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Patrick cites growth in local economy

Tours Burlington businesses

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BURLINGTON - Amid the ongoing economic downturn, Gov. Deval Patrick came to Burlington Tuesday to tour two growing companies and to meet with area business leaders on the issue of job creation.

Patrick toured Avid Technology, a digital audio and video production business, which is moving from Tewksbury to Burlington and Palomar Medical Technologies, which produces aesthetic and cosmetic laser technologies. Palomar has moved from its former location on Cambridge Street to a newly opened building on the former Sun Microsystems campus, now known as Network Drive at Northwest Park.

In his comments to business executives, before the session was closed to the media, the governor said he wanted "a very open-ended conversation" about how the state can assist their companies.

The turnpike area, which includes Northwest Park, was designated by the state in 2008 as a Growth District, clearing the way for additional assistance from the commonwealth.

"We are really, really excited about what's happening here in Burlington," commented Patrick.

A release from the governor's office touted the Avid expansion and the relocation of Palomar to the new, much larger facility.

Though not part of the Growth District, the statement also noted that Oracle Corp., after meeting with the governor in November, committed to completing the third phase of its campus on Van de Graaf Drive in Burlington, just south of Route 128. The California-based technology company located in town under a tax increment financing agreement with the town and the state, though development of the campus has lagged well behind initial target dates.

Patrick stated he wants to create an "environment" where businesses will look to expand and hire.

With high unemployment numbers facing the state and the country, Patrick said there is "a special urgency around jobs."

He also told the business leaders that the private sector will be the driving force behind economic recovery.

"You create jobs," he told the group. "Not government, the private sector."

Patrick said he wanted the executives to "help us, help you."

Town Administrator Robert Mercier lauded the Growth District Initiative, saying the Patrick administration has been helpful in assisting with economic development in town.

"They have been very, very cooperative with us," he said.

The governor started with a tour of one of the locations where Avid will house its worldwide headquarters.

Avid decided on Burlington when the company needed more space than it what was occupying in Tewksbury. A 10-year lease was finalized with the Nordblom Co., owners of Northwest Park.

The company will occupy 203,000 square feet of space at 65 and 75 Network Drive, and 10 North Ave.

According to Patrick's office, the company's decision to locate in Burlington saved 740 jobs from leaving the state.

Patrick toured the 75 Network Drive location where renovations are ongoing to accommodate the company's move later this year.

The governor also walked through the new Palomar building, which comprises 130,000 square feet.

Patrick learned about the company's work and talked with employees who were working on various aspects of production. He cited Palomar as an example of new growth industries which the state is promoting.

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GOV. DEVAL PATRICK toured two businesses at Network Drive at Burlington Tuesday as well as meeting with business executives from Avid Technology, video production business, which moved from Tewksbury and will occupy more than 200,000 square feet in Burlington. Accompanying the governor were Avid global real estate director, Town Administrator Robert Mercier, and Todd Fremont-Smith, president of Nordic Properties, and Todd Fremont-Smith, development for the Nordblom Co. (KarwanPhotos.com)

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