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Vancity and Real Estate Foundation award first ever Green Building Grants

Vancouver, January 10, 2005 – Vancity Credit Union and the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia have awarded \$100,000 to recognize three diverse projects that encourage green building strategies and reduce the environmental impact of real estate development in BC.

Launched in June, the Green Building Grant program is a new initiative that provides one or more annual grants of up to \$50,000 to non-profit organizations for building renovations, retrofits and regulatory changes to support more environmentally friendly buildings.

This year's recipients include, the **Islands Trust Fund** for its rainwater catchment and utilization demonstration project on Salt Spring Island; **O.U.R. EcoVillage in Shawnigan Lake** for the greening of its climate change demonstration building; and the **Society Promoting Environmental Conservation in Vancouver** for its sustainable energy demonstration project.

"This new grant is a further extension of Vancity's long-standing commitment to environmental sustainability and finding solutions for climate change," says Vancity Board Chair Elain Duvall. "We're thrilled to support groups doing important work that will have a positive impact on our communities for generations to come."

Recently, Vancity was the first financial institution in Canada to join the Canada Green Building Council, an organization dedicated to the design and construction of green buildings.

The Real Estate Foundation supports sustainable real estate and land use practices. The Green Building Grant is part of the Foundation's ongoing work of enabling communities to make responsible decisions about the way they use land. In 2003 the Real Estate Foundation approved 103 grants totalling \$2.75 million. Since 1988 the Foundation has made over \$32 million in grants to non-profit organizations across the province.

Vancity is Canada's largest credit union, with \$9.3 billion in assets, 305,000 members, and 41 branches throughout Greater Vancouver, the Fraser Valley and Victoria. Vancity was chosen as the best place to work in Canada for 2005 by Maclean's Magazine as part of its annual Canada's Top 100 Employers issue. Vancity owns Citizens Bank of Canada, serving members across the country by telephone, ATM, and the Internet. Both Vancity and Citizens Bank are guided by a commitment to corporate social responsibility, and to improve the quality of life in the communities where we live and work.