



Urban Housing Communities Begins Construction on City's First Affordable Apartments Targeting Families in Big Bear Lake

KTGY-designed \$17 Million Community Offers High Quality, Eco-Friendly Workforce Housing

SANTA ANA, CALIF. (August 2, 2010)—Urban Housing Communities LLC (UHC) is pleased to announce construction of The Crossings at Big Bear Lake, a 42-unit affordable housing community developed in collaboration with the City of Big Bear Lake's Improvement Agency, Bank of America, and architecture and planning firm KTGY Group, Inc. Upon completion next summer, this new \$17 million community will offer healthy, supportive and eco-friendly apartment homes to local working families earning between 30 percent and 60 percent of San Bernardino County median income.

Designed by KTGY, The Crossings at Big Bear Lake will offer 28 two-bedroom two-story townhomes and 14 three-bedroom single-story flats averaging approximately 1,100 square feet. Each thoughtfully-planned apartment home will offer central heat, ceiling fans, a covered patio or balcony, energy-efficient kitchen appliances, washer/dryer hookups, high speed internet access and be wired for cable television. Rents are expected to range from \$449 to \$1,038 per month, based on family size and income level.

Located on 2.60 acres of land on Knickerbocker Road between Pennsylvania Avenue and Maryland Road south of Big Bear Blvd. (Highway 18), the community will feature a spacious 2,500 square foot community room, a computer lab, a fully-equipped kitchen, a manager's office, picnic and BBQ areas, a playground, laundry facilities and landscaped courtyard areas. The community room will serve as the location of a supportive services program provided by UHC's non-profit partner, Central Valley Coalition for Affordable Housing (CVCAH). Designed to meet residents' specific physical, educational, professional and social needs, CVCAH's supportive services program will offer health clinics, after-school tutoring, budget planning, credit counseling, resume writing, computer training, fitness/nutrition classes, and targeted youth and senior activities.

The new affordable apartment community will be convenient to schools, public transportation, shopping, medical services, a public park and recreation areas, and is approximately a 10 minute walk from Big Bear Lake Village, the city's premiere shopping and entertainment district.

The Crossings at Big Bear Lake represents a milestone for the City, which is home to over 6,000 full-time residents. While the City does offer some affordable housing, its stock consists mainly of aging single-family homes and one affordable senior community. The Crossings at Big Bear Lake will be the City's first affordable community targeted toward families.

“Most people know Big Bear Lake as a vacation destination, but it’s also a city that confronts the same issues of housing, healthcare and education as more urban areas,” said John Bigley, Chief Operating Officer of Urban Housing Communities. “A certain level of affordability is required to sustain the local workforce that supports the City’s year-round recreation activities that entice vacationers to the area, such as skiing and snowboarding during the winter and boating and biking in the summer. We believe the quality affordable housing offered by The Crossings at Big Bear Lake will help the City achieve its long-term goals by attracting and retaining both businesses and employees,” Bigley added.

“We are so pleased and proud to welcome UHC and Bank of America to the community as our partners in developing high-quality, family-oriented affordable housing for our work force,” said Big Bear Lake’s City Manager Jeff Mathieu. “We expect this new, fully-appointed apartment community to be an asset for the City of Big Bear Lake by providing our workforce with the opportunity to enjoy the Big Bear lifestyle in a safe, clean and modern environment without the threat of fast rising rents in the future that will surely price them out of the market as soon as the economy recovers.”

Situated adjacent to a new neighborhood of single-family developments and across from Big Bear Elementary School, The Crossings at Big Bear Lake will improve vacant, untended property. “The new residential apartment community was planned and designed to fit in with the image of the Big Bear Mountain community,” said KTG’s Chris Texter, AIA, LEED AP and Principal. “Heavy timber wood details can be seen in the corbels supporting the large roof overhangs that are common in Big Bear. The apartment homes are part of a redevelopment infill and include heavy timber gable end framing, stone veneer and siding. Each building is planned in such a way to respect and add to the current street scene, residences, trees and other site opportunities and are oriented around a central garden, tot lot and community center amenities for the families,” Texter added.

“KTGY is committed to Urban Housing Communities’ mission to provide affordable housing within a community design that is contextual and well designed and meets the needs of its residents. We believe that The Crossings at Big Bear Lake achieves UHC’s vision with these beautiful new apartment homes and architecture that evokes a mountain community. We are confident that families will appreciate the high quality and the outstanding amenities that The Crossings at Big Bear Lake has to offer,” noted Texter.

SL Residential, the general contractor for the project, began construction on July 15 and plans to recycle at least 75 percent of construction waste. Other eco-friendly design features include solar panels for generating electricity to the community room and common areas; gas condensing tankless water heaters; Energy Star rated lighting, windows and gas appliances; “Dark Sky” compliant exterior lighting; water-saving fixtures in the kitchens and bathrooms; high-efficiency dual-flush toilets; flooring, railings, furniture, BBQs, and trash and recycling receptacles made from recycled content; zero-VOC interior paints and low-VOC interior finishes and adhesives; building materials that contain recycled content and do not emit harmful chemicals; and bike racks. Early in the design process, UHC consulted an arborist in an effort to preserve some of the existing onsite trees.

UHC partnered with the City of Big Bear Lake's Improvement Agency in 2009 to increase the City's affordable housing stock in a manner consistent with the goals of the Redevelopment Plan. The Improvement Agency committed funding through a soft loan and UHC secured financing through the highly competitive 9 percent tax credit program. Additional financing for the project was provided by the Bank of America Community Development Corporation (BACDC), Bank of America, National Equity Fund (NEF) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

The Crossings at Big Bear Lake is UHC's second project to begin construction in less than 30 days. UHC recently broke ground on The Crossings at Escondido, a KTGy-designed residential community that will feature 55 high quality, affordable apartment homes for working families in San Diego County. Families interested in living at The Crossings at Big Bear Lake, should contact AWI Management Corporation, Inc. at (530) 745-6249.

About Urban Housing Communities

Urban Housing Communities LLC is a "mission driven for-profit" affordable housing development partner of Morgan Stanley and Banc of America Community Development Corporation specializing in multifamily and senior housing facilities in California and Hawaii. UHC was formed in 2003 by executives of SunAmerica and ASL Housing, and has since been joined by professionals from KB Home, CalFed Bank and the California State University System. Together, they have financed or developed over 10,000 units of housing. For more information, visit www.uhcllc.net.

About KTGy Group, Inc.

Established in 1991, KTGy Group, Inc., Architecture and Planning, provides comprehensive planning and award-winning architectural design services for residential communities, retail, hospitality, mixed-use and related specialty developments. KTGy delivers innovative solutions that reflect clear understanding of development, marketing and financial performance and takes particular pride in its highly motivated and principal led studios. Serving clients worldwide, KTGy maintains offices in Irvine, Oakland and Santa Monica, and in Denver. See www.ktgy.com.

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