



The Home Depot Foundation Announces Winners of Awards of Excellence for Sustainable Community Development

ATLANTA, December 9, 2009 — Today, The Home Depot® Foundation awarded its first Awards of Excellence for Sustainable Community Development to Minneapolis, MN and its nonprofit partner Aeon and to North Charleston, SC and its nonprofit partner The Sustainability Institute. These awards recognize and showcase innovative projects completed by these cities and their nonprofit partner organizations exhibiting thoughtful construction of green affordable housing in a sustainable community. The winning nonprofit organizations received a total of \$150,000 to further the sustainability goals of their communities.

“Many cities across the country are finding successful ways of dealing with the financial, social and environmental issues facing them through thoughtful design, land use and building, resulting in the construction of healthy, safe neighborhoods that families can afford to live in over the long term,” said Kelly Caffarelli, president of The Home Depot Foundation. “We hope that identifying, recognizing and showcasing these success stories will offer insight, inspiration and a roadmap for other cities to follow as they develop and implement sustainability plans for their communities.”

Drawn from projects submitted by cities across the country, the award recipients were selected based on a number of criteria, including comprehensive sustainability, environmental sustainability and green infrastructure, as well as how well they met the needs of the local community while maintaining affordability for the residents. An advisory committee of experts from a variety of organizations representing a diversity of interests including municipalities, affordable housing, community development, building sciences and the environment participated in the selection process. The committee included representatives of 360GREEN, Inc., Global Green USA, Enterprise Community Partners, Inc., Forest Stewardship Council-US, Housing Assistance Council, Jay Hall and Associates, Inc., Mercy Housing Lakefront, Southface, US Green Building Council, The Noisette Company, LLC, City of Atlanta Office of Sustainability, National League of Cities, and the Madison Area Community Land Trust.

Winner Descriptions

Minneapolis, MN and Aeon:

- The City of Minneapolis has titled its Comprehensive Plan as “The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth,” making it clear that sustainability will be considered with all decisions, not as an afterthought. The plan includes green policies and implementation guidelines that are incorporated when managing a particular issue, such as land use, housing or transportation.
- The city has also established 25 sustainability indicators to track its progress, each with specific targets and incentives for achieving those targets. Key elements of the sustainability plan include: reducing the carbon footprint by 12% by 2012; cleaning up 100 brownfield sites from 2004 to 2014; ending homelessness by 2016; and increasing the percentage of people who enter the city via alternative transportation (bus, light rail, bicycle, walking, carpooling) from 55% in 2003 to 67% in 2013.
- Minneapolis’ Ripley Gardens, developed by Aeon, was recognized as a best-in-class example of the successful completion of a sustainable community. Using the historic Ripley Memorial Hospital and planning to add three additional buildings, the project team created plans for a residential development focused on historic preservation, energy efficiency and sustainability. The site is accessible to transit, jobs in the downtown area and bike trails and contains one acre of greenspace

that includes a playground and a community garden. The project boasts green and efficient building and maintenance practices and meets the MN Green Communities standards.

North Charleston, SC and The Sustainability Institute:

- In the early 2000's, North Charleston faced many challenges, including the closing of a major naval base. The city struggled as residents moved to the surrounding suburbs leaving vacant homes, a low home ownership rate and impoverished neighborhoods. In 2008, the city revised its Comprehensive Plan and included sustainability as a goal. The plan's key priorities included: reducing blight and the amount of abandoned properties; reducing stormwater runoff and non-point source pollution; promoting ecological awareness; providing a safe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists; increasing the amount of active and passive park space; and providing education and training for residents to create workforce skills to support new business and industry.
- Oak Terrace Preserve is a role model for the successful completion of a sustainable community. Originally built as temporary housing for World War II shipyard workers, Oak Terrace Preserve was a vibrant community. By 2000, the homes were in major disrepair and the area was not healthy to live in. The city purchased the land, with a vision to transform it into a sustainable, attractive community. Today, it exemplifies best practices in housing, natural resources and land use and development. It includes bioswales, rain gardens, pervious paving in alleys and "flexi-pave" sidewalks. The community layout encourages community interactions and all 55 homes on the property achieved EarthCraft certification.

Full case studies and videos on each winner are available at www.homedepotfoundation.org.

About The Home Depot Foundation

The Home Depot Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization that was established in 2002 to further the community building goals of The Home Depot by providing additional resources to assist nonprofit organizations.

The Foundation is dedicated to building affordable homes for working families that are healthy to live in and affordable to own. To make homes healthy and affordable, the Foundation encourages developers to incorporate responsible design and use durable and quality materials to ensure that homes are more energy and water efficient, have good indoor air quality, and provide a safe and healthy space to live. Since its formation, The Home Depot Foundation has granted \$120 million to nonprofit organizations and supported the development of more than 65,000 affordable, healthy homes.

While focused on building affordable homes, The Home Depot Foundation is also committed to improving the overall health of our communities. Taking a long-term, comprehensive approach to building healthy, stable communities where families can thrive, the Foundation invests in the planting and restoration of trees along streets, in parks and in schoolyards; the building and refurbishment of community play spaces; and the revitalization of school facilities.

###

For more information, please contact:

Paula Drake
The Home Depot
770-384-3439
paula_drake@homedepot.com

Catherine H. Woodling
The Home Depot Foundation
(770) 384-2304
catherine_woodling@homedepot.com

Twitter: @HomeDepotFdn
YouTube: youtube.com/homedepot
Blog: www.homedepotfoundation.org/blog/