

ENTERPRISE

a quarterly focus on the people and the issues that drive New Jersey business

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New
Development
turns **Orange** into
Green

The City of Orange is Taking a New Approach to Downtown Revitalization

Also Inside:

Preparing for Health Care Reform
Workplace Kiosks to Monitor Employees' Health



FIRST ROW, FROM LEFT: Keith Miles, of Northern Hills Redevelopment; Orange Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, Jr., and Ted Zangari, real estate redevelopment lawyer at Sills Cummis & Gross. **Back row, from left:** Anthony Marucci and Carol Gabel, of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce, and Valerie Jackson, planning and economic development director in Orange, standing in front of The Valley Lofts in Orange.

COVER PHOTO BY Gary Gellman (Gellman Images)

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The New
Orange
is turning
Green

**The City of Orange
Takes a New Approach to
Downtown Revitalization**

ABOVE: The inside of a condominium at The Valley Lofts.

RIGHT: Mayor Eldridge Hawkins, second from left, says Orange is the perfect laboratory for sustainable development because it is a compact city where homes are a short walk or bicycle ride from a train station and the thriving central business district.

ALL PHOTOS BY Gary Gellman (Gellman Images)

BY ELDRIDGE HAWKINS, JR., MAYOR, CITY OF ORANGE

There are many reasons why the city of Orange is turning green. The Valley Lofts – 16 new condos recently developed by Northern Hills Redevelopment – was built with green building materials and boast rooftop gardens complete with sod grass, shrubs and beautiful views.



The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce supports economic development and clean energy, especially in our cities, so when we heard about the redevelopment projects in Orange, we took a trip there to meet Mayor Eldridge Hawkins and see it ourselves. We were impressed by the rooftop gardens, the views and the commitment to green building. Here is some of what was said:

“Mayor Hawkins is off to a wonderful start with his plans to create a renaissance in the city of Orange. His vision for bringing a live-work-play community to the heart of his town is clearly under way.”

— Ted Zangari
co-chair of the Redevelopment Law Practice at Sills Cummis & Gross,
the Newark law firm, and member of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

“Before 2007, Orange was thought of as a diamond in the rough, with two train stations in the city and four within a mile and a half radius. We felt the green movement was taking place. Gas was over \$3 a gallon so people will be looking to cities to be closer to mass transportation. We came up with the green lofts at a price point people can afford.”

— Keith Miles
managing member, Northern Hills Redevelopment,
developer of The Valley Lofts in Orange

Grand Central Redevelopment Project, 70 units of affordable housing being built by RPM Development, will be at least 60 percent more energy efficient thanks to passive solar heating and ventilation, air-tight walls and windows, and solar panels that generate enough electricity to power at least half the units' energy.

In the meantime, the city is revising its zoning to include mandatory sustainable design standards in all site plan submissions and it has conducted energy audits on our municipal buildings, as part of participation in the Sustainable Jersey Certification Program.

This is one of my most important goals as mayor – to make Orange a leader in the use of energy-saving green technologies. Orange is the perfect laboratory for sustainable development. It is a compact city, where homes are a short walk or bicycle ride from a train station and our central business district. Our director of planning and development, Valerie Jackson, has attracted developers in the forefront of green construction techniques, and we have citizen activists who are our partners in the creation of a green Orange.

The new green Orange even has an urban farm, a hydroponic urban green-

house created under the Garden State Urban Farm program that provides job training in the growing and marketing of hydroponic produce, a method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions in water, without soil.

Last year, we created a “Green Team” with members from our Master Plan Committee supported by city departments, the planning and zoning boards and the Orange Board of Education. In addition, the Planning Board has received City Council permission to update and amend two existing redevelopment plans to include green building and sustainable standards.



TOP: The inside of a condominium at The Valley Lofts.

CENTER: Valerie Jackson, planning and economic development director in Orange, has attracted developers in the forefront of green construction.

BOTTOM: The rooftop gardens at The Valley Lofts.



“We are ensuring that green development occurs in Orange by having standards and requiring builders and developers to incorporate the standards into their site plans.”

— Valerie Jackson

director of planning and economic development, City of Orange Township



The recently established Reock Street Redevelopment Area already contains sustainable standards mandated by New Jersey’s Transit Village program.

Northern Hills Redevelopment has paved the way for green building in Orange with The Valley Lofts. That is being followed by sustainable development in the Central Orange Redevelopment Area. Over the past 18 months, three large, sustainable multi-unit residential projects have been approved. The Grand Central Redevelopment Project, 70 units of affordable housing, is under construction. It will be New Jersey’s first Climate Choice building under a Board of Public Utilities Program to encourage green building innovation. All three projects comply with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED), an international green building certification system.

The Walter G. Alexander Redevelopment Project is another LEED certified development that will bring 166 units of new housing to Orange, replacing a recently demolished public housing project.

Green building often increases front-end costs while creating significant savings once the buildings are in operation. To help compensate, properties located in redevelopment and rehabilitation areas are eligible for tax abatements where savings can be passed on to purchasers.

Next year, when Orange begins its mandatory master plan re-examination, we will include a focus on energy conservation and green development. All new and future construction in our redevelopment areas will meet or exceed the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency’s Green Homes Standards.

By taking steps to prepare for a green future, Orange is in the forefront of the movement to combat global warming, reduce America’s dependence on foreign oil, create green collar jobs and reduce the cost of energy. We are firm believers in the principle of “think globally, act locally.”

Eldridge Hawkins, Jr. is the mayor of Orange and president of the New Jersey Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees).