

Loring Commerce Centre HAPPENINGS

A newsletter about the Loring Commerce Centre showcasing the facility's assets, news and on-going activities.

LORING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY NEWS

We want to recognize Carl Flora, who retired as the Loring Development Authority's President and CEO, last December. Since starting in 1995, he spent 28 years with the organization, 18 as its CEO. We are eternally grateful for his long-term stewardship of the Commerce Centre and his significant contributions to the Loring redevelopment effort over the years. He left the organization in a very good position to succeed.

Jonathan Judkins, The LDA's new President and CEO has been quite busy, since coming on-board. In addition to managing a move of the LDA headquarters, coordinating all the various property management issues on the Commerce Centre, and overseeing all the grant and other activities described below, he has been actively working with a number of new investors and other exciting new potential business prospects.

Of note, the LDA recently completed the renovation of the new LDA headquarters at 119 Weinman Rd., the former fire department structure. They have consolidated their footprint to help ensure long-term fiscal responsibility of the organization. This move has resulted in reduced overall expenses and resulted in the improvement of a previously underdeveloped facility (the former fire station). This also paves the way for Green4 Maine to fully utilize the 154 Development Drive property to support private business office growth on the campus.

BUSINESS NEWS

There are a number of exciting business projects underway at Loring. The LDA has previously announced three major business deals that are projected to have a profound impact on the northern

ABOUT THE LORING COMMERCE CENTRE

The Loring Commerce Centre, the former Loring Air Force Base, has evolved into a busy commercial, industrial and aviation park that is currently home to over thirty-five business entities, collectively employing over 1000 people. The Loring Commerce Center is managed by the Loring Development Authority of Maine (LDA), a quasi-state agency.

Loring possesses some of the most significant "open the door ready" economic development assets in northern Maine. With over 3,800 acres of developed area and over 900,000 square feet of existing unoccupied or underutilized modern and practical buildings and developable sites, all supported by high-capacity municipal utility infrastructure and a newly constructed dark fiber network, Loring has the capacity to support substantial new business development activity. Furthermore, in addition to supporting local and national markets, Loring's facilities also can support international markets, due to its proximity to Canada and northern Europe. Please refer to loringcommercecentre.com for a comprehensive listing and descriptions of these superb assets.

There are a lot of exciting things happening at the Loring Commerce Centre, with numerous business opportunities available! Join us!



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Learn more at:
loringcommercecentre.com

Maine regional economy; Taste of Maine Potato chip Co, DG Fuels and Green 4 Maine. Here some updates on these major projects.

Taste of Maine Potato Chip Co.

Taste of Maine Potato Chip Co., has announced that they will build and operate a \$55 million potato chip processing facility on the Loring Commerce Centre. Bruce Sargent and Jim Pelkey of Falcon Transportation in Presque Isle, announced that they plan to locate Taste of Maine Potato Chip Co. at Loring Commerce Centre. Taste of Maine Potato Chip Co., based in Presque Isle, recently held a kickoff event on the Loring campus recently to celebrate its future \$55 million potato chip processing plant. The company is the vision of Falcon Transportation owner Bruce Sargent and colleagues, which is another element in the redevelopment of the former Loring Air Force Base.

Sargent and Pelkey have broken ground on the 80,000-square-foot Taste of Maine facility, with plans to open the plant in fall 2025. Taste of Maine will employ 75 people at the start of production in 2025 but eventually expand to 100 employees. They also want to construct a \$2.5 million solar garden adjacent to the production plant

“Bruce and I have been talking about building a potato chip factory for eight years and last year we decided to look around the community,” Pelkey said. “We’ve been working with the town of Limestone and Loring and are very excited about this facility.”

“I have always wanted to do something in agriculture. I farmed

for several years before starting Falcon Trucking [now Falcon Transportation],” Sargent said. “We think this plant will be good for the region.”

The 80,000-square-foot plant will be built at 250 Northcutt Road, not far from the main entrance to Loring near West Gate Road. The 30-acre site is the former home of the Damon and Corey Schools that taught children of Air Force service members.

