Our New Directions Ecosystem Services Energy, Industry and Technology Urban Ecology Leadership and Civic Engagement

Oregon to develop first-of-its-kind "living building" to extend region's sustainability strengths, leadership

PORTLAND, January 5, 2008 – A new public-private collaboration is poised to leverage Portland's and Oregon's "green" reputation and practice through the development of an **Oregon Sustainability Center**, an effort announced today by Governor Ted Kulongoski and Portland Mayor Sam Adams. The Center, which will be housed in a "living" and self-sustaining green building, is expected to become the city's and state's front door to sustainable business practices, university research and education, environmental and energy policy, workforce development, and innovative government programs.

"The Center has the potential to advance Oregon's position as a global leader in sustainability," Governor Kulongoski said. "It will be a place where Oregonians and visitors can seek inspiration and practical solutions when making green, sustainable investments in their homes and businesses. It will also be a hub where governments and nonprofits come together to formulate new sustainability policies, infrastructure investments, and gain a better understanding of the needs in the marketplace and within Oregon's population."

To kick off the development and design of the Oregon Sustainability Center, the Portland Development Commission and the Oregon University System today issued a request for proposals to complete a feasibility study, funded by the PDC, on the design, engineering and financial feasibility of construction of a living building. Bruce Warner, PDC executive director, says, "Our investment and involvement in building a permanent Oregon Sustainability Center are consistent with our strategic focus on promoting local and regional green businesses, entrepreneurs and innovators with the goal of creating more jobs for Portland."

Included in the Governor's Recommended Budget for 2009-11 is a total of \$80 million of bonding authority for the Center, which will be considered by the Oregon Legislature in the upcoming 2009 legislative session. It is expected that other potential funding will be contributed by the City of Portland, nonprofits, and private businesses. The PDC owns the building site, located in the downtown University District at the junction of S.W. 5th and Montgomery streets. The site is located at the confluence of the Max light rail extension, the Portland Streetcar, and primary TriMet bus routes, providing easy access for local and out-of-state visitors to access the services and innovations housed within the Center. If approved and funded, the Center is expected to begin construction as early as this year, helping to provide economic stimulus and jobs for the city and state, both through the construction project itself, as well as by placing Oregon at the forefront of a new green economy movement.

"Portland and the state of Oregon helped create the global sustainability movement," said Mayor Adams. "Moving forward with the feasibility study for the Center is the first step we are taking to leverage our leadership and competitive advantage in sustainability. We are developing an ambitious strategy to accelerate green collar job creation and innovative best practices that can be scaled up to meet the environmental and social challenges facing cities throughout the world. I am committed to Portland leading the way."

The Center effort would be the first of its kind both nationally and internationally to develop this type of sustainability-focused effort working with such diverse partners across the public, private, nonprofit, and education sectors. The Oregon Sustainability Center is a publicly-led effort whose partners include the Oregon University System (OUS), the City of Portland, the Portland Development Commission (PDC), the Living Building Initiative, and Portland+Oregon Sustainability Institute, a new organization that is being created to govern the Center and facilitate collaboration among partners.

Also notable for the Center is its aim to be the first large scale building to achieve the Cascadia Region Green Building Council's 'Living Building Challenge,' the most rigorous global green building standards. The Living Building Challenge was developed to challenge builders, owners, architects, engineers, and design professionals to build environmentally sound and self-sustaining buildings. There are specific requirements that living buildings must meet in the Challenge including: (1) generates all of its own energy with renewable resources; (2) captures and treats all of its water on site; and (3) uses resources efficiently and for maximum beauty (see www.livingbuilding.org).

Speaking on behalf of the Living Building Initiative, Andrea Durbin, executive director for Oregon Environmental Council, said, "This project has the potential to be a game changer for what we expect from buildings today and in the future. Oregon should be the first state in the nation to build a regenerative living building, and demonstrate to the rest of the country Oregon's sustainability know-how and expertise for building and living green."

The Living Building Initiative is a consortium of nonprofits and businesses committed to sustainability issues and protection of natural resources, land use and public health in Oregon. LBI organizations include: Oregon Environmental Council; Earth Advantage; Green Building Services; Energy Trust of Oregon; Oregon League of Conservation Voters Education Fund; Portland Energy Conservation, Inc (PECI); Conservation Services Group; 1000 Friends of Oregon; Coalition for a Livable Future; Oregon Natural Step Network; Bus Project; Friends of the Columbia Gorge; Portland Audubon (for retail only); River Network; Technical Assistance Community Services (TACS); Community Health Partnership; Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force.

The Portland Development Commission was created by Portland voters in 1958 to serve as the city's urban renewal agency as laid out in Chapter 15 of the City's Charter. PDC's mission is to bring together resources to achieve Portland's vision of a diverse, sustainable community with healthy neighborhoods, a vibrant central city, a strong regional economy, and quality jobs and housing for all.

1 of 2 12/17/2009 4:57 PM

Oregon to develop first-of-its-kind "living building" to extend region's sus... http://www.bullitt.org/news/oregon-to-develop-first-of-its-kind-201clivi...

 $Oregon\ University\ System\ (OUS)\ comprises\ seven\ distinguished\ public\ universities,\ reaching\ more\ than\ one\ million\ people\ each\ year\ through\ on-campus\ classes,\ statewide\ public\ services,\ research,\ and\ lifelong\ learning.\ For\ additional\ information,\ go\ to\ www.ous.edu$

2 of 2