
UBC to add 'forest village' for 4,000

BY MAURICE BRIDGE

A planned community of 4,000 on the campus of University of BC is one step closer to reality with the approval of the Greater Vancouver Regional District board of directors.

The community is to be built on 40 hectares of largely wooded land south of 16th Avenue, and is conceived as a pedestrian – oriented village in the forest. It will include two and three storey townhomes, four storey apartments and 18 storey apartments buildings in a mix of market homes and rental housing aimed at students and faculty.

Just under 2000 residences are planned. The GVRD directors approved the plan Friday, ruling that it conforms to the university's official community plan.

It will include a 65,000 square foot mixed use village centre on Wesbrook Mall with retail shops as well as professional, institutional and residential space. A 180-suite seniors' living facility is on the books, as are a public school and a community centre.

Dennis Pavlich, vice president of external and legal affairs for UBC, said Tuesday that preliminary planning and work infrastructure could begin as soon as six months from now.

South Campus is the largest of seven new residential neighbourhoods planned in the University Town scheme, which Pavlich says is unlike any other university campus.

"We have very significant targets that we've got to meet," he said Tuesday. "These are targets of affordability and work-study – we're saying 50 per cent of the people who live in these neighbourhoods must either work or study at UBC, so we're trying to do something that's very sustainable.

"We don't want people commuting, and we're able to achieve that if we can get students and staff and faculty actually living on campus."

University Town is expected to increase the permanent population on campus to about 18,000 residents by 2021.

Sustainable design, "green streets" intend for pedestrians, bicycles and other non-motorized vehicles, alternative-energy and waste-management systems are included in the overall plan.

The South Campus neighbourhood plan goes to the UBC board of governors for final approval in December.