Jonathan Judkins, Loring Development Authority’s President, and CEO, said that “Taste of Maine fits with Loring’s vision for attracting new “value added” agricultural facilities and will be in a prime location on the campus. We identified this piece of land as ideal for manufacturing,”

At a recent groundbreaking ceremony at the plant site, Sargent said “the plant will produce kettle chips made from locally sourced russet and round white potatoes. Bags will include a Taste of Maine logo. “In the first year, we hope to utilize 1,500 acres of potatoes to start and eventually get close to 3,000 acres. We have already talked with several local farmers and will see what they are looking at for a crop in spring 2025.”

“Mapleton-based Buck Construction is serving as the project engineers while a potato chip plant developer from Idaho will oversee the project and contribute his expertise. A solar farm will be constructed nearby and allow the plant to function solely on green energy, Sargent said.

DG Fuels

DG Fuels LLC (DGF), which is based in Washington, D.C., signed an agreement last winter with the Loring Development Authority for a long-term lease of 1,240 acres at the Loring Commerce Centre.

DGF is working collaboratively with the Loring Development Authority of Maine (LDA) and Green 4 Maine, LLC, towards developing the 175 million gallon per year sustainable jet fuel project at Loring; first announced in November 2022. DGF will be building a low-CO2 life cycle emissions synthetic fuel system based on high carbon conversion technology that is targeting a 97% efficiency. The DGF's technology does not require the development of new engines or types of distribution infrastructure. DGF's innovative technology produces hydrogen via water electrolysis and biomass derived carbon replacement fuel for aircraft, and potentially for locomotives, vessels and trucks as well.

Michael Darcy, the chief executive officer of DGF, reports that considerable progress has been made in various aspects of the project including identifying sources of large quantities of clean electricity needed to power the refining process, and engaging the engineering firms of Black and Veatch and Haley Ward to design the site layout and handle environmental issues and permitting. Efforts are also underway to secure wood waste and biomass needed for the plant's feedstock. The Maine Department of Transportation has been involved in identifying the means by which rail lines in northern Maine can be

returned to service and used to transport the raw biomass product to the plant site. Discussions are also underway with Loring Holdings to utilize a pipeline corridor to bring the finished Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) to Searsport where it would be loaded onto tankers for distribution at airports on the east coast of the United States.

The project is estimated to create about 650 permanent full-time jobs and will run on a 24/7 schedule. The project will also create as many as 2,300 construction jobs. DGF is also working with Green 4 Maine to renovate housing at Loring which will help to support the project workforce during both the construction and operational phases.

For additional information:
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website www.DGFuels.com

Plans call for breaking ground in 2025, pending the company lining up financing in time. The site could open as soon as 2027. In addition to 650 permanent jobs, DG Fuels said construction of a production site would create 2,300 jobs.

"This exciting project will support efforts by the Mills Administration to revitalize the former Loring Air Force Base and bring new good-paying job opportunities to Aroostook County. We look forward to working closely with DG Fuels as this project continues to take shape," said Heather Johnson, commissioner of the Maine Department of Economic & Community Development.

DG Fuels will be creating a production site for synthetic jet fuel, which it sees as a more sustainable long-term option for commercial airlines than petroleum-based fuel. The company describes itself as an “emerging leader in drop-in sustainable aviation fuel” and says the Aroostook site would create up to 175 million gallons per year.

“This kind of investment is key to the Loring Development Authority’s strategy to innovate and promote economic development of Loring as a green energy hub for Maine as well as develop the airport for renewed operations.” said Carl W. Flora, president and CEO, Loring Development Authority of Maine.

The company said northern Maine provides “key logistical and environmental advantages,” with availability of stranded hydroelectric power, regional timber, and agricultural waste.

“DG Fuels’ base line process differs from other systems by having little or no environmental emissions either to the atmosphere or waters while at the same time providing a customer for all forms of agricultural waste to the region’s agricultural community alongside waste from the timber industry.” said Michael C. Darcy, CEO of DG Fuels.

