



## **Grow Community is the First One Planet Community in the United States to start construction on Net-Zero Carbon Homes**

FROM THE EARTH SUMMIT IN RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL TODAY (18.06.2012) – BioRegional, founders of the One Planet Living program, announced the official endorsement of the Grow Community, an 8-acre urban neighborhood development under construction on Bainbridge Island in Washington State. The Grow Community is dedicated to bringing One Planet Living principles to the United States to provide sustainable homes that allow all generations to enjoy a high-quality lifestyle without the high price.

The project is being built to meet the growing need for sustainable living options in the United States and combines single-family homes, townhomes and lofts in pocket neighborhoods clustered around pea patches and shared outdoor spaces. The Grow Community is set to be ready for touring by prospective home-buyers in mid July, 2012. The design was guided by the local community to go far beyond typical green building practices and create opportunities to live within a truly sustainable ecological footprint.

Speaking from Rio+20, Pooran Desai, Co-founder of BioRegional and international director of the One Planet Communities program said, “The Summit here has the strapline “The future we want”. The Grow Community is creating a 21st century vision of the American dream – an exceptionally high quality of life which doesn’t damage the planet”.

### ***Taking Sustainable Development Beyond LEED***

Based on the 10 guiding principles of sustainability developed by BioRegional, One Planet Living helps communities around the world focus on creating a new kind of quality of life within the sustainable resource limits of the planet. Reaching far beyond LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) and other sustainable building certification programs, One Planet Communities address entire lifestyle impacts, with the goal of reducing our overall ecological footprint. The Grow Community is the first of its kind in the United States to start construction on sustainable homes using the One Planet Community development guidelines. From zero carbon homes and transportation strategies, programs that increase local food consumption and procurement policies that support a local green economy, the Grow Community is applying One Planet Living solutions to create a cost-effective, creative, inspirational and replicable community on the leading-edge of sustainable development practices.

“Grow is a place where residents can live a more connected lifestyle. The site, the buildings and the community amenities are all designed to create spontaneous interactions and foster deeper relationships, from the way the paths cross, to the community center and the urban gardens,” says Marja Preston of Asani, the sustainable development firm behind the Grow project. “We are creating a new type of neighborhood, where health and happiness are an integral part of the living experience, where residents can live comfortably, knowing that their footprint on the planet is considerably lighter and their time is free to focus on the things that matter to them.”

Located immediately adjacent to the center of town, Grow Community will foster a five-minute lifestyle where residents can walk to restaurants, the grocery store, schools and the ferry to downtown Seattle. Schools, the library and cultural opportunities are all within walking distance of the community. The project is expected to create local jobs and support existing local businesses.

#### Grow Community is Making Sustainable Living Affordable and Easy

With a goal of making low-carbon living both attainable and affordable, Asani has worked with local partners to provide solar panels on each of the homes. Each home is designed to achieve net-zero energy, with enough solar panels on the roof to not only provide enough energy to power the home, but also to create potential economic returns to the homeowners. With lower energy and utility bills, the cost of living in a home in Grow Community will be equal to or less than a typical home in the area. In addition, the car share program at Grow will include an electric car powered by solar panels, creating a zero-carbon transportation option for residents.

The project, the first of its kind in the United States, will test a new concept for urban infill development. Asani and BioRegional will collaborate to create a One Planet Learning Center at the project, to gather feedback and provide information about One Planet Living. BioRegional will monitor the project's success with achieving the One Planet Living sustainability principles over the next eight years, and Asani is committed to sharing lessons learned to further the conversation on how we can live well, within the resource limits of our planet.

"Working with BioRegional and the One Planet Living framework, has challenged us to design a community that will create the opportunity for people to live a low-carbon lifestyle," says Marja Preston. "This project will be a prototype for a new type of neighborhood, and we hope it will add value to the discussion on how we can all create new ways of living sustainably in the urban environment."

BioRegional North America's Director, Greg Searle added, 'What Asani is building today will be copied by other developers tomorrow. It has been a privilege working with such a forward thinking company.'

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**ABOUT ASANI:** Bainbridge Island-based Asani is a working community of planners, architects, contractors and developers working to positively impact communities and the environment with profitable projects that are both socially responsible and ecologically sustainable. Past and current projects include Vineyard Lane, Island Gateway, the Kid's Discovery Museum, Bainbridge Island Museum of Art and Grow Community.