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Bellevue Downtown Association Announces 2009 Place Making Award Winners

BELLEVUE, Wash. – The Bellevue Downtown Association (BDA) announced tonight the winners of the 2009 Place Making Awards at the organization's 36th Annual Celebration. More than 350 business and community leaders attended the event at Meydenbauer Center in Downtown Bellevue.

"The Place Making Awards recognize achievements from the previous year, as well as extraordinary contributions toward creating a thriving downtown," said Leslie Lloyd, BDA president. "The winners, all in different ways, represent the evolution and strength of our community as the economic and cultural heart of the Eastside."

Following the awards program, keynote speaker Rebecca Ryan, founder of Next Generation Consulting and author of *Live First, Work Second*, shared key trends and expectations driving the next generation's decisions about where to live and work.

2009 Place Making Award Winners

Commute Champion: Courtyard by Marriott Downtown Bellevue

Maintaining an accessible downtown is critical for the local and regional economy. Several downtown employers play a major role in boosting non-drive-alone rates and transit ridership by covering all or a portion of transportation costs for their employees. An effective commute benefits program can reduce individual travel expenses and help an employer with recruitment and retention. Courtyard by Marriott Downtown Bellevue's commute benefits program has resulted in more than 50% of the hotel's employees choosing to commute daily using transit.

Community Service: YWCA Angeline's Eastside Women's Center and The Sophia Way

These two programs provide essential services to homeless women in East King County. The YWCA's daytime program provides hot meals, showers, laundry facilities and a variety of services, such as visits with a nurse, legal aid, and employment counseling. The Sophia Way, operated by the Eastside Interfaith Social Concerns Council, offers women an overnight shelter, a life skills program and access to social services. Both programs are housed at Bellevue First Congregational Church in Downtown Bellevue.

BDA Champion: Jill Ostrem

The BDA Champion Award recognizes Jill Ostrem for her two-year term (2008 and 2009) as Chair of the Bellevue Downtown Association Board of Directors. She is highly-respected for her successful leadership and management style, advocacy on behalf of downtown, and valuable service to the downtown community. Ostrem, a vice president for Group Health, began her term as Chair the same year Group Health opened its Bellevue medical center.

Skyline Award: Elements Too

Elements Too, with 23 and 13-story towers, brings 274 apartment homes and 48,000 square feet of retail space to downtown. A collaborative effort between developer John Su and architect Jim Cutler of Cutler/Anderson, the project design emphasizes clean modern lines and creates a cantilevered silhouette, evoking a uniquely Pacific Northwest look and feel. It creates an eye-catching gateway to downtown and complements the 989 Elements tower next door.

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Residential Development: Ten20

At the heart of downtown's Ashwood neighborhood, Ten20 has added 129 residences, 4,700 square feet of retail space, including the Grand Cru Wine Bar and Shop, a new outdoor public plaza and space for a 200 to 300 seat black box theater. Ten20 completes a prominent, central corner along the increasingly residential NE 10th Street. The project was developed by The Hanover Company and designed by CollinsWoerman.

Hotel Expansion: Hyatt Regency Bellevue

The \$185 million Olympic Tower expansion at the Hyatt Regency Bellevue raised Bellevue's "power rank" as a major conference and destination city. It added 351 guest rooms and more than 30,000 square feet of ballroom space, plus several conference suites and a 120-seat auditorium. The grand opening event in October coincided with the Bellevue Collection's 2009 Fashion Week. Kemper Development Company developed the expansion. Sclater Partners Architects was the architect and GLY Construction was the general contractor.

Office Development: City Center Plaza

City Center Plaza brought over 580,000 square feet of rentable space and a two and a half acre urban landscaped plaza to the office core of Downtown Bellevue. Reaching 26 stories, the building's curving facades ensure maximum views for tenants, and the color palette provides a visual counterpoint to Northwest's winter-gray days. Microsoft has fully leased the office space, and El Gaucho chose a large portion of the the retail base for its Eastside expansion. City Center Plaza, built to LEED Gold standards, was designed by NBBJ and developed by Wright Runstad & Company for Beacon Capital

Downtown Employer: Microsoft Corporation

Microsoft has been a significant and stabilizing force for the Downtown Bellevue economy and office market as the company completed its move-in of nearly 6,000 employees in about 1.6 million square feet of space at The Bravern Office Commons, City Center Plaza and Lincoln Square.

Place Maker of the Year: The Bravern

The Bravern's opening was among the biggest in the Pacific Northwest in the past 10 years. The Bravern Office Commons added 750,000 square-feet of space, fully leased by Microsoft. The Shops at The Bravern brought more than 300,000 square-feet of retail space and the Northwest's first Neiman Marcus, along with other top luxury global and local retailers and five-star services. Restaurants include John Howie Steak, Artisanal Brasserie and Artisanal Table, and the Eastside debut of Wild Ginger. Opening in 2010, the Residences will offer 455 condominium homes. The Bravern was developed by Schnitzer West and designed by Callison and NBBJ. Skanska and PCL Construction were general contractors. DCI Engineers performed the structural engineering.

The Bellevue Downtown Association 36th Annual Celebration was sponsored by: Davis Wright Tremaine, Clark Nuber P.S., The Spring District, Washington Federal Savings, Aegis of Bellevue, DCI Engineers, Sterling Realty Organization, The Seattle Times, GA Creative and Ryan Wenzel Events.

About the Bellevue Downtown Association

Established in 1974, the Bellevue Downtown Association is a nonprofit, membership organization charged with leading the continuing evolution of Downtown Bellevue as the economic and cultural heart of the Eastside. The BDA advocates for a shared vision of Downtown Bellevue, cultivates economic vitality, fosters a dynamic civic and cultural community and creates an open forum for Downtown constituents.