Green 4 Maine

Green 4 Maine acquired nearly 400 acres of land and buildings at Loring in late January, 2023. On July 1, 2023, G4M hosted an open house and fly-in to showcase Loring’s facilities and to celebrate on-going progress. The open house featured a ribbon cutting by Bob Cleaves, President of BD Solar which has

commenced construction of Loring’s third solar project. Multiple aircraft landed and people in attendance enjoyed a pancake breakfast at the Arch Hangar followed by facility tours. G4M has made progress in achieving its vision for a Green 4 Maine campus at the Loring Commerce Centre. In addition to the BD Solar project, they include a lease to “Fork in the Road, LLC”, a new food truck service to be operated and stored at a Loring facility; a new lease with Eternal Mind, Inc., for data center operations; a lease of the former Gas Station to Chris King and group which will open a snowmobile, ATV and auto repair shop and will serve local snowmobile and ATV clubs in the area; and a lease extension with Novel Energy, which is constructing and operating numerous solar sites throughout Maine.

The Green 4 Maine mission proposes to be interwoven into the Loring Commerce Centre strategic plan to provide future jobs and economic vitality for the entire region. G4M has also begun to hold meetings with officials from the Town of Limestone and is building relationships throughout Aroostook County.

Visit www.Green4Maine.com for more details and for future announcements.

SPX Aids to Navigation Tilton

Last summer, SPX Aids to Navigation Tilton leased space in two buildings at Loring’s airport. Aligning with their commitment to cutting-edge technologies and dedication to safety and quality assurance, the spaces have been acquired to support a testing program to evaluate the performance of airfield

lighting systems the company is developing. Avlite Systems, part of SPX Aids to Navigation family and based in Tilton, New Hampshire, is a technology leader in the design and production of innovative airfield lighting equipment.

Their popular products include but are not limited to Runway Lights, Airfield Lighting/Airport Lighting, Approach Lights, Helipad Lighting, Monitoring and Control Systems for Airfields and Helipads, PAPI Lights, REIL Lights, Solar Power Systems tailored for Aviation, and a comprehensive selection of Aviation Lighting accessories. The company is a manufacturer with a proven reputation for aviation lighting systems specifically designed for defense, government, civil, and humanitarian aid operations in the most remote, toughest environments. Among the lighting equipment tested at Loring this year include runway and taxiway edge lights, end lights, and approach lights specifically designed for an expeditionary airfield lighting solution.

The Loring project was a huge success for them and we hope to see them back again soon.

SPECIAL EVENTS AT LORING

With Loring's vast footprint, the LDA has hosted numerous events on its property, ranging from open houses hosting legacy Air Force (B 52's, KC 135's), and civilian aircraft; time trials on its runways and taxiways, and music concerts. Following are brief descriptions of a couple of the most recent events held at Loring. If there is an event you are planning, please contact Jjudkins@loring.org.

Loring Open House 2024

The Loring Air Museum hosted an open house on the Loring airport the weekend of August 2-4, to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the closure of the Loring Air Force base. The event kicked-off of the event started with an opening of the Museum. At 1 o'clock in the afternoon, Peter Noden presented the deadliest crash at Loring in 1958. In the evening a really big concert on the runway was held and well attended with 2 bands a beer garden and food.

On Saturday we opened up and there was a dedication of Major Charles J. Loring Jr., for his medal given in July by South Korea, the Order of Military Merit the nation's highest award. We had many vendors, authors, and crafters on site. A B52 was on site all weekend from the former 69th Bomb Squadron at Loring and now stationed in Minot ND. A KC-135 from Bangor flew over at 2pm to the crowd's delight. The driveway of the museum was full almost all day. That evening a dinner was held at the Caribou Inn and convention center by 178 people.

On Sunday we had a bus and driving tour to the weapon storage area by JC Garbinski that was well attended. And we closed at 1 o'clock. We followed the closing with an event for the committee, a few friends, and the crew of the B52 and the 42nd from Maxwell AFB.

Overall, everyone had a great time and we estimate the crowds at about 8500.

Spud Speedway Concert – ARCH Hangar

On August 9th and 10th Spud Speedway held the “Bike Bowl Hangar Party” in the ARCH Hangar, featuring seven bands, food trucks and other entertainment events.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Loring has several pending wastewater collection systems, road improvement and building demolition projects in the works. Upgrades to infrastructure including water, sewer, and roadways are necessary to support new and existing economic activity at the Commerce Centre. Roadway improvements will assist the movement of employees, goods, services and facilitate commercial activity. The LDA has been awarded over \$4 million in Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) grants for this work, which has commenced. In addition, the Senate Appropriations Committee has recently recommended \$2 Million in the 2025 budget for improvements to the Arch Hangar, which is critically important to the future of the aviation complex.

