended *Newark's Green Future Summit*, where she completed "Sustainability" and all the other line drawings in this report. Cory A. Booker is the mayor of Newark.

Opposite page: Apollo Co-Director Kate Gordon opens Newark's Green Future Summit, held on September 12-13, 2008 at the New Jersey Institute of Technology.

For more information on

*Newark's Green Future Summit* visit:

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# IMAGINING NEWARK'S GREEN FUTURE

## A Year Building The Green Economy

### Introduction

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*“Focusing on green in the urban context is meeting a moral imperative, an economic urgency, and an energy crisis. Now is the time for us to be ambitious and uncompromising, to be daring in the pursuit of our boldest hopes and dreams.”*

Mayor of Newark  
Cory A. Booker

In September 2007, recognizing the great potential of green economic and infrastructure development, Newark Mayor Cory A. Booker asked the Apollo Alliance to engage the community at large and “make Newark a national showcase for clean and efficient energy use, green economic development and job creation, and equitable environmental opportunity.”

The project, announced at the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) conference in New York City, focused on convening a summit of Newark’s community leaders to develop recommendations for the city to become cleaner, greener, and more prosperous. Aimée Christensen of Christensen Global Strategies, working closely with the

mayor, brought together a number of national allies and local leaders to carry out the CGI commitment and initiate a summit planning process. National partners included the Center for American Progress, Green For All, Sustainable South Bronx, the Majora Carter Group, and GreenOrder. Local groups included Newark’s Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District (LPCCD), the Workforce Investment Board, The Trust for Public Land, the Greater Newark Conservancy, the New Jersey Environmental Federation, and the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice.

This report documents Apollo’s year working with the amazing Newark community – a year that culminated in Newark’s Green Future Summit in September 2008. We

## Green Economic Development: Some Definitions

What do we mean by “green economy” and “green-collar job”? We define the green economy as one where investments are made in green products and services – renewable energy, energy efficiency, transit and transportation, open space, and green infrastructure – in a way that creates high-quality green-collar jobs.

We define green-collar jobs as well paid, career-track jobs that contribute significantly to preserving or enhancing environmental quality. These jobs tend to be local because so many involve transforming and upgrading the immediate built and natural environment – retrofitting buildings, installing solar panels, constructing transit lines, and landscaping green spaces.

Many, though not all, are in traditionally blue-collar occupations such as construction, manufacturing, installation, and maintenance. These jobs may not look “green” from the outside, but they are created by targeting investments in green industries and a local commitment to green development principles, in which environmental goals go hand in hand with social and economic goals.

In *Green-Collar Jobs in America’s Cities* we identified the following steps as essential to building a robust local green-collar jobs program:

- Identify environmental and economic goals, and assess local and regional opportunities for achieving those goals.
- Enact policies and programs to drive investment into targeted green economic activity and generate demand for local green-collar workers.
- Prepare the local green-collar workforce by building green-collar job training partnerships to identify and meet workforce training needs, and by providing green pathways out of poverty that focus on recruitment, job readiness, job training, and job placement for low-income residents.
- Leverage the program’s success to build political support for new and bolder policies and initiatives.



write this report primarily for Newark itself – for city officials and residents who showed their commitment to a new kind of economic development, where sustainability and prosperity go hand in hand.

We write also for a broader audience of cities interested in embarking on similar projects. In our 2008 report *Green-Collar Jobs in America’s Cities*, co-written with Green For All, the Apollo Alliance laid out a model for how cities can combine environmental and economic goals to

create green job programs. Readers from cities across the country asked for more detail – how to bring stakeholders into the process, how to define “growth sectors” in a green economy, how to better integrate city departments so that “sustainability” isn’t just one person’s job. We don’t claim to answer all these questions here, but we do hope to give a window into how Newark asked them – and started to find answers.

Newark’s Green Future Summit reflected the core values of the Apollo Alliance. For five years

the Apollo Alliance has brought together leaders from the environmental, labor, business, and social justice communities to make the case for catalyzing a new green economy based on the fundamental principles of clean energy and good jobs. Our mission – to advance solutions to environmental problems that also offer solid economic opportunities, especially in hard-hit American cities – has resonated with political and opinion leaders.

It is more important now than ever to realize this mission. Newark's Green Future Summit was planned and held during a momentous time of upheaval in America. We face challenges so great that they sometimes seem insurmountable. In the short term, these challenges include collapsing financial markets, rising unemployment, and energy and transportation systems in dire need of repair. Newark, like many of the nation's historic industrial cities, grapples with these challenges every day. The city faces high unemployment, epidemic rates of lead poisoning and asthma, and ever-rising utility costs that are hurting households and businesses and crippling the city's budget.

## Step 1: Collaborate and Assess

- **Identify existing environmental and economic goals and strategies.**
- **Gather existing research and data.**
- **Brainstorm strategies that build on existing strengths.**
- **Identify local leaders.**

In the long term our dependence on carbon-intensive sources of energy threatens the future of our planet. But we also face the incredible opportunity to meet these challenges in a way that simultaneously brings climate stability, energy security, and economic prosperity to our communities. For Newark, this means restoring and reclaiming the city's natural assets and realizing the economic opportunities that are part of the transition away from a carbon-based economy to a more sustainable future.

Newark's Green Future Summit, and the year



Brandy Agerbeck spent nearly every hour of the summit standing on her feet, colored felt marker in hand, drawing on a landscape-sized stretch of white paper to describe the proceedings in colorful displays of pictures and language, arrows, boxes, and circles.

long process leading up to it, provides a rare glimpse into how one city moved from the vision of a green economy to the reality of a green economic strategy.

## December 2007: The Planning Process

*“If we think of this green movement [as] in any way distinct from everything else that we are doing as Americans, then we are not going to succeed.”*

Mayor Cory Booker  
Newark's Green Future Summit

Our commitment to Mayor Booker and the Clinton Global Initiative was to organize a summit to bring local leaders together and develop specific recommendations for Newark's green future. In December 2007 our planning group met with city officials, including Mayor Booker, to brainstorm ideas for a process that would engage community leaders, businesses, and city officials. Taking the *Green-Collar Jobs in America's Cities* principles as our starting point, we assessed the city's existing sustainability goals, projects, and resources. We wanted to make sure we were not starting from scratch, but instead building on Newark's strengths.

Unlike many cities, Newark still has functional industrial land and room for growth on its brownfields. Both of these factors are

## Robin Dougherty: A Green Pioneer In The New Newark

When Robin Dougherty was job hunting ten years ago, she had two offers: one from an environmental group based in the rural Catskill Mountains of New York and the other located in Newark's gritty inner city.

