



## **CONSTRUCTION STARTS ON \$55 MILLION EVERGREEN BRICK WORKS PROJECT**

### ***Major milestone in development of Canada's First Large-Scale Environmental Discovery Centre***

**TORONTO (December 8, 2008)** -- Evergreen Brick Works, Canada's first large-scale environmental discovery centre, took a big step closer to becoming reality at a groundbreaking event held today. Jim Flaherty, Minister of Finance; Aileen Carroll, Ontario Minister of Culture; David Miller, Mayor of the City of Toronto; Geoff Cape, Executive Director, Evergreen; David Pecaut, Chair of Toronto City Summit Alliance; Bill Downe, President and Chief Executive Officer of BMO Financial Group and students from Cassandra Public School, planted trees and broke ground signalling the start of construction for this innovative community project. Evergreen Brick Works will open in spring 2010.

Evergreen, a not-for-profit organization that makes cities more livable, is transforming Toronto's old Don Valley Brick Works Factory – revitalizing the buildings while focusing on heritage and ecological sustainability. Evergreen Brick Works will be an environmental community centre and national hub for urban sustainability nestled in the heart of Toronto. Designed for people to experience the benefits of nature first-hand, Evergreen Brick Works will give visitors a renewed sense of place and inspire them to become active participants in shaping a more sustainable future. It is being designed to be the most energy and resource efficient building of its kind in Canada.

“This innovative project is a model for environmental sustainability. It breathes new life into the historic Don Valley Brick Works factory, and is creating a community gathering space in the middle of Canada's largest city that will attract both area residents and tourists,” says Minister Flaherty. “The federal government is proud to have committed up to \$20 million to this project under the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund.”

“The Don Valley Brick Works is an important heritage site that celebrates Ontario's rich industrial roots,” says Minister Carroll. “Ontario's investment in Evergreen Brick Works helps us preserve this heritage while demonstrating our commitment to building strong communities and a healthy environment.”

“This exciting and innovative project will enhance Toronto's reputation as world leader in urban creativity,” says Mayor Miller. “By rehabilitating valuable heritage structure and enhancing our public open spaces in an environmentally sensitive manner, we strengthen the community while building a sustainable 21st Century city.”

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“Evergreen Brick Works will be unique in the world – it will change our city and the way we live,” says Mr. Cape. “We are building a village experience at the 4.9-hectare site with a diverse set of buildings that require different architectural and design approaches. The project will set a new standard for environmentally sustainable design and adaptive re-use and it will pursue Platinum status under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. As a showcase for environmental best practices, it will point the way to a sustainable future for Toronto, Canada and beyond.”

Joe Lobko of du Toit Allsopp Hillier is the project’s lead designer. Evergreen has made community consultation an integral part of the design and development of Evergreen Brick Works.

In spring 2010, all public programming buildings and landscapes will open and will include:

- **Welcome Centre** – the year-round winterized centre will be the hub and orientation site for visitors. Tours will leave from here and the Centre will include exhibition space, heritage information and industrial artifacts.
- **Welcome Court** – the front entrance for visitors to Evergreen Brick Works. Gardens with native trees, shrubs and wildflowers will replace the old cement, and shade and seating will make this a comfortable space for visitors to meet and relax.
- **Green City Gardens** – the gardens designed by internationally renowned landscape architect Claude Cormier, where Evergreen will grow native plants and shrubs for sale year round. School groups, community groups, home gardeners and families will participate in the planting and maintenance of these accessible gardens. In the winter, a playful skating trail will wind through the space.
- **Evergreen Marché** – a collection of store-fronts including an environmentally sustainable Jamie Kennedy Café. At the Marché, visitors will discover the richness of food through gardening and cooking experiences and will explore the cultural and culinary diversity of local agriculture. The goal is to inspire food action in homes and communities.
- **Brick Works Heritage Centre** - a 52,000-square-foot space that will preserve and celebrate the factory’s industrial heritage. At the north end, Outward Bound Canada will have a permanent ropes course and climbing wall.
- **Ravine Terrace** – the public space overlooking the Weston Quarry for public gathering and special events.
- **The Nature Playground** – an enchanting outdoor children’s activity area with tunnels, secret passageways, a garden maze, an adventure zone, a challenge course and tree house. A special section will be for children to ‘get their hands dirty,’ creating and caring for vegetable and native plant gardens.

The **Centre for Urban Sustainability** (designed by Diamond and Schmitt), the only new building on site, will be the economic and intellectual heart of the complex, and will open soon thereafter. The centre will be a meeting place where educators, innovators and leaders in social and environmental thought come together to bring about positive change.

Over \$40 million of the \$55 million capital campaign goal has been raised to date. Evergreen is pleased to announce that BMO Financial Group has committed \$500,000 to the Campaign for Evergreen Brick Works. The two-storey high meeting space on the main floor of the site's new Centre for Urban Sustainability will be called the BMO Forum.

"We are proud to support the BMO Forum at Evergreen Brick Works," says Mr. Downe. "BMO is committed to the belief that the quality of our lives improves when economic growth is integrated with respect for the environment. The opportunity to be a part of this important project is a great example of how we can show that respect with tangible action."

The site is owned by the Toronto Region and Conservation Authority and is managed by the City of Toronto.

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**Media kit available online at:** <http://evergreen.ca/groundbreaking>