Wastewater System Improvements

Over a decade ago, the Greater Limestone Wastewater Treatment Facility was completed and began for the first time to treat the combined wastewater of Limestone and Loring. Prior to that time, Limestone had completed, and LDA had started, projects to replace sewer lines to address “Infiltration and Inflow” (I & I) issues, which refers to water entering the sewer collection system either through roof or floor drains or from cracks in

old sewer pipes that admit groundwater. I & I is not wastewater to begin with and would not have to be treated if it can be kept out of the system. To that end, sewer lines must be replaced, or sleeved, and drains must be disconnected from the system. Unused portions of the system can also be disconnected.

In 2006, LDA completed a flow monitoring study that recommended a ten-phase plan to replace sections of the sewer collection system to reduce I & I into the collection system and at the wastewater treatment plant. Over the past 15 years, LDA has completed the first four phases of work totaling over \$2.9 million. Now, Loring is preparing to complete the work. The new project is expected to be supported by various funding sources including a CDBG public infrastructure grant, a Maine DEP wastewater infrastructure grant together with funding from the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund - with principal forgiveness; a grant through the Northern Border Regional Commission and a Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) request. These funding sources will allow for the completion of the remaining six phases of work consisting of replacing nearly 20,000 feet of gravity sewer and manholes with PVC sewer and precast concrete manholes.

Reducing flows to the treatment plant will reduce our costs for wastewater treatment services provided by the Limestone Water & Sewer District (LWSD). It will also help LWSD with achieving 85% removal of biological contaminants (“BOD”) during wet weather events

as required by regulation and will minimize the chance of discharging untreated wastewater to the environment. As in the past, the CDBG portion of the funding has been granted to the Town of Limestone; Limestone is a conduit to the CDBG funding for LDA. The CDS funds will be used to continue this work.

Roads and Demolition

LDA's plan is to use the CDS funds for repairing and reconfiguring roads from 4 lanes to 2 lanes, and to complete demolition of several unusable structures. Reduction of roadway width from 4 to 2 lanes in many places will reduce the cost of plowing and maintenance. Removal of substandard structures will address blighted conditions and make the park more attractive to new businesses.

Manser Drive Project

Things are progressing smoothly with the conclusion of the Inlands Winds operation in June and the transition to a new property manager, JAKS Property Management, taking over all master tent landlord responsibilities starting July 1.

PLANNING PROJECTS NEARING COMPLETION - REGIONAL ECONOMIC DIVERSIFICATION

In 2022, The LDA was awarded a \$740,664.00 grant from the Department of Defense to secure funding to develop a Regional Economic Diversification Strategy, aimed at reducing the Region's reliance on defense jobs by expanding the Region's employment base. This strategy includes broad-based regional workforce, aviation,

and energy assessments. As part of this overall strategic planning effort, the LDA is completing two planning efforts aimed at growing aerospace opportunities and securing energy resiliency at the Loring Commerce Centre, as well as gain a better understanding of the workforce skills at the DFAS facility and how best to support their future workforce needs.

Airport Master Plan - Loring AeroSpace Port

The Loring Development Authority (LDA), with the help of DuBois & King, has prepared a new Airport Master Plan for the Loring Airport for inclusion into the FAA's National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems, for operation as a public airport facility. With the initiation of the new airport master plan, the former Loring Air Force Base, now known as the Loring AeroSpace Port, is preparing for an exciting future as a major element of Maine's forward-looking aviation infrastructure.

The original Reuse Plan from 1995 evaluated Loring's aviation assets and subsequent Strategic Planning efforts in 2019 and 2021 identified aviation as a promising long-term development opportunity. In particular, Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) of large aircraft, air cargo, testing and development of new aircraft and aircraft systems including unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) Urban Air Mobility and other autonomous aerial vehicles, and various roles in the emerging space industry including a Spaceport, are all promising growth sectors for Loring and Maine.

