



## Innovative City Building Recognized for Excellence Once Again

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For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC – Once again the Burnside Gorge Community Centre has been recognized for excellence. At a recent awards ceremony in Whistler, the facility won the *2009 BC Recreation and Parks Association Facility Excellence Award* for its innovative, sustainable design, operation, and overall contribution to the community. The City of Victoria owns and maintains the building, which is operated by the Burnside Gorge Community Association, a local not-for-profit organization.

The Centre has also been awarded the 2009 Award of Excellence for Extensive Institutional Green Roofs in North America by Green Roofs for Healthy Cities, as well as the Victoria Real Estate Board's Green Building Award (Commercial Building category) in recognition for its many achievements in sustainable design.

"The Burnside Gorge Community Centre is visionary and resets the bar for truly sustainable, civic facilities," said Mayor Dean Fortin. "This healthy, green building is helping revitalize a community."

The 15,113 square foot facility opened in September 2007, replacing three older buildings. The synergy of having all programs and services located together in one building has resulted in the creation of a gathering place which is the centre piece of the community.

"The Centre represents a bright future for all who live and work in the neighbourhood," said Suzanne Cole, Executive Director of the Burnside Gorge Community Association. "On behalf of our Board of Directors, I want to thank the community, who for close to two decades, rallied to raise funds for this valuable resource."

Over \$1.1 million was raised through extensive community fundraising efforts by the Burnside Gorge Community Association for building construction, equipment and furnishings. The project was made possible through the Canada-BC Infrastructure Program, which included a City of Victoria contribution of almost \$2.5 million, and contributions of \$1 million from both the Federal and Provincial Governments.

The Centre's programs represent a vital lifeline to housing, education, childcare, counselling, recreation and friendship. The facility features a state-of-the-art youth drop-in centre complete with an Internet breakfast bar, mini-movie style theatre and a Dance, Dance Revolution system; a large family centre where parents can socialize comfortably while their children play; an activity centre large enough to hold exercise classes and banquets; a childcare centre with a fenced outdoor play area; and a community kitchen that serves all the facility's programs.

Project Architect Shiv Garyali and his Associates, Nick Fiocco and John Armitage, came up with the idea to set the facility on what had been considered an unusable slope in the Cecelia Creek ravine and to develop a building design that reflected the curved shape and contours of the land and creek. Their innovative architecture and sustainable design for the Centre were recently featured in the cover story of *Architecture BC*, a journal published by the Architectural Institute of British Columbia (AIBC).

“The project team worked hard to ensure the Centre’s spaces were inviting, durable and designed to meet community and program needs, while ensuring green building standards for construction and operation,” said Shiv Garyali of Garyali Architect Inc.

Green building initiatives were used extensively to reduce the amount of energy, water and materials required to construct and operate the building. Energy efficient heating, ventilation and lighting systems save 55% more energy than the minimum national requirement for energy efficiency in new buildings. Low-flow faucets and toilets, motion controlled office lighting, low emission paints, sealants and flooring, and a green cleaning program have all served to reduce the buildings impact on the environment and have substantial long term savings in operational costs.

Planted with native, drought resistant plants, the Centre’s roof is one of the largest publicly accessible green roofs in Western Canada and is considered a partial restoration of an endangered Garry Oak ecosystem. In addition, the parking lot’s open-grid paving system and other storm water treatment measures ensure that all storm water for the building is treated and absorbed onsite, protecting the integrity of Cecelia Creek.

The BC Recreation and Parks Association is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to building and sustaining healthy active lifestyles and communities in British Columbia. Its annual provincial awards ceremony recognizes a number of individuals and organizations for their outstanding contributions to the field of parks, recreation, physical activity and culture. For more information, visit: [www.bcrpa.bc.ca](http://www.bcrpa.bc.ca)

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**For More Information:**

Katie Josephson  
Director of Corporate Communications  
Office: 250.361.0210  
Cellular: 250.217.8343

Suzanne Cole  
Executive Director  
Burnside Gorge Community Association  
250.388.5251

Shiv Garyali  
Garyali Architect Inc.  
250.388.7371