"It wasn't even a choice," said Dougherty, executive director of the Greater Newark Conservancy. "I love my job. I love this city. Newark has a lot of incredible people here who are very committed to making this city a great place to live."

A former special needs educator and environmental policy champion with a love of cities, city people, and urban environments, Dougherty found the Conservancy's combination of programs focusing on urban greening, policy advocacy, and environmental education for children the perfect marriage of her passions.

The organization's showpiece is its downtown learning center, where more than three thousand children come for hands-on lessons in the center's ten gardens. Each garden has a different theme to instruct children in a variety of topics ranging from urban gardening to the benefits of insects to the life of Nelson Mandela.

"It's a great, fun place," said Dougherty. "Kids get to see what they're learning. They can touch it and smell it and in some cases even taste it."

When the Conservancy started there was no hands-on science

program in Newark public schools, and the district had trouble recruiting and retaining qualified science teachers. Now, thanks to the center, outreach programs in the schools, and job training for

high school students, young people from Newark have gone on to become environmental educators themselves.

Dougherty hopes that within the next few years she'll be able to recruit graduates of the Conservancy's own programs to work in the center and educate the next generation.

Just as gratifying as her work with the city's youth is her work with neighborhoods and smaller community groups on basic clean-up and greening.

"We tend to use community gardening and block beautification

as a way for people to get to know their neighbors," said Dougherty. "[As] they get to know their neighbors and the children in the neighborhood, it begins to create a bond of community and a bond in the neighborhood."

When Dougherty came to Newark ten years ago, people weren't thinking about how their health related to the environment. Now, says Dougherty, things are different. The city – both its people and its government – are excited about revitalization.

"It's a great time to be in Newark."



"It wasn't even a choice," said Robin Dougherty (L), with a friend, of her decision to work in Newark.

crucial to a green economic development strategy because so many manufacturing and clean tech firms need industrial space. Moreover, Newark is well served by its transportation infrastructure – home to major international sea and air ports, and connected to interstate highway and rail, the city is a distribution nexus for much of the country.

To frame the issues for the summit, we relied heavily on a brainstorming session city officials held a few months earlier with GreenOrder, the Center for American Progress, and New York-based developer Carlton Brown, among others. Based on GreenOrder's reports from the sessions, our group decided to hold a pre-summit process to develop a set of strategies for Newark, focused on three areas central to Newark's green future: green open space, green buildings, and green economic development.

Through municipal, private, and community

activities, the city had already made strong progress in all three areas. Earlier in 2007, Mayor Booker leveraged private funds to complement the significant public dollars the city and county had dedicated to upgrading and expanding open space and recreational centers. Community organizations throughout the city were also hard at work on various neighborhood park projects. In the area of green building, the city, non-profits, and private developers worked to create safe, healthy, energy-efficient affordable housing – models that have become recognized nationally, especially in other cities with aging housing stock and high lead poisoning rates. In the area of green economic development, the city and its non-profit partners had already developed several innovative career ladder and workforce development programs covering areas as diverse as horticulture and green building.

At the December meeting we pledged to

build on these successes by forming working groups focused on each of the core areas; these were co-chaired by local leaders and supported by representatives from national organizations and city staff. The working groups were charged with developing draft goals and strategies in each of the three areas, with the ultimate goal of informing the city's long-term sustainability initiative.

## February 2008: First Working Group Meeting

*"I want to point out the local leaders who carried this ball before it was hip. Before people were talking about it, before mayors were talking about it, there were people working on the grassroots level here in Newark, doing some pretty dynamic and incredible things."*

Mayor Cory Booker  
Newark's Green Future Summit

On February 22, 2008 over 150 representatives from local community organizations, businesses, and non-profit organizations joined Apollo, our national partners, the working groups, and City of Newark officials to begin the public planning process for Newark's Green Future Summit. The meeting, hosted by the Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG) and billed as "Organizing for Newark's Green Future," was intended to inspire and recruit broader community involvement.

The meeting's featured speakers were Mayor Booker and Van Jones, the founder of Green For All and a member of the Apollo Alliance board of directors. Mr. Jones recognized that Newark is poised to become a national model for greening former industrial cities – a place where environmental policies can help clean up neighborhoods while providing a "pathway out of poverty," especially for the city's youth. Mayor Booker outlined a bold vision for a more green and prosperous city, calling for an ambitious agenda to "clean our environment, create jobs, and generate wealth in sections of our city that have been

closed out of real substantive economic opportunity for generations."

Galvanized by the call to action, participants broke into smaller groups to discuss how to formulate a citywide green agenda.



## Newark's Green Future Benchmarks

Working groups decided on a set of Green Future Benchmarks against which they would test all proposed goals and strategies:

- Create safe, healthy, high-quality jobs that provide pathways out of poverty and opportunities for career advancement.
- Make use of Newark's existing assets, strengths, and opportunities.
- Produce a healthier and more livable Newark.
- Engage the community, especially youth and business, around a collective vision for the future.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.
- Emphasize recycling, waste reduction, and reuse.

Several principles emerged:

- A 21<sup>st</sup> century green city is both economically and environmentally sustainable. All residents have access to green-collar, career-track jobs that provide pathways out of poverty and opportunities to enhance community and environmental health. These jobs also offer the green skills that are increasingly important in the regional and national economies. A green agenda for Newark must address job creation and retention and engage all major workforce training providers, including unions, from the start.
- A green agenda has to strategically capitalize on Newark's strengths, including Mayor Booker's visionary leadership, a strong network of effective

community leaders, Newark's formidable transit and industrial infrastructure, and the city's position in the New York metropolitan region. Efforts to green Newark and create good, family-supporting jobs must complement existing initiatives, including municipal purchasing and construction commitments, expanding public green spaces, and community organizing, advocacy, and planning.

- Guided by these principles, the three working groups began to brainstorm preliminary goals and strategies related to Newark's existing opportunities for sustainability and green-collar job creation.

*The Green Economic Development Working Group*, co-chaired by Kim Thompson-Gaddy

## Kim Thompson-Gaddy: Advocating For The Next Generation of Green Voices

Kim Thompson-Gaddy teaches children to become environmental advocates. And she teaches adults and community activists the importance of becoming leaders in the environmental justice movement.

For Gaddy, the New Jersey Environmental Federation's environmental justice coordinator, her passion isn't limited to cleaning and greening Newark. Nor is it limited to teaching residents – adults and children alike – how the environment affects their health.

