

## Green principles abound at Whistler Athlete Village

The Olympic and Paralympic Village isn't your average place to bunk, it's actually a model of sustainable living for athletes and officials during the 2010 Winter Games and will be for Whistler residents for years to come.

The village was built to green building standards, using smart growth principles and with the goal of meeting Gold Level certification under LEED ND (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design – for Neighbourhood Development). The LEED-ND rating system integrates the principles of smart growth, urbanism, and green building into the first international standard for neighborhood design.

In order to achieve LEED status, the neighbourhood needed to be a showcase of sustainable design and development practices. So far, the project meets and exceeds those standards.

Everything from the largest component to the smallest detail was built with green building standards in mind. Organizers were guided by the Smart Growth Network's 10 principles of Smart Growth and the Charter for New Urbanism. When you stroll around the village, you will find compact design, proximity to transit, mixed use, mixed housing types and pedestrian and bicycle friendly design.

The site was once the municipal landfill but has been transformed into a "green" development using progressive initiatives. For example, the community's heat will be generated by effluent from the wastewater treatment plant located nearby. Heat exchangers transfer energy to a fluid, which will be pumped around the development through pipes. Individual homes will use heat pumps to produce space heating and hot water. Up to 90 per cent of the village's heating load will be provided from the system, which gives off non green house gas emissions.

So far, the project has garnered international recognition for its commitment to green practices. The District Energy System (DES) is one of the highest profile aspects of the athlete's village commitment to green design. The Resort Municipality of Whistler's waste management system earned the 2009 CAMA (Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators) Environmental Award as well as the 2008 Community Energy Association's Energy Action Award for Community Planning and Development.

"This is an innovative alternative energy system that effectively leverages all of the showers, toilets and hot water going into the sewers in Whistler," said Ted Battiston, Whistler Centre for Sustainability's Energy & Emissions Manager.

The village also manages its stormwater to maintain predevelopment flows and preserve or enhance existing wetlands in the area. Rain gardens reduce sediment and contaminant levels in the stormwater, and direct water flows away from the landfill to reducing leachate.

Homes were built to an EnerGuide rating of approximately 85 and will include low flow dual-flush toilets, low flow faucets, energy efficient fixtures, and dual pane windows. The floors will be made from recycled bamboo. Long-lasting materials will be used for the exteriors. To encourage sustainable forms of transportation, homes also include a one-car garage.

From bamboo floors to the LEED standards in the High Performance Centre, everywhere you look at the Olympic and Paralympic Village in Whistler, you will find something “green.”