

Architects applaud Green Cities Accords

OTTAWA June 3, 2005— Members of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada are applauding a move to take place during World Environment Day in San Francisco June 5 that will see mayors from around the world declare their support to green cities.

“This is a great step in the right direction. The RAIC has long been stating that it is critical that planning at all levels ensures an integrated approach to sustainable planning,” said **RAIC President Yves Gosselin, FIRAC**. “What we see is a need for more inter-governmental co-operation and inter-jurisdictional co-operation in land use planning and design.

Architects serve as advisors and visionaries during the building process. As designers of buildings and communities, architects envision the possibilities and balance between human participants—users, developers, regulators, decision-makers—and the environment. They stand-in for the natural world, ensuring it is not something distinct and outside of architectural and urban design processes, but “heard” and thoughtfully considered in every aspect from planning and design to construction and maintenance.

Architects have led the world in developing and adopting Green Building Rating systems, as well as urban planning principles and practices that advance higher density, mixed use, walkable, bikeable and disabled-accessible neighborhoods, which coordinate land use and transportation with open space systems for recreation and ecological reconstruction..

“Architects and Architecture are key to reducing greenhouse gas emissions as buildings consume more than 30 per cent of all energy and fossil fuels in their construction and operations,” said Gosselin. “Architects are in the position to help ensure Mayors around the world and in Canada keep the environment in mind when planning cities.

“Our talent, vision, training and experience puts us in a key position to offer creative solutions to build healthier cities. At this time, when cities are looking for creative solutions to increasing urbanization, Architects are at the forefront - helping citizens, mayors, builders and developers address the challenges,” he added.

RAIC Members have been embracing the greening of Canada for years. The Institute has established recommendations for its membership to follow entitled *Sustainability and the Built-Environment*.

Mayors are expected to sign an accord that commits them to building ecologically sustainable, economically dynamic, and a socially equitable future for urban citizens, by attending to energy, urban design and urban nature, as well as water, environmental health and transportation issues.

The RAIC is a voluntary national association established in 1907 as the voice for architecture and its practice in Canada. Representing more than 3,200 architects, the RAIC provides the national framework for the development and recognition of architectural excellence.

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Details on Sustainability and the Built-Environment:
www.raic.org/raic/green_architecture/sustainability_e.htm

Details on the Green Cities Accords: www.wed2005.org/0.0.php

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