She also feels the imperative to empower – to show people what they can do in their own homes, in their own schools, and with their own elected officials and community groups to change their worlds for the better.

"I tell them, just close your eyes and picture this community and how you want it to be, because if it is going to be, it is up to me," said Gaddy. "Now, what do you need to do to change it?"

So she takes her fight to where the people are, showing up at PTA meetings to discuss how chemicals used in public schools can affect children's health, and at golf courses to talk about pesticide use on the greens.

Gaddy herself has a powerful reason to seek this change. Her three children have asthma, which is thought to be on the rise because of pollution in urban areas. Her godson suffers from irreversible damage due to lead poisoning, which has led to learning difficulties.

"It's crucial to African Americans because of the health problems

that plague our communities. There's a direct correlation between health and degradation of the environment," she said.

Though abatement programs are under way, New Jersey still has one of the highest rates of lead poisoning in the country. In children it can lead to lowered IQ, behavioral problems, and learning disabilities. These problems disproportionately affect inner city residents and minorities who often live in neighborhoods with fewer social services and limited green spaces.

"You could say it was personal for me because I was concerned about my children, but then I thought, how about all the other parents whose children are asthmatic?"

Since Gaddy takes a wider approach to environmental justice, she doesn't just see one issue. She looks instead at a patchwork of problems that all need to be addressed in order for the city she loves to become the showcase of both sustainability and prosperity she believes it can be.

"I'm learning more and more about green jobs and seeing what the opportunities might be for our young, for those [who] can't go to college but still want to work. It can stabilize our neighborhoods," said Gaddy. "If you give a job to these youngsters they aren't going to be joining gangs. They'll be concerned with their future."

"I see Newark and all its potential," said Gaddy. "You can still have development and open space. We can revitalize this city. We can green it as we grow it."



Kim Thompson-Gaddy says her focus on the environment is personal.



# Connections and Partnerships

## How Newark's Green Future Summit Drew On Collective Strength

The Apollo Alliance was founded on the idea that the most effective way of tackling our energy challenges and preparing for a sustainable future is to forge coalitions that draw on collective strengths. Our work to foster green-collar jobs often leads to ongoing connections among community, government, business, and labor groups, and to new and exciting projects on the ground.

In this spirit, some of the most important results of the working group process and the Green Future Summit were the connections made between Newark organizations:

- Through the working group process, three local organizations and the City of Newark joined forces to create the **Park Works**

**Program, a pilot green jobs project** for Newark high school-age youth. After the February working group meeting, the City of Newark's Philanthropic Liaison and the Director of Prisoner Re-entry sprung into action and connected Project U.S.E. (Urban Suburban Environments), a non-profit devoted to environmental training for urban youth, with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) – and in turn with TPL's working partnership with the Mildred Helms Park Resurrection Committee. The new partners teamed up with Newark Works, the city's summer youth employment program, to create a six-week course offering character development, horticultural skills training, and paid work in seasonal park maintenance at the 3.3-acre Mildred Helms Park. The Greater Newark Conservancy contributed their significant expertise in environmental education. The first course concluded in August 2008; the partners hope to introduce the program to other Newark parks in 2009.

- The Weequahic Park Super Neighborhood is partnering with Brick City Urban Farms, EarthBox (a garden container manufacturer), and

the Prudential Center to create **an urban farm (pictured above) on a city-owned vacant lot** adjacent to the historic Weequahic Park. This partnership developed at the summit's Green Open Space working group session, where Weequahic Park Super Neighborhood Council Chair Brenda Toyloy discussed opportunities for urban farming with EarthBox's Education Director Molly Philbin and Brick City Urban Farms founder "Farmer" John Taylor. This project is part of a larger community vision to reclaim vacant city-owned lots and develop them into a network of neighborhood organic farms.

- One highlight was the post-summit green business workshop presented by the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE) and the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia. During this session the speakers facilitated a brainstorming session on what **a sustainable business network** might look like in Newark and offered their assistance in building such a network. The BALLE presentation gave rise to some innovative ideas, including strengthening local



businesses by encouraging business-to-business purchasing, inserting pollution prevention principles into business development assistance, expanding the existing "Fresh Foods Initiative," which aims to expand the availability of fresh foods in the "food deserts" that exist in several of Newark's neighborhoods, and using the city's "Buy Local Guide" to help residents connect to sustainable businesses throughout the city. At the session a representative from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation also offered to **sponsor interested Newark residents at the 2008 Social Venture Institute in Philadelphia**, the East Coast's largest gathering of "triple bottom line" businesses.

- The New Jersey Environmental Federation’s Newark-based Urban Environmental Institute (UEI) made a connection with a solar expert from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, resulting in a new **Solar Panel Energy Savings & Training Project**. The project is designed to increase Newark’s solar infrastructure and use solar energy to help large schools, churches, and businesses reduce their electric bills by up to 75 percent. In its initial stages, the project will offer ten Newark residents training and certification in solar panel installation. Graduates will be eligible to take an apprenticeship program test with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 164 and, if they pass, they will be connected with a union electrician from LB Electric Company, who will act as an apprenticeship sponsor.
- The week after the summit, in honor of Green For All’s National Day of Action for green-collar jobs, Newark’s sustainability officer and the director of Newark Works convened a Green Workforce Development meeting of organizations and businesses that are already doing green job training or are interested in becoming training partners. Meeting attendees established a **Green Jobs Coordinating Committee**, identified green job growth areas, and recommended specific city actions. That same day the Urban Environmental Institute and Green Building Solutions joined South Ward Councilman Oscar James II in organizing another exciting **Day of Action** event, where a new Newark business trained local members of Saving Our Selves, a gang intervention and prevention organization, to install a reflective “cool” roof on a Newark building.
- Newark-based sisters Pamela Johnson and Nina Pilar were so inspired by their attendance at Newark’s Green Future Summit that they merged their writing and graphic design skills to form **Brickerati Green**, a public relations firm that is helping document environmental best practices to inspire action.
- Through the summit process, Winnie Fatton of the Municipal Land Use Center connected with the Sustainability Officer to collaborate on the Center’s initiative to develop **Green Career Tracks** in Newark’s Vocational Technology High Schools.
- Inspired by the summit, NJIT professor Jay Kapraff offered to host follow-up **Green Future Forums** to support the city and community organizations as they move forward on the draft Green Future plan. In addition to connecting the city to the New Jersey Higher Education Partnership for Sustainability (NJHEPS), NJIT opened an informative sustainable technologies lecture series to the working groups, and hosted a luncheon that brought together community organizations and university faculty to identify “town-gown” opportunities to advance Newark’s green future.

