

Contact:

Jean Walcher / Robert Arends
JWalcher Communications, 619-295-7140
jean@jwalcher.com / robert@jwalcher.com

SIERRA CLUB NAMES THE SOUTH GROUP'S PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT ONE OF AMERICA'S BEST

PORTLAND - December 21, 2005 – The South Group, a downtown Los Angeles collaboration between Portland's Gerding/Edlen Development Co. and Williams & Dame Development, is seeing "green" this holiday season thanks to a report just out by the Sierra Club, America's oldest and largest environmental organization.

The Sierra Club released its inaugural Guide to America's Best New Development Projects, naming a dozen cutting-edge projects that have positively transformed communities. Portland's Pearl District, an eclectic and successful downtown neighborhood redevelopment led by Homer Williams, now of Williams & Dame, and Gerding/Edlen, was among the twelve projects selected nationwide.

"We're honored to be recognized for our longstanding commitment to building innovative, environmentally friendly and sustainable structures," said Tom Cody, principal of Gerding/Edlen and The South Group. "We share the Sierra Club's vision of creating vibrant livable urban communities that serve as models and inspiration for other cities, as well as the industry."

The Pearl District, once an aging warehouse and industrial area, has become Portland's most acclaimed urban redevelopment.

The South Group's Homer Williams is recognized as the visionary who led the transformation of the district, first through the development of the Hoyt Street Yards residential project in 1997, then through partnerships with the City to develop two public parks and connect the district to Downtown Portland via streetcar.

In 2000, Gerding/Edlen led a large-scale redevelopment project in the Pearl District on the site of a former brewery (the Brewery Blocks), preserving the historic brew houses while adding the approximately 1.7 million square feet of retail and office space and two new residential towers to the neighborhood. Both the new and historic buildings incorporate the latest energy conservation techniques.

As a result of these efforts, the Pearl District has blossomed into a neighborhood replete with parks, restaurants, galleries, retail shops, educational institutions, cultural attractions and diverse residential options.

To merit consideration for the Sierra Club's top development honors, projects had to demonstrate a number of criteria, including offering a range of transportation choices

(walking, biking and public transportation); redevelopment of existing areas, rather than natural surroundings; locating homes, retail shops, and offices close to each other; minimizing storm water pollution and handling runoff in an environmentally responsible manner.

The Sierra Club also considered the use of “green building” design in compiling its list of best new developments.

Gerding/Edlen and Williams & Dame’s new residential projects in downtown Los Angeles—under The South Group name—share the same environmentally friendly traits of the Sierra Club’s distinguished honorees.

In Los Angeles, The South Group’s progressive approach to urban living is currently taking shape in the form of three modern residential properties—Luma, Elleven and Evo—that are helping transform L.A.’s urban core into a dynamic neighborhood of pedestrian paths, plazas, fountains, gardens and a streetscape of retail shops and services. Plans are also underway for a park and additional residential buildings nearby.

The “South” neighborhood, conveniently located within walking distance to public transportation and local landmarks such as Chinatown, STAPLES Center and the new L.A. Live entertainment complex, is fast becoming *the* place to live. Elleven, scheduled for move-ins in April 2006, and Luma, scheduled for completion in summer 2007, are sold out. Evo is just breaking ground.

Upon completion, The South Group developments are expected to be the first residential buildings in downtown Los Angeles to be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED). Luma, Elleven and Evo will feature an abundant use of natural light, use of low-emitting materials and finishes, water efficient fixtures, appliances and landscaping, odorless paints, wheatboard cabinetry and bamboo floors, an aggressive waste management plan that ensures that the majority of materials leaving the site are recycled and dozens of other innovations incorporated into the project to create quality of life advantages for new homeowners.

For more information about The South Group and its continuing dedication to “smart” growth and development, visit www.exploresouthgroup.com.

For a complete list of the Sierra Club’s Best New Development Projects, visit www.sierraclub.org/sprawl/report05.

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