

Millennium Development backs Downtown Eastside

Millennium Development Corporation, developers of Millennium Water, the project that will serve as the 2010 Athletes' Village in Vancouver, has facilitated the purchase of more than \$25 million worth of goods and services from inner-city suppliers.

As part of its community benefits agreement (CBA) in winning the project, Millennium had committed to awarding \$15 million in contracts. It's shot past this mark by \$10 million. Among the goods and services sourced

from the downtown core – largely the Downtown Eastside – are home furnishings, mechanical equipment, catering, office supplies, architectural hardware and electrical services.

Established by Millennium, the **City of Vancouver** and **Building Opportunities with Business Inner City Society** (BOB) in 2007, the CBA was formed to create opportunities for local low-income residents and businesses of the inner city in the areas of training and acquisition of goods and services.

"Millennium has made a tremendous contribution to the community through the CBA as administered by BOB," said **Shirley Chan**, CEO of Building Opportunities with Business.

The **Vancouver Regional Construction Association** (VRCA), along with **ITC Construction** and **Metro-Can Construction**, general contractors on the Millennium Water project, has been active with inner-city residents in the field of entry level trades. **Rona Building Supplies** has provided

"Millennium has made a tremendous contribution to the community through the CBA as administered by BOB"

- Shirley Chan,
CEO,
Building Opportunities
with Business

the training facility and the VRCA has supplied the trainers.

The CBA includes a \$750,000 legacy fund put in place by Millennium to fund the pre-employment and skills development training. There is a commitment to create 100 construction jobs for inner-city residents.

So far 101 people have started Construction Orientation to Retain Employment (CORE) training with 65 completed and 11 in training. Millennium points out that success of

this magnitude is rare for most employment programs in the area.

With 86 inner-city residents hired onsite and another 26 hired offsite, 112 paying construction jobs have been created by Millennium through the CBA.

"We believe our commitment to ethical and social responsibility will bring social and sustainable benefits to the communities where we live and work," said **Hank Jasper**, Millennium's general manager of development and construction. ♦