## Step 3: Define Goals

- **Reconvene core working group members and new stakeholders.**
- **Articulate goals and the opportunities and challenges for meeting those goals.**
- **Measure goals against core principles.**
- **Identify knowledge gaps; work with national partners on research and data collection.**
- **Continue brainstorming new potential allies and partners.**

and its surrounding industrial zone. One obstacle they identified was federally mandated security measures that exclude former prisoners from port employment. A noted opportunity area was in attracting new green businesses that could use the port zone’s industrial infrastructure and provide green jobs in growing sectors like clean energy production.

**Green Building** discussed incorporating green construction in all new development. One potential obstacle noted is the perception among builders that green building is prohibitively expensive. The city could educate developers about how green building can save money and expand upon existing green building incentives.

**Green Open Space** discussed including green design principles in infrastructure development and enhancing storm water management plans. The city’s park expansion and upgrade initiative was noted as an opportunity to increase community engagement and connections to open space.

## July 2008: Stakeholder Summit Prep Meeting

*“We’ve got to stop fighting each other and join each other’s hands and say ‘America is wild and abundant here in Newark, New Jersey.’ Show us the problem and we’ll show you how to solve it.”*

Mayor Cory Booker  
Newark’s Green Future Summit

On July 25, 2008 a public meeting brought together key stakeholders with working group co-chairs and national allies. At this meeting, three guests presented best practices from their

# Green Future Priorities and Action Items

While the panels and speakers at the summit were informational and inspiring, many participants felt that the real work of the two-day meeting was done in the working group break out sessions. There, participants took a close look at the working group goals and strategies developed in the year leading up to the summit, and refined these into action items and next steps for creating a real sustainability plan. Individuals and organizations committed to support specific programs and initiatives and to work closely with the city to ensure success.

What follows are the final priorities and action items developed in the summit break out sessions. The full goals and strategies that emerged from each session, recommendations for additional research and assessment needs, suggested action items, and commitments are available on the Newark's Green Future website at [www.apolloalliance.org/newark](http://www.apolloalliance.org/newark).

## Green Economic Development Working Group *Final statement*



From left: Newark deputy mayor Stefan Pryor, director of planning and community development Toni Griffin, and Cecil Corbin Mark of WEACT look on as Mayor Booker discusses Newark's green future.

*of principles:* Green economic development must be grounded in equitable community development and public health. Strategies must support the greening of existing industries while engaging emerging sectors. In both cases, the creation and retention of well-paying, career-track jobs is the priority. To this end, business development support and incentives (e.g., procurement policy or tax abatements) should be tied to first-source hiring provisions and job standards (e.g., living wage). Finally, any economic development strategy must acknowledge Newark's position as a regional hub, not just a "city alone."

## Action Items

- *Support green business entrepreneurship, growth, attraction, and retention.*
- *Harmonize green economic development with other city economic development policies and programs.*
- *Foster opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals.*
- *Green the Port of Newark.*
- *Begin green economic development in Newark's schools.*

## **Green Building Working Group** *Final statement of principles:*

Green building – small or large, residential or commercial, public sector or private – should not happen in a vacuum. Green building is part of a larger healthy, high-performance building approach that includes lead-based paint remediation, radon testing, and measures to reduce energy costs and preserve home ownership. Green building policies, along with developer, business, and community education initiatives, will create demand for green-collar jobs ranging from construction, operations, and maintenance to product manufacturing and distribution. To meet this demand, Newark should build on existing workforce training networks and partnerships. Greening Newark's building stock will be most effective as a means of increasing health and prosperity if environmental and energy policies are fully integrated into economic development, smart growth, land use, and zoning considerations.

## Action Items

- *Support career creation in local green construction, green building maintenance and operations, and green building product manufacturing.*
- *Educate the community and developers about green building.*
- *Work with developers to identify roadblocks to green construction and retrofits (e.g., problems with permitting for mixed-use green buildings).*
- *Convene roundtables of architects, planners, developers, community organizations, and unions to brainstorm opportunities and challenges to greening Newark's building stock.*
- *Reach out to the financial community (banking, mortgage, insurance, appraisal) to address common roadblocks to green building (e.g., appraisals not properly recognizing the value of green features) and opportunities (e.g., energy-efficient mortgages, green building home insurance).*
- *Support local manufacturing and distribution of green building products. Look at green material supply chains; opportunities and barriers to bringing manufacturers to Newark (business incentives); tax abatements, land subsidies, and industry partnerships.*
- *Audit municipal buildings and contract cost-effective retrofits that reduce energy costs over five to ten years ("city leads by example").*
- *Institute citywide green building policies and programs.*
- *Identify and pursue ways to green public housing that reduce energy use and operating costs.*

- Set goals for the citywide deployment of specific green building technologies (e.g., solar thermal space and hot water heating, green roofs).
- Develop an alternative energy plan for Newark that sets targets for the expansion of renewable energy infrastructure.

**Green Open Space Working Group** *Final statement of Principles:* Open space stewardship, urban forestry, brownfield-to-greenfield projects, and community greening projects must create pathways out of poverty and local green-collar jobs. It is important that the City of Newark manage its parks to create more jobs for Newark residents through the use of local hiring requirements and Newark-based training programs. Urban park strategies must include union and union apprenticeship programs from the outset to ensure that entry-level workers are connected to longer-term employment opportunities. Green open space must be part of a broader green infrastructure strategy that includes storm and waste water management and urban heat island mitigation (e.g. cool and green roofs). Newark's green open space and infrastructure initiatives should draw on successful models from New York City, Washington, D.C., Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Boston, San Antonio, and Baltimore.

#### Action Items

- Integrate green infrastructure solutions into community and neighborhood design and redevelopment initiatives, particularly parks, waterfront, gardens, farms, pocket parks, trails, and greenways.
- Promote and create green jobs linked to open and green space initiatives.
- Support incentives and tax abatements to develop green roofs and attract green roof material suppliers.
- Create a certified urban farming program, with a "head gardener" position, to grow a Community Supported Agriculture co-op in every ward.
- Weigh in on the state-approved Newark forestry management plan.
- Expand community gardening programs and preserve existing assets like vacant lots for garden development.
- Set a goal for increasing urban tree count and make a plan for long-term maintenance.
- Reinstate an environmental center at the water purification plant.
- Support the development of riverfront recreational paces and support green open space jobs on the Newark waterfront; investigate the creation and funding of an entity to oversee waterfront parks.
- Create and implement a "Healthy Living Action Plan."
- Support the creation of greenways and safe routes for walking/biking; establish new truck routes and reroute traffic.

## Step 4: Refine Goals; Brainstorm Strategies

- Identify best practices from other cities and communities.
- Develop strategies to achieve local goals.
- Identify green job training opportunities to connect to goals and strategies.

own experiences promoting sustainability.

Nick Weiner from Change to Win's Clean Ports Campaign shared his perspective on the national effort to improve air quality and create high-quality jobs at major container ports. Leanne Krueger-Braneky from the Sustainable Business Network of Greater Philadelphia spoke about creating green business entrepreneurship and "communities of practice." Maureen Conway from the Aspen Institute's Workforce Strategies Initiative shared her research on sectoral workforce development and methods of overcoming barriers to employment in emerging sectors.

The working group co-chairs then led break out sessions to refine each group's goals and strategies, which would become the material for discussion at the Green Future Summit on September 12 and 13.

**The working group process was crucial** to the Newark's Green Future initiative. Beyond the intrinsic value of distilling the best ideas of many key stakeholders, the collaboration spawned exciting new partnerships and collaborative projects (*see sidebar on pages 10 and 11*).

**The process also highlighted** the ways in which Mayor Booker's commitment to a greener, more prosperous city is inspired by the prominent leaders engaged every day in greening Newark – community development corporations that transform communities, workforce training providers who create career tracks in emerging industries, and educators who teach the next generation how to realize its vision of a greener city.

## September 2008: Newark's Green Future Summit

After months of planning, Newark's Green Future Summit was held on September 12-13, 2008 at the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT). The summit agenda was balanced between national and Newark-based experts and aimed to communicate the working group principles and

## Seeing Change Up Close

At the close of Newark's Green Future Summit, attendees were invited to learn more about how sustainability is becoming a reality in Newark in the areas of green building, open space, and economic development through on-site visits.

At the **Ironbound Park Project** Carol Johnston of the Ironbound Community Corporation explained this industrial neighborhood's plan to reclaim the waterfront and provide a green open space spanning the Ironbound frontage on the Passaic River.

At **Lincoln Park/Brick City Urban Farms** visitors saw an example of the LEED-certified housing units that LPCCD is building in the Lincoln Park neighborhood. The project has become a national model by incorporating a green building job training program for local youth. Summit participants learned how LPCCD is transforming this low-income neighborhood into an urban eco-village and saw green construction practices up close.

At the **Greater Newark Conservancy** Robin Dougherty led a tour of the Conservancy's Urban Environmental and Ecological Center, which provides service learning opportunities to over three thousand youth per year and develops youth leadership by employing teenagers to educate younger children. The center's educational "sensory garden," which incorporates storm water capture principles, is just one example of GNC's work to foster stewardship of Newark's urban environment.

"This is a great opportunity to put Newark at the leading edge of the green revolution in this country," said Phil Angelides, chairman of the Apollo Alliance.



draft goals while highlighting national models that could directly inform these goals. Each working group had a corresponding panel at the summit, and two additional panels took a closer look at the cross-cutting issues of workforce training and youth and community engagement.

We also included a number of inspirational speakers throughout the two-day summit to ensure broad public participation and continually bring the theme back to the hope and promise of the green economy. Early on Friday Apollo Board Chairman Phil Angelides addressed a packed house on the need for a transition to a "clean energy, good jobs" economy. He said, "We can commit ourselves to saving our planet and building a new economy of broad opportunity here at home, here in Newark, here in cities across this nation."

Mayor Booker expressed his commitment to put Newark at the forefront of the green movement. His call for change was clear: "If we do the same things we did yesterday, we are not going to end up with results that are different [from those] we have today."

Toni Griffin, Newark's director of the Division of Planning and Community Development, reiterated the city's commitment to green growth. Ms. Griffin made clear that green principles would inform the revision of the city's Master Plan, and that Newark no longer held the shortsighted view that environmental consideration and fiscal responsibility are mutually exclusive priorities.

During lunch New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Lisa Jackson talked about the vital issues of watershed protection and air quality, noting that through these issues "we are interconnected and don't talk about it enough." PSEG Chief Executive Officer Ralph Izzo put Newark's plans in a larger environmental context. "We need everyone involved and doing their part to win the fight against climate change," and he explained how innovative public policy that stimulates investment in energy efficiency and renewables can result in environmentally friendly, equitable, and sustainable business models in the private



# Setting Green Priorities: A Message From The City of Newark

*“Sustainability issues are quality of life issues. They affect the quality of our children’s lives as well as our children’s children. Sustainability is about making decisions today which support social, environmental, economic, and cultural and spiritual vibrancy. Through such a lens we can create a vibrant and sustainable future.”*

Chelsea Albucher  
Sustainability Officer, City of Newark

On many fronts Newark is becoming renowned as a place of innovation. One way the city is moving forward is to brand itself green without “greenwashing.” The city has hired a sustainability officer, stationed in the mayor’s office, who will coordinate inter-departmental activities and develop policies, programs, and partnerships to advance Newark’s green future.

The city is committed to addressing the recommendations and priorities that emerged from the summit process through:

- Fostering green economic development and green job creation.
- Promoting green infrastructure and greening our communities.

At the summit one stakeholder said he hoped the Newark’s Green Future process would help “green my job, green my home, and green my community.” The city is committed to this same vision, will take action on those items within its municipal powers, and will reach out to stakeholders to engage in broad programs and partnerships to advance the greening of Newark’s economy, infrastructure, and neighborhoods. The city sees the deep stakeholder involvement in the summit as just the beginning of a multi-sector initiative to advance Newark’s sustainable future.

To establish a baseline the city is surveying departments to identify and assess existing programs and policies that address sustainability issues and then evaluating whether and how they can

be improved. Specifically, based on direction provided at the summit, the city has committed to advances in the areas of green economic development, green building, and open space. To guide growth and investment in these areas, sustainability goals are being integrated into the city’s Master Plan update, building and open space development guidelines, and infrastructure and capital improvement projects. The city’s land disposition process and tax incentives also encourage development that meets triple bottom line objectives.

The city is committed to building on its assets and is supporting neighborhood economies by targeting capital investments – such as streetscape enhancements, brownfields remediation, and infill development – to enhance economic viability and improve social and environmental conditions. Newark is second only to Boston as the fastest growing urban area in the Northeast, and so these strategies are geared toward addressing the needs of existing residents and preparing for future growth. In particular, given that the port is one of the city’s largest assets, the city is committed to working collaboratively to realize sustainable port related development and mitigate the environmental impacts of port activities.

