



**press release**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FIRST GREEN BANK CHARTER APPLICATION FILED  
FOR SOUTHEAST'S FIRST ENVIRONMENTALLY FOCUSED BANK**

**First Green Bank to Offer Lower Cost Money for Commercial Green Building Projects  
in Commitment to Promote Environmentally Responsible Behavior**

(Eustis, FL) – March 24, 2008 – Mr. Ken LaRoe and other organizing directors announce the filing of their charter application for First Green Bank (FGB), a commercial bank that will promote environmental responsibility and green building by offering lower interest rates for commercial projects that meet green building certification defined by U.S Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. Gold and platinum certified projects will qualify for the lowest interest rates in order to motivate commercial developers to build green while at the same time making it possible for them to realize increased profits. FGB will also offer special incentives to employees who meet green lifestyle housing and living standards.

The overall savings and increased profits for a project developer doing business with First Green Bank will be significant. A green project with a \$4 million dollar loan that qualifies for a 1/2 percent discount would save approximately \$30,000 over 5 years—and more over a longer period.

By building with the environment in mind, property and business owners can achieve additional savings through water-use reduction, energy efficiency, and employee productivity gains. Experience shows that it is not difficult to cut energy use by 30 to 50 percent and water consumption by 30 percent or more. A recent Department of Energy study shows employee productivity increases of up to 15% when the quality of the indoor environment improves. Buildings with more environmentally friendly amenities have reported historically lower vacancy rates and higher resale values as tenants prefer enhanced comfort, health, and productivity for their employees.

“We are very excited about this business model and we believe it will define the future of the U.S. banking industry. To my knowledge, this will be the first bank of its kind to promote positive environmental and social responsibility while providing for increased profits for investors and clients,” said, Ken LaRoe, Organizing Director and upcoming CEO of First Green Bank.

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First Green Bank is being organized by experienced banking executives and business leaders in Central Florida. Ken LaRoe is the founder and former CEO of Florida Choice Bank which was founded in 1999. In 2006 with more than \$400 million in total assets, Florida Choice Bank was acquired by Alabama National Bancorporation. LaRoe is now focused on First Green Bank and wants to change why America does business.

Targeted to open in November 2008, First Green Bank will lead by example, promoting environmentally responsible behavior through its own business and employees. FGB will require loan officers to be LEED Accredited Professionals in order to better assist clients and will cover the cost for and offer salary increases to all employees who attain LEED Professional Accreditation. Additionally, FGB will provide zero interest loans to employees who buy automobiles that exceed 30 miles per gallon, and will offer paid sabbaticals to employees who engage in environmentally responsible projects. FGB will also provide green building expertise, networking, and product resources through its Web site and staff so clients have all the necessary tools available to help ensure successful green building projects.

FGB will open in a temporary building in Eustis, Florida while a new LEED certified sustainable building is constructed nearby. The new building will be built among old oak trees and will include a sustainable architectural design that includes; a green roof, low water consumption plumbing, solar power, water cisterns, Florida-friendly low-water use landscaping, recycled building materials, natural lighting and many other features that make up the gold or higher LEED certification. Future branch locations will be built to similar standards. The new building is being designed by Environmental Dynamics, Inc.—a LEED specialty architectural and design firm with offices in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Boca Raton, Florida.

LaRoe also has plans for taking his message to other banks and businesses. FGB is developing a Business Sustainability Manual and a Financial Institution Sustainability Manual to help others make the transition from thinking green to taking action. “Many people want to go green, but don’t know how to get started. Our goal is to show them how they can move forward and what they can do to get started. We believe leading by example will attract like-minded investors, depositors, and clients. We’re looking forward to our opening,” said LaRoe.

First Green Bank will be using the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Rating System which is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings. LEED gives building owners and operators the tools they need to have an immediate and measurable impact on their buildings’ performance. LEED promotes a whole-building approach to sustainability by recognizing performance in five key areas of human and environmental health: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection and indoor environmental quality.

The approval process begins with the filing of the First Green Bank charter application with state regulators. FGB is *In Organization* while it works through the regulatory process and raises the capital required to begin bank operations. First Green Bank (In Organization) expects to open in November 2008.

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