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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

UNIVERSITY HILLS SPECIFIC PLAN RECEIVES STATE PLANNING AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN

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August 18, 2009, SAN BERNARDINO, CA – The University Hills Specific Plan in the City of San Bernardino has received the American Planning Association's 2009 Outstanding Neighborhood Planning Award for its California Chapter. The University Hills development is located in the foothills of San Bernardino adjacent to California State University San Bernardino.

"The American Planning Association is the preeminent organization for professional planners in the United States," said Mayor Pat Morris. "Receiving the California Chapter's Outstanding Neighborhood Planning Award is a tremendous honor for the City of San Bernardino and our Development Services Department who worked with Inland Communities to create the University Hills Specific Plan."

University Hills is designed as a pedestrian friendly development with 8 acres of public parks and open space, regional and community multipurpose trails and recreational trails and bike lanes. The project is special in many ways, but most unique, is the relationship with the adjacent University. In 2008, Inland Communities Corp., developer of University Hills, donated 235 acres of open space to the University as a land laboratory for field research. In addition, the University will develop up to 60 units in the project for faculty housing to attract highly qualified professors.

The development of the specific plan overcame numerous challenges including hillside topography, fire safety protection and close proximity to seismic faultlines. Inland Communities took great care to create wide fire buffer zones, to design the project around faultlines and to preserve important hillside viewsheds.

“This award honors Inland Communities Corp.’s desire to create a true community that fits with its neighbors, which could only have been achieved through extensive outreach with the University, community groups, and the City.” said Jim Ahmad, President of Inland Communities Corp. “It truly honors our commitment to creating a green community and the hard work of taking what many thought was an unusable site and making it into something special for the City and University”.

The APA California Awards Program recognizes and celebrates great planning work occurring throughout California. The purpose of the State Awards Program is to encourage quality in planning and increase the public's awareness of the planning profession through acknowledging outstanding achievements in the planning field.

APA California annually presents Planning Awards that recognize the most outstanding planning efforts. The Program honors innovative plans and projects as well as distinguished planners, planning advocates and students. The University Hills Specific Plan is now being submitted to the National APA Awards Program.