Sustainability goals are also informing the city’s business and workforce development strategies. For example, the city has integrated green business assistance into its economic development activities in order to expand and retain existing businesses and attract new green economic activity to its highly marketable commercial districts. The city is advancing social venture enterprise and local hire policies, and is launching a “buy local” initiative with an emphasis on business-to-business procurement.

The city is actively committed to green workforce development and is supporting green job training, from green building to horticulture to environmental remediation, with an emphasis on connecting former offenders to green career pathways. To ensure



that our residents are prepared for these green jobs, Newark Works offers customized training to meet the labor needs of clean tech industries.

The city is committed to working collaboratively to expand green career path educational opportunities for Newark residents. Local programs engage youth in environmental service learning activities which foster stewardship, and local vocational high schools and community colleges are developing green career track training, with an emphasis on energy, green building, and facility management. Through its support of programs like these, the city is actively developing a green-collar workforce.

### **Energying Newark: Energy Efficiency Initiatives**

The city is committed to implementing a sustainability initiative that addresses everyday bread and butter issues that make a difference in the quality of people's lives. Because ever-increasing utility rates threaten the livelihood of our city's residents, businesses, and budget the city has kicked off its sustainability initiative with an energy efficiency campaign that is geared toward reducing the burden of utility bills, increasing building efficiency, and strategically positioning Newark to capitalize on the green job opportunities presented by the nation's transition to a clean energy economy.

Residents and businesses in older urban areas are more likely to occupy less energy-efficient structures than occupants of newer towns and suburbs, and therefore spend a disproportionate share of their income on utility bills. Addressing this disparity is an economic and environmental equity issue. Hence the city is conducting outreach and education to increase energy efficiency and is streamlining access to existing assistance programs for bill payment, weatherization, building retrofits, and renewable energy installation.

It is estimated that 20,000 jobs will be created by the energy sector in New Jersey by 2020. In particular, Newark is pursuing financing to support wide-scale retrofitting of its older building stock and increasing clean energy production, both of which will create jobs. The city is committed to advancing related workforce development to prepare residents for these green-collar jobs.

The city has also invited the community at large to "take the climate change challenge" in an effort to inspire and motivate actions – large and small – that will increase energy efficiency, realize savings, and reduce carbon emissions. The underlying message is that we all have a green job to do and can take actions at home and at work to reduce carbon emissions and support the green economy. To support this commitment, the city has forged a collaborative energy initiative partnership among state agencies, the utility, and regional non-profits. The theme is "Newark conserves" – to save energy, save resources, and save money.

The city is committed to leading by example – Newark has finalized an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions resulting from municipal facilities, which provides a baseline from which to set carbon emission reduction targets. Next, the city will be conducting energy audits of municipal buildings to identify potential efficiency upgrades. In addition, the city is pursuing solar installations on several of its buildings.

The city is also seeking to enhance its energy security through increasing distributed generation, implementing a demand-response management system, and creating an alternative fueling infrastructure.

– Prepared by the City of Newark



Chelsea Albucher (L), Newark's sustainability officer, shares an idea with Aimée Christensen, founder and chief executive of Christensen Global Strategies, who helped organize the summit.

sector. Mr. Izzo also emphasized his company's ongoing commitment to ensuring that local residents are prepared for green jobs in the utility industry – an industry that is fast losing workers to retirement.

### **Panels Present Local Priorities and Best Practices**

Most of Friday's agenda was dedicated to panels highlighting some of the best green job practices from across the country, including several from the Newark area. The three panels were organized around the working group topics – green buildings, green economic development, and green open space – and each opened with a local representative providing an overview of the working group priorities, draft goals, and strategies developed over the previous six months. The panels, moderated by the summit's national conveners, then presented national models and strategies to inform these local priorities. After the panels, participants broke into smaller groups, where they refined the draft goals and strategies into action items and next steps for creating a real sustainability plan. The participants also made specific commitments to moving these action items forward while working closely with the city to ensure success.

Friday concluded with a reception in the Newark City Hall rotunda, featuring live music by the Betty Miller Trio and a moving speech by



Mayor Cory A. Booker committed to use the remaining two years of his first term to pursue a green economic development strategy so aggressively that it will “fully saturate the consciousness of so many Newark leaders.”

## Elizabeth Reynoso: No Throwaways

Elizabeth Reynoso, coordinator of planning and community partnerships for the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, believes there’s no such thing as a throwaway person, which is why she works with the Institute’s New Careers project to help ex-offenders re-enter the workforce and society.

Providing its students with training, including interpersonal skills, basic work ethics, and conflict resolution, the Newark-based urban research and advocacy organization helps get ex-offenders into transitional jobs that offer them immediate pay while providing on-the-job training, work experience, and references.

“I am really excited about the green jobs movement because it gives new meaning to our project name, New Careers. Since many of our folks have damaged themselves and their relationships, they tend to have few opportunities that lead them out of the cycle of poverty, street life, and incarceration,” said Reynoso.

If there’s any hope of reducing rates of recidivism and black - and grey-market economies, then there need to be jobs and opportunities for those coming out of prison. Currently, according to Reynoso, 1,300 people return from prison to Essex County, New Jersey each year.

In many cases they find that their conviction makes employers

hesitant to hire them or bars them completely from jobs for which they may otherwise be qualified.

“Have we really resigned ourselves to continue having two different societies, one underground and one legitimate, with neither benefiting from the talents and resources of the other?” said Reynoso. “There really needs to be a rethinking. Right now we’re cutting off opportunities and access to a middle class life for so many people in Newark. How can the city revitalize if there’s no investment in its citizenry?”

Since the Institute began its New Careers project in 2006, about 300 people have come through the door for assistance, with 120 completing the entire program. Recently the Institute began working with the city on an initiative called Clean & Green,

in which participants will help clean, restore, and beautify 300 city-owned lots.

“Now, instead of preparing people for jobs that tend to have no career path, low pay, and are sometimes in conditions that are unsafe, we can help inspire and prepare people for jobs that will not only benefit them financially, but also benefit their health and the environment they are coming home to.”



“Have we really resigned ourselves to having two different societies, one underground, one legitimate?” asks Elizabeth Reynoso, shown here with a young friend.



Brick City Urban Farms, Lincoln Park, and LPCCD's nearby green housing project dominate the cityscape at the corner of Washington and Lincoln.

