

# The Mercury News

## **Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network lays out green vision for region**

By Matt Nauman

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Calling it "a compelling manifesto," Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network on Friday released a green vision for the region that says a private-public partnership focused on alternative energy and energy efficiency will lead to economic recovery and growth.

"The climate crisis is an opportunity to innovate, to invent new technologies, to commercialize them, to grab market share, to create whole new clusters of green jobs and grow the economy," said Russell Hancock, Joint Venture's chief executive.

The "greenprint," a word play on the blueprints used to detail the construction of new projects, was released during the organization's annual State of the Valley conference, attended by about 1,200 people at Parkside Hall in downtown San Jose.

Besides laying out a strategy for how the valley can profit by going green, the group announced the formation of the Silicon Valley Climate Prosperity Council, one of seven national pilot projects backed by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund and the nonprofit Global Urban Development. It will be funded by a two-year, \$300,000 grant from Applied Materials as well as an additional \$75,000 from two foundations.

Some of that money will be used to hire a director for the project, a person who, Hancock said, will "make this greenprint a reality."

Chairing the council will be the two chairs of Joint Venture, San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, who represents the public sector, and Chris DiGiorgio, who represents the private sector as California managing director of the consulting firm Accenture.

Reed noted that Al Gore, the climate-change guru and former U.S. vice president, spoke at the same event two years ago and challenged Silicon Valley to lead the green charge.

"Silicon Valley has accepted the challenge," Reed said.

The 44-page document, "Climate Prosperity: A Greenprint for Silicon Valley," points to four areas where Silicon Valley's technological expertise and innovative business style can lead to cleaner skies, green jobs and an expanded market for green services and products. And it offers suggestions on how those areas can be improved.

- Renewable energy. Solar manufacturers and installers already dot valley office parks, but streamlined permitting, better financing options and coordinated public procurement will help them grow, the group says.
- Building efficiency. More consistent building codes and standards, greater use of green materials, and energy audits when a building is sold would be useful improvements, it says.
- Clean transportation. Electric carmaker Tesla Motors and Better Place, which envisions a global network of charging stations, already call Silicon Valley home. The valley should support additional clean-transportation companies as well as improve the mass-transit systems, the report says.
- Green infrastructure. Silicon Valley should be the showcase for pilot projects using the technologies invented here, such as new solar panels and energy monitoring systems, with the help of utilities such as Pacific Gas & Electric and Silicon Valley Power.

During a panel discussion on how Silicon Valley can lead America's new-energy future, a leading venture capitalist called for more government research dollars to help drive down the cost of alternative forms of energy.

"Green (energy) is more expensive than brown," said John Denniston, a partner with Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers in Menlo Park. "We need to radically increase the amount of dedicated research dollars." Advances in biotechnology and technologies such as the Internet came after such government research efforts, he said.

#### GREENING of SILICON VALLEY

Joint Venture: Silicon Valley Network says the region is "uniquely qualified" to foster the new, green economy. Here's why:

- A growing roster of clean-tech companies, many with venture capital backing.
- Major companies, such as Applied Materials and Google, that have made going green a big part of their business strategy.
- Research at Stanford, UC-Berkeley and the national labs.
- Leading-edge utilities such as PG&E and Silicon Valley Power.
- Local government policies, such as San Jose's "green vision."
- Active community of environmental volunteers and nonprofits.
- Community college, labor union and workforce-development agency support.