



## *At a glance (September 2008)*

- **Congressman Cardoza pledges support for Gustine and Los Banos projects.**
- **CCEDC Boston mission reaches new market and identifies projects**
- **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for cities and county of Merced completed and submitted to EDA**
- **New Atwater business park stakeholders benefit from EDA grant.**
- **Incubator tours guide plans for Innovation Place Network in Los Banos and Merced**
- **Outreach efforts contact thirty businesses and recorded six new project leads.**

### *Upcoming: Business and Manufacturing Summit December 4, 2008.*

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- Congressman Dennis Cardoza met with a long-time Los Banos business on September 5<sup>th</sup> to review the proposed project and explore avenues of support with the proponent, City of Los Banos representatives and MCEDCO. The Congressman also reviewed two emerging technology and alternative energy projects considering investment in Gustine. The Congressman offered support for all three proposals and provided keen insight on a strategy to secure assistance directly attributed to his participation with several Federal committees.
  - The CCEDC Boston mission met with seven firms and conducted two presentations to a dozen brokers September 22<sup>nd</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup>. The New England market is a prime source of venture capital and lifesciences business start ups. During the mission an immediate site location was generated and four prospective projects were identified. The CCEDC was invited to return to the area for a more comprehensive presentation to the Northeast Association of realtors as interest in California is high.
  - MCEDCO modified and completed the regional CEDS in accordance with federal requirements on September 12<sup>th</sup>. The final submitted document included amendments received during a month-long public input process as well as adjustments requested by public agencies. The CEDS included dozens of priority infrastructure projects and potential initiatives that will lead to new investment and employment. The CEDS will be updated regularly and modified to include new activities.
  - The City of Atwater and MCEDCO convened a stakeholders meeting to review the pre-development and planning of a new business park in the Sante Fe/Shaffer Road area of the City. The initiative was part of a broader regional study funded in part by an EDA grant of \$177,000 to undertake preliminary master utilities planning in the cities of Atwater, Gustine and Merced. The Atwater property owners and developers in attendance supported the prospect of using federal funds to reduce their costs, and most agreed to contribute to the matching fund requirement of the grant. The preliminary study is considered a prerequisite for competing for construction grant funds from EDA in the coming year. MCEDCO shall meet with the cities of Gustine and Merced to confirm their intention to participate in the pre-development project.
  - Representatives from the City of Los Banos, Merced College and MCEDCO complete two tours of small business incubators to assist in formulating the business plan for the Innovation Place Network project. The business plan is funded in part by a \$60,000 EDA grant to Merced College with matching funds received from Los Banos, Merced and PG&E. MCEDCO is managing the project on behalf of the College and cities. The group viewed incubators in Clovis, Fresno, Marina, Watsonville and San Jose and identified crucial components and programs that will contribute to the success of the Innovation Place Network. The study is required to guide possible development of a formal facility, and is necessary if the cities wish to pursue EDA construction funding.
  - Staff outreach efforts contacted approximately thirty businesses and generated six new project leads. Notable projects include the relocation and redevelopment of the Los Banos Abattoir, advanced discussions with three different commercial entertainment proposals, and sustained actions to facilitate a new alternative fuels production operation in the Gustine area.