Majora Carter, an environmental and social justice leader who was recently honored with a MacArthur fellowship, more popularly known as the MacArthur “genius” award.

Saturday’s agenda, organized by the city, focused on specific strategies to engage Newark residents in the emerging green economy. The first panel presented best practices from local green workforce development programs, including strategies for engaging low-income and formerly incarcerated job seekers, and for exposing youth to environmental careers. The second panel focused on the important role of community-based organizations and youth programs in catalyzing citizen action and developing future leaders. In the breakout sessions that followed, participants brainstormed ways to enhance local workforce and community-based initiatives, and focused on identifying key stakeholders and potential funding sources for these programs.

After the breakouts, Van Jones eloquently highlighted the opportunity for under-served and under-represented populations to rise with the “green tide” out of poverty. “You want to beat global warming?” he asked. “Help us weatherize our buildings. Leaky buildings create drafty, chilly people, but they also create a hot planet. You want to beat global warming? Put our young people to work.”

Cecil Corbin-Mark, a nationally recognized environmental justice leader, followed with a call to the faith-based community to embrace sustainability as a higher calling, and reminded participants that the green future vision has to be matched with dedicated perseverance if it is to become a reality.

The summit concluded with Newark’s declaration of its commitment to a greener city. Chelsea Albucher, Newark’s new sustainability officer, responded to the priorities articulated at the summit by sharing information about the city’s current and planned activities to make Newark a greener and more equitable place to live, work, and play. She stressed that only through political will, constituent advocacy, supportive policy, adequate funding, and – most important – strong partnerships, will Newark’s



“You already in a one-year period have accomplished what it took four years to get to in Oakland,” said Van Jones, founder and president of Green For All, which helped organize the summit.

Green Future be realized.

Mayor Booker closed the summit on an inspirational high note, repeating his office’s dedication to a greener Newark. Noting that every generation has moved us closer to realizing the ideals of democracy, he connected the city’s participatory sustainability initiative to America’s great green future.

“We need to redefine the American dream as the *green* dream,” he implored, “and understand that this idea of being environmentally conscious is not something that we should do, or ought to do, or that would be nice to do. It is something that we *must* do if we are to retain the very elements of what it means to be American, of what we claim to be. If we do not do this, we are risking everything that our ancestors sacrificed for.”

## Moving Forward: Next Steps for Newark

Newark’s Green Future Summit was just the beginning for Newark. The goals and strategies that were refined at the summit, along with connections made between city officials, community leaders, businesses, labor representatives, and citizens, provide a strong foundation for a long-term green development strategy. Related initiatives, such as the work Newark is doing with ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, a Toronto-based international



Mayor Cory Booker and Phil Angelides, the Apollo Alliance chairman, hold a news conference on the first day of the summit.

organization of local governments, to identify and address the city's carbon footprint, will be integrated into the city's overall sustainability initiative. If we learned one thing at the summit, it is that collaborative partnerships are necessary to achieve environmental, economic, and equity goals. Collaboration – across city departments, across local, regional, state, and federal agencies, and across the (often wide) public-private sector divide – is essential to fostering truly sustainable projects and commitments, whether the goal is greening the port, greening a neighborhood, or greening local jobs.

## Lessons Learned

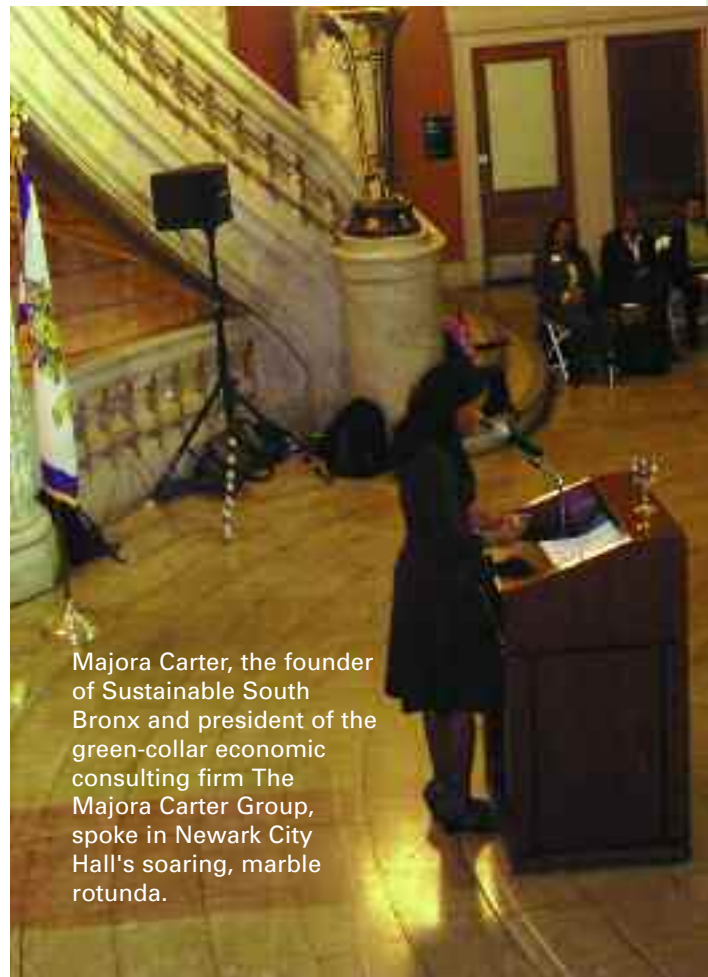
Working with the Newark community over the past year has been an honor and a privilege for the Apollo Alliance. Apollo affiliates work tirelessly in a number of states and cities across the country. This is the first time, however, that we have devoted the national organization's energy to helping a city and its residents articulate a green economic development strategy that incorporates environmental, ecological, and social justice goals from the very beginning.

The Apollo Alliance learned just as much from the process as our Newark partners did. What we achieved in Newark is a model for how cities that are starting to address sustainability issues can do so in a comprehensive, integrated,

and equitable manner.

Throughout the year, and after each working group meeting, we made sure to debrief with working group and national partners, evaluating ourselves and the process. Here are some of the lessons the Apollo Alliance staff learned:

- Green jobs strategies must have strong support from the mayor and high-level city staff from the beginning. We were very lucky that Mayor Booker was such a champion of this effort from its inception and attended both days of the summit, providing opening comments on Friday and closing the summit on Saturday. In retrospect, we should have involved key city staffers from the economic and workforce development, prisoner re-entry, and environmental departments into the planning process as early as possible.
- Large-scale green jobs efforts must have at least one city staffer consistently involved in the project from the beginning. We were lucky to have a top mayoral aide working with us as we started this project, but unfortunately he left



Majora Carter, the founder of Sustainable South Bronx and president of the green-collar economic consulting firm The Majora Carter Group, spoke in Newark City Hall's soaring, marble rotunda.

## John Taylor: Produce and Profit For The People

John Taylor didn't plan on becoming a farmer overnight. But that's basically what happened after Christmas dinner table talk with his children turned to issues of food security, hunger, and urban renewal.

Within a few short months Taylor managed to secure temporary use of an empty city-owned lot, find partners with gardening experience, and procure enough planting boxes to turn the quarter-acre blight into an urban oasis that, thanks to intensive techniques and a lot of thought, is able to produce enough fresh vegetables to feed much of the neighborhood.

Brick City Urban Farms was born.

In many areas of Newark, which has one of the highest poverty rates in the nation at nearly 24 percent, residents have very limited access to grocery stores and fresh, healthy produce. Smaller corner markets sell mostly pre-packaged convenience and snack foods, often at a premium cash-strapped residents can ill afford to pay.

Nutrition remains a problem for many. "It's a real issue in the City of Newark," said Taylor. "And the prices in these stores can be insane. At least ten percent above what you'd pay at a grocery store in a neighboring town."

Taylor, now known as "Farmer John" to many, says the farm first started distributing the fruits – and vegetables – of its labor as gifts to neighbors and residents of nearby halfway houses, many of whom volunteered to help in the garden. Then they started offering

neighbors a deal: bring a bag and fill it for five dollars.

Now Brick City Urban Farms is in the process of developing a more sophisticated distribution network, looking at farmers' markets, local restaurants, and caterers.

"We're organizing ourselves as a for-profit [in partnership with non-profits and schools] with total commitment to the community we're serving," said Taylor.



"We found ourselves in the middle of a movement," said John Taylor, of Brick City Urban Farms.

Since the farm uses planting boxes, about half of which were bought at wholesale prices and half of which were donated, there's no need for expensive soil remediation or worries about lead contamination. It also means that if the plot they use comes up for development they can transport the supplies to a new plot easily.

And like most commercial farmers, Taylor and his partners studied the market, choosing crops with the maximum yield, nutrition, and profit for the amount of space they had.

Not bad for a guy whose only previous gardening experience was a small vegetable patch he tended as a child. Still, Taylor is quick to point out that the farm's success is a community effort and that it wouldn't have been possible without the help of partners Kirsten Giardi, Lorraine Gibbons, and the Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District, which helped them find the land and will continue to help them find new plots.

"I'm the kind of guy that comes up with ideas. If it were just up to me all this would be just another idea on the shelf," said Taylor. "But because of the people I shared the idea with and the surge of interest in urban farming, we found ourselves in the middle of a movement."

halfway through to attend law school.

This created a four to five month gap before Sustainability Officer Chelsea Albucher was hired in August 2008. The project would have run more smoothly with staff consistency in that position.

- It is essential to have funding not only for the summit itself, but also for the working group process before the summit and the important partnership work post-summit. Private foundations were very generous in supporting the summit, but a bit wary of funding a working group process they saw as untested. We hope our

experience in Newark paves the way for funders to support similar processes in other cities.

- Working group leaders need clearly defined roles and expectations from the beginning. Because the working group process was new, group leader roles developed organically. If we did it again, we would be much clearer about roles and responsibilities from the outset.
- The working group and summit planning processes should be integrated. For several months, Apollo staffers were the only link between the working group process (developing the goals and strategies) and the group of national



partners planning the summit agenda. In retrospect, we would have included working group leaders in summit planning from the outset to ensure that summit presenters addressed working group concerns.

- The labor movement, especially the Building Trades, Laborers, and other closely related unions, should be actively involved from the beginning. Labor is a key partner for Apollo at the national level and in all our partnerships across the country. Perhaps because of this, we were too quick to assume labor involvement in the Newark project and did not realize until late spring 2008 the need to be very proactive in engaging labor. In retrospect, we would have involved labor in both the working group and summit planning process from day one.
- It is essential to provide a clearinghouse of information for working group and summit participants to enable them to move projects forward after the summit. Apollo set up a Web page with working group and summit notes, graphic facilitation drawings, speaker contact information, Newark-specific research, and other resources for Newark. We also provided

participant lists from the summit to the city and to working group leaders. This has proved to be an invaluable resource. We recommend that any organization or city wanting to move forward with a green economic development project produce such a list.

We hope that our experience in Newark, including the lessons we learned, provides insight and value to other cities and organizations working to move the “green dream” from vision to reality. As in other major American cities that are proving the value of a development strategy based on energy efficiency, climate sensitivity, and resource conservation, Newark is charting a new path to prosperity that fits the distinctive economic and environmental conditions of the new century.



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**CONVENING ORGANIZATIONS:**



**SUMMIT SPONSORS:**



*During Newark's Green Future Summit, a two-day conference held Friday and Saturday at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Mayor Booker passionately argued that embracing environmentally friendly initiatives would create new jobs and affordable housing that could, potentially, reduce inner-city crime and employ struggling ex-convicts.*

Newark Star Ledger

*By employing people in trades aimed at enhancing the energy efficiency of old buildings and by attracting new green businesses to the transportation hub on the doorstep of Manhattan, Mayor Cory Booker maintains that Newark can create an example for other municipalities to emulate.*

Greenwire

*Mayor Cory Booker is aiming to make Newark a national showcase for economic policies, energy, and environmental programs that can provide high-quality jobs for residents and help them to rise out of poverty, according to the city.*

NJBiz.com

*Newark is on its way to be a national model for clean and efficient energy use in a green economy and a “shining example of how to rebuild the very core of America, its cities,” asserted Phil Angelides, chairman of the Apollo Alliance.*

DailyNewarker.com

*Booker's green goals include helping Newark save energy and money, creating jobs, reclaiming community space, “undermining” health issues like asthma and cancer, beautifying the city and the state, and ensuring that people of all backgrounds and income levels have access to clean rivers, parks, and oceans. He says the American dream is a green dream.*

GreenJersey.org

*While the current financial crisis has stoked worries about our economic future, the need for an innovative approach to economic growth is taking root in places like Newark, New Jersey.*

EcoFriendlyMagazine.com



[www.apolloalliance.org](http://www.apolloalliance.org)