



“Key Development” in Transformation of Central Eastside Opens

An abandoned warehouse becomes a model of sustainable design, boathouse for paddlers and home to architects/engineers and a software firm.

PORTLAND, OR, April 12, 2007—A former warehouse adjacent to the Hawthorne Bridge has been transformed to bring new life to the central eastside industrial area. RiverEast Center will bring over 250 jobs to the neighborhood and provide the City long awaited, improved public access to the East Bank esplanade. The innovative public plaza includes the first shared “green street” in Portland to treat stormwater from both public and private runoff sources as well as a public art installation from reclaimed building façade elements.

RiversEast LLC, formed between Jeff Reaves, president of architect/engineering firm Group Mackenzie and Jay Haladay, Chief Executive Officer of Portland-based software development company Coaxis, developed the property as new, expanded headquarters for their respective companies. In addition to Group Mackenzie and Coaxis companies, Insight Distribution Software and Viewpoint Construction Software, tenants also include the Portland Boathouse, a non-profit group which provides boat storage and training for paddlers and rowers; Alder Creek Canoe and Kayak, retail and rental outlet; Willamette Riverkeeper, a non-profit advocacy group, TS Consulting, a construction management and design/build firm; and SDC, mechanical and electrical engineering consultants. A food service tenant is being negotiated for a small ground floor space.

When Reaves was looking for a site, he saw the potential in the old warehouse, with its dramatic 20-foot ceilings, capped columns and sweeping views of downtown Portland. “RiverEast Center is good for the neighborhood, our employees and the city as a whole,” says Reaves. “It showcases Group Mackenzie’s sustainable design capabilities as well as the firm’s multi-disciplined skills; it was a challenging project”, Reaves added.

Haladay, whose companies develop industry-leading enterprise software solutions for the food/beverage distribution and construction vertical markets, considers the move strategic. “Our most valuable asset is our employees. The move downtown makes it more convenient for them and provides an exciting, creative work environment on the river,” says Haladay. “Additionally, RiverEast Center offers us an easy-to-access, central location for business development programs as well as employee retention and recruitment efforts.”

The former Holman Transfer Building was built in 1951 and served to transport products for Quaker Oats, Coca Cola and C&H Sugar for many years. The Portland Development Commission purchased the building in 2002, calling it, “a key site in the transformation of the city’s east bank.” The building is located in the Central Eastside Urban Renewal Area.

“The transformation of the RiverEast building exemplifies exactly what the public asks PDC to do” said PDC Chairman Mark Rosenbaum. “This has been a tremendously successful public/private partnership and exemplifies the Portland way of doing things. Congratulations to the developers for taking a partially empty building, making it the home for Group Mackenzie, Coaxis and the other building tenants. We are especially pleased that RiverEast is bringing 250 family wage jobs to the central eastside,” Rosenbaum added.

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Sustainable Showcase

Group Mackenzie, the project architectural and engineering firm, used a multi-disciplinary approach to ensure that the design aesthetics of the Art Deco warehouse were not lost in the transformation into a sustainably designed and functional office environment. RiverEast Center is expected to achieve LEED Gold certification, one of the highest ratings for sustainable design from the U.S. Green Building Council. Key features:

- **Green Street.** Clay Street has been turned into a public plaza, featuring Portland's first example of shared facilities for treating public and private storm water. Rain water from the roof, Water Avenue, and the parking lot travels through artistic downspouts, storm water basins with native plantings and recycled building concrete into a privately maintained water quality facility before reaching the river. The innovative site development was designed collaboratively by GreenWorks Landscape Architects and Group Mackenzie and coordinated with many local agencies. Portland Bureau of Environmental Services provided grants to help accomplish projects goals that exceed minimum city standards.
- **Energy Efficiency.** The entire south side of the building is a dynamic solar wall which uses a system of glass panels, baffles and shelves to alternatively capture and divert solar heat throughout the seasons. The solar wall, wide use of natural light, reflective white roof, special window glazing, energy efficient fixtures, and buying 100% green power reduces energy consumption to 51% less than code requires.
- **Reclaiming and Recycling.** The project received funding from the Regional Arts and Culture Council (RACC) for a series of sculptures in the plaza, using large concrete slabs, cut out for windows and doors. The slabs reveal the impressions of old growth timber, used as forms for pouring the Art Deco structure. Over 95% of the concrete waste has been reclaimed for other purposes. Interior designers used sustainably harvested bamboo paneling and re-used much of the building's existing doors and windows.

The building presented a number of challenges: a dramatically sloped floor; traffic noise from two adjacent bridges; a brownfield from an old loading dock; lack of space for systems infrastructure, and the fact that while the LLC owns the building, they can only lease a limited area for parking from the city. "The reality is that there are no easy in-fill projects in the city anymore," says the project's development manager, Monte Haines, GVA Kidder Matthews.

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