In addition to large aircraft maintenance and air cargo operations, Loring is particularly suited to support the next generation of autonomous system and new space industries for:

- Testing and development of Unmanned Aircraft Systems and Urban Air Mobility vehicles;
- Testing and development of autonomous land vehicles;
- Testing and development of Beyond Visual Line of Sight (BVLOS) technologies in non-urban environments, remote identification, drone detection, collision avoidance and the Unmanned Traffic Management (UTM) system; and
- Testing, development and operation of horizontal launch and recovery, and management of low orbit space systems.

Located in northern Maine, Loring's proximity to northeastern United States and eastern Canadian markets, as well as the European markets, presents a strategic advantageous location and unique launching point for globally based new-aged aerospace businesses, as well as defense-oriented operations. With its significant assets, this vast aviation complex is ideally suited to support the next generation of aviation activities. Loring's major assets to support these industries include:

- a 12,100 x 300-foot main runway with additional 1,000-foot overruns on each end;
- a 12,100 x 200-foot parallel secondary runway/taxiway;
- a 126,000 (approx.) SF Arch Hangar capable of

accommodating wide body aircraft;

- a 194,000 (approx.) SF DC Hangar;
- a 41,000 (approx.) SF hangar;
- a 22,000 (approx.) SF Alert Hangar consisting of 2 hangar bays;
- a 38,000 (approx.) SF jet engine repair facility;
- a jet engine test cell and sound suppressor;
- control tower and lighting vault;
- numerous buildings for manufacturing and aviation support businesses;
- hundreds of acres of ramp space and a parallel taxiway; and
- uncluttered airspace.

The Loring airfield (ME16) has operated since 1997 as a private airport with landings by prior permission, by the LDA. Since its closure, Loring has been utilized by a number of aviation companies, including one developing and testing an unmanned airship for persistent surveillance, and an aircraft MRO, storage, tear-down and parting-out operation. In addition, over the years, the airport has hosted several annual aviation fly-ins and other special events, such as concerts and speed trials. In 2022, ME16 was visited by an active-duty B-52 during its Fly-in and open house.

In addition to Loring, the Central Aroostook region is served by Presque Isle International Airport (KPQI) and Caribou Municipal Airport (KCAR), with each supporting different aviation niches. Presque Isle is served by scheduled airlines with multiple flights daily, and some small private aircraft and business jets are based there. Small

privately-owned aircraft are based at Caribou as well. These surrounding communities are supportive of Loring revitalizing its aviation facilities because of the broader economic impact that it would create to support the growth of significant aviation and aerospace industries in the area, while maintaining and strengthening their individual niche markets.

For additional information about the airport master planning process and aviation opportunities at this amazing asset, please go to loringcommercecentre.com or email stevel@loringcommercecentre.com.

Energy Resiliency Study

The Energy Capacity/Needs Assessment and Resiliency Plan will forecast the future energy needs of the Loring Commerce Center campus and evaluate the level, capacity and improvements needed in this critical infrastructure to support growth. The Plan will also recommend needed improvements to allow for the Loring campus to enhance energy resiliency with a focus of long-term "behind the fence" sustainability, (e.g., becoming a self-sustaining energy island). The benefits anticipated for this project element will help set the stage for the creation of new investments on the campus and additional job creation in the energy sector. An added benefit from these investments will provide for energy resiliency and long-term security for businesses at the Loring campus. Requests for proposals for this project will be issued in the near future.

Workforce Skills Assessment

While a substantial amount of work has been done in recent years to understand the workforce dynamics of the region, the LDA, working with

the Northern Maine Development Commission will assess the skills of the 600 employees of DFAS and Loring. This effort will give a clear understanding of how to best to support DFAS's future workforce needs and help build a resilient workforce for the Region.

MARKETING EFFORTS CONTINUE

In 2022, the Maine State Legislature appropriated \$200,000 in Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 to the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to oversee a business development and marketing program with the primary objective to attract new business investment and to bring quality jobs and improved economic vitality to the Loring Commerce Centre and region and generate much needed new revenue for the LDA. A two-year contract was awarded on June 1, 2022. Given the progress that has been made, the State and SHL has agreed to extend the contract thru May of 2025.

