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Chapman awarded grant for renewable solar energy system; headquarters to be LEED renovated

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Chapman Construction/Design has been awarded a Large Onsite Renewables Initiative (LORI) grant from Mass. Technology Collaborative (MTC). Chapman will receive the highly-competitive grant for the planned installation of a 43 kW solar photovoltaic (PV) system at the co.'s headquarters. The LORI grant is directed at renewable energy projects with a capacity of greater than 10 kilowatts where more than 25% of the energy generated will be consumed onsite. Chapman's planned 43 kW PV array installation was selected from a field of about thirty applicants to the MTC, and Chapman was awarded the full amount of its proposal.

Chapman's PV system is one element of the larger "green" renovation of its offices, for which the company will seek Platinum LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). In that effort, Chapman will be applying for at least two "Innovation in Design" credits: one for utilizing the renovation as an educational tool with clients, partners, and the community, and another for the secondary use of solar panels as sun shade. As part of the renovation, Chapman will create an observation platform to allow visitors to view the photovoltaics and a selection of green roofing strategies. The PV system's output will be displayed live on Chapman's website (chapcon.com) as well as on a screen in Chapman's newly renovated foyer.

In addition to the MTC grant, Chapman will qualify for several federal tax credits, including a 30% incentive credit for investment in renewable energy and one that allows businesses to depreciate renewable energy systems over an accelerated five-year period. Also, Mass. offers its own deduction for businesses that install alternative energy systems. Chapman expects that the payback term for the PVs to be five years, at which point the firm will be generating its own free electricity while also significantly reducing its carbon footprint.

"I am grateful that the MTC embraces our corporate philosophy towards sustainable building and our educational programs that foster a green mindset," explains Chapman president and LEED AP John Hall. "We see our green mission as going beyond our employees, to our clients and to each of the communities we affect. With our building's LEED renovation and highly visible photovoltaic panels, I believe that we can illustrate the benefits of looking beyond first costs and instead consider the impact of a building throughout its life cycle."

In addition to the green renovation of its office, the Chapman-built Project Hope Community Center in Roxbury, Mass. was awarded Silver LEED certification by the USGBC. Chapman has five LEED accredited professionals on staff and provides all employees with LEED training. Chapman also rewards its employees for making green choices in their personal lives with reimbursements for driving energy-efficient vehicles and making green improvements in their homes.

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