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## NEWS RELEASE

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### UniverCity Grabs Two Awards in One Week for Innovative Approach to Sustainable Development

BURNABY – Over the past week the SFU Community Trust has been honoured not once but twice for UniverCity, the innovative residential community it is developing adjacent to Simon Fraser University (SFU) on Burnaby Mountain.

In two separate events, one in Ottawa and the other in Dongguan, China, UniverCity was awarded for initiatives that address affordable housing in the Vancouver area, as well as for the overall planning and execution of UniverCity as a model of sustainable community building.

“We are extremely proud to see UniverCity recognized like this at both the national and international levels” said Gordon Harris, President and CEO of the SFU Community Trust. “To receive two awards in one week says a great deal about the innovative work being undertaken at UniverCity.”

The award-winning week began on November 3<sup>rd</sup> when UniverCity received a 2008 Best Practices in Affordable Housing award from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) for the 60-unit Verdant at UniverCity residential project. This national award honours several innovative projects that are finding new ways to address housing affordability in Canada.

The Verdant project was bestowed an award based on its innovative ownership model that sets housing costs at 20% below market levels in perpetuity. This unique project was developed through a partnership between UniverCity, Vancity Enterprises and reSource Rethinking Building as a means to provide more affordable housing for SFU faculty and staff, and is also one of the most energy-efficient residential buildings in Canada.

According to CMHC President Karen Kinsley, “this year’s CMHC Housing Award winners showcase the incredibly rich source of housing knowledge and innovation in Canada that has helped create and revitalize communities from coast to coast. These winners have championed solutions that work for communities and families across the country.”

The winning continued on November 10<sup>th</sup>, when UniverCity was honoured with a Gold Award, and third place ranking overall in the Sustainable Projects Category at the 2008 LivCom Awards. The

LivCom Awards, presented this year in Dongguan, China, are an international initiative backed by the United Nations Environment Programme to honour global innovation in sustainable community building.

UniverCity placed well in these awards based on an assessment of all of its past initiatives as well as on its plans for future development. The community's innovative stormwater management system, comprehensive green building guidelines, and first-in-Canada Community Transit Pass program all helped UniverCity beat out competitors from countries such as Japan, the United Kingdom, Poland, the Czech Republic, South Africa, and China.

This year's awards saw more than 280 submissions from cities all over the globe. A list of 50 finalists were then invited to present to a panel of international judges assessing six evaluation criteria; Enhancement of the Landscape, Heritage Management, Environmentally Sensitive Practices, Community Sustainability, Healthy Lifestyles and Planning for the Future.

Commenting on the success of this year's event, Claudette Savaria, the chair of the LivCom judging panel said: "The standard of presentations and work being done to tackle the major issues we all face is reaching new heights. [Nominees] are becoming increasingly well organised in the way they approach environmental problems and many are showing an important lead that others can adapt to their own circumstances and follow."

"In this era of uncertainty in the real estate market this kind of recognition becomes quite important," added UniverCity's Gordon Harris. "It gives a sense of certainty to residents and developers that UniverCity is and will continue to be an extremely attractive and livable community in which to buy and invest."

## **ABOUT UNIVERCITY**

UniverCity on Burnaby Mountain is a model sustainable community neighbouring one of Canada's premier educational institutions, Simon Fraser University (SFU) in Burnaby, British Columbia.

Developed through a collaborative and integrated planning process, UniverCity is designed to be a compact, mixed-use and transit-oriented community founded on our Four Cornerstones of Sustainability: Equity, Economy, Education and Environment.

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