Following the State procurement process, SHL Enterprise Solutions (SHL), a Greenville-based economic development consulting firm, was identified as the winning bidder. SHL's principal is Steve Levesque, who most recently led the successful redevelopment of the former Brunswick Naval Air Station.

For this project, the SHL team is accompanied by Designlab, a full-service graphic design and marketing agency based in Millinocket and other specialists, as needed.

Through increased brand awareness and implementation of a robust and focused national and international business marketing strategy, this work will focus on attracting the

following primary business sectors: transportation equipment, agricultural products, wood products, aerospace industries and energy operations. These sectors were identified in the sustainability plan as likely to succeed in the area.

Activities to Date

- Redesigned the Loring Commerce Centre website. The new website is: loringcommercecentre.com.
- Established and maintain active social media presence on Facebook and LinkedIn.
- Developed six target-sector “Pitch sheets” and other presentation materials and distributed to a growing mailing list (currently over 1,000 contacts) of UAS and commercial aircraft manufacturers, MRO and R&D companies, machine technology companies, and agricultural and forestry equipment manufacturing companies; and
- Attended fourteen trade shows and conferences for targeted industries.

Future Focus

The major foci of SHL's marketing and business development efforts in the near future to promote The Loring Commerce Centre will be to:

- Continue to work with strategic business partners;
- Identify and attract supportive supply chain business that complement the DG Fuels project;
- Continue to aggressively market and promote the Loring aviation complex for aerospace industries, including large aircraft maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO), Air Cargo, research & development, unmanned aerial

systems (UAS) development and operations, and spaceport operations;

- Continue to attend strategic trade shows and industry events;
- Assist in training new LDA personnel;
- Assist in implementing the airport master plan, energy initiative and workforce development program;
- Work collaboratively with Green 4 Maine on their Parcel 1 marketing efforts; and
- Work collaboratively with the Maine Space Corporation to promote Loring as an integral element of the future Maine Spaceport Complex.

Foreign Trade Zone Designation

The LDA is working with SHL and C3 Associates to prepare an application to the US Foreign Trade Zone Board to develop a new US Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ) at the Loring Commerce Centre. Given its strategic business location, it makes a great deal of sense for the Commerce Centre to have its own FTZ with a Grantee that aids in future business development efforts. FTZs are excellent resources that attract domestic and international distribution and manufacturing companies, supplying the benefits needed to make these companies competitive from the start.

Geographically, Limestone is far from any existing zone; additionally, there is no incentive for any other Foreign Trade Zone in Maine to promote growth in an area outside of their responsibility as an economic development organization.

Air Force PFAS Study Ongoing

The US Air Force is in the process of conducting further “remedial investigations” into the PFAS issue at

Loring. Looking into the application of Aqueous Film Forming Foams, “AFFF”, and assessing the potential ecological and human health risks is the latest phase in the Air Force’s investigation into PFAS contamination and will include multiple informational public meetings during the study period. AFFF was used at Loring to put out aircraft fires on the runway and conduct training.

In a recent Air Force presentation to the LDA Trustees, the initial site inspection was completed in 2018, confirming PFAS presence in eighteen areas, primarily where the firefighting foam was used and stored. This investigation concluded that groundwater at and around Loring does not exceed EPA health advisory guidelines. The level of contamination and the type of remediation needed will be determined in the remedial investigation, which is ongoing. Following this work, appropriate

remedies will be accomplished by the Air Force to mitigate any public exposure. It is important to note that the US Government, through the Air Force is the primary liable party for any preexisting contamination at Loring, and there is an indemnification statute in place for transferees and subsequent transferees of military properties.

PFAS is being investigated in many Maine communities and is becoming better known. The US Navy has been conducting similar studies at the former NAS Brunswick and the Midcoast Regional Redevelopment Authority has been working with the Navy, the DEP, and local developers to manage development and ensure public health is protected. This example, as well as others around the country, clearly demonstrate that this issue is manageable and that economic growth can occur at Loring.

This newsletter is produced by SHL Enterprise Solutions, in collaboration with Designlab, Inc. Stay updated for current events by checking out the Loring Commerce Centre Facebook and LinkedIn pages and be sure to visit the website linked below. Comments may be sent to: Stevell@loringcommercecentre.com



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