



Tall Wood Building Demonstration Project Reaches New Heights in Canada *'Topping out' Celebration for UBC's Brock Commons*

OTTAWA, SEPTEMBER 15, 2016 – Three years after launching a request for an Expression of Interest, through funding received from Natural Resources Canada, for Canadian design teams willing to undertake an innovative approach to designing and building high-rise wood demonstration projects, the Canadian Wood Council (CWC) was proudly in attendance at the 'topping out' celebration of the University of British Columbia's Brock Commons Phase 1 tall wood student residence.

When completed, Brock Commons will be among the world's tallest mass timber hybrid structures at 18 storeys. "Above and beyond further establishing the safety, economic and environmental credentials of massive timber products used in buildings, UBC's Brock Commons will inspire current and future generations of architects and engineers to consider its use – ultimately creating another and most welcomed construction choice for builders and new markets for wood product producers," explained Michael Giroux, president of CWC.

Tall wood buildings are not a new concept – with 19-storey wood pagodas built and still standing in Japan and China as far back as 1,400 years ago. There are many contemporary examples as well with taller buildings built within the past five years in Australia, Austria, England, Italy, Norway and Switzerland.

Backed by science from FPInnovations and the National Research Council, examples such as Brock Commons offer increasingly compelling data for the building code changes necessary to make the construction of these innovative buildings more common. The CWC is committed to leading this evolution in building codes.

In 2012 a study co-authored by architect Michael Green of mgb ARCHITECTURE + DESIGN (and now principal of MGA Michael Green Architecture), with support from the teams at Equilibrium Consulting, LMDG Building Code Consultants and BTY Group, entitled *The Case for Tall Wood Buildings*, outlined the case for mass timber as a safe, economical, and environmentally friendly structural material for taller and larger structures. CWC is pleased to see that the 2012 study, coupled with advocacy from influential wood champions, have led tall wood building construction to where it is today.

The renewability of wood products coupled with the fact that these products are sourced from Canada's sustainably managed forests is a great story from an environmental impact in construction perspective as well as a positive story for the forest and wood products industry in Canada. Derek Nighbor, CEO of the Forest Products Association of Canada (FPAC) saluted the new building and called it, "a beautiful example of what can be done with wood. Brock Commons shows us why building with wood offers the best of all worlds: you get the environmental and economic benefits, but it also looks spectacular." Nighbor also commented that a student residence is the perfect choice for this landmark tall wood building and that Canadians in all regions can look forward to more of these across Canada as building codes evolve. "This building shows us the future of what our buildings will look like, while housing some of our future leaders."

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For more information please contact:

Natalie Tarini
Communication Manager and Association Secretary
ntarini@cwcc.ca
613.747.5544 ext. 225