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FIRST CARBON NEUTRAL ZONE CREATED IN THE UNITED STATES

Atlanta-based Developer and 18 Businesses Work with Verus Carbon Neutral to Establish Groundbreaking Eco-Zone

ATLANTA (NOVEMBER 14, 2008)— Global climate change is one of the most daunting challenges of the 21st century, but the recent growth and popularity of American eco-consciousness has created a new sense of urgency to address this problem. Today the green movement took a significant step forward as the first “Carbon Neutral Zone” in the United States was announced in Atlanta. By purchasing carbon offsets, an entire retail community, known as The Corner-Virginia Highland, effectively offset its residual greenhouse gas emissions using an innovative collective approach that will set the standard for American companies looking to adopt sustainable business practices and reduce their carbon footprints.

Atlanta Establishes First Carbon Neutral Zone in the U.S.

The zone, established at The Corner-Virginia Highland shopping district, was initiated by Verus Carbon Neutral, and spearheaded by Antje Kingma, founder of Eco-Bella Organic Lifestyle Boutique. “Many of us have taken steps to run environmentally friendly companies for years,” said Ms. Kingma, “this zone gave us all a chance to come together for our community.”

Verus Carbon Neutral specializes in auditing individual and corporate footprints and providing carbon offsets from the highly acclaimed Chicago Climate Exchange. Sponsored by the Meddin Company, each of the 18 businesses located at The Corner submitted to a carbon footprint audit. Verus Carbon Neutral completed all audits and calculated the metric tons of carbon

emissions that needed to be offset. The local shop owners then volunteered to purchase the required offsets to create this first of its kind Carbon Neutral Zone.

“Climate change is the number one issue of our time, and it is critical for our leaders to be committed to addressing these issues on a local level, and to lead by example,” said Mandy Schmitt, director of sustainability for the city of Atlanta. “Today’s announcement is an exciting and important step in the right direction and is representative of our overall efforts to green our city.”

“We were thrilled to work with The Corner-Virginia Highland businesses on this groundbreaking endeavor,” explained Eric Taub, founder and managing partner of Verus Carbon Neutral. “It’s a smart business proposition that creates a win-win situation—offsets allow you to contribute to the future of our planet while investing in your own business at the same time.”

Carbon Offsets—The Next Step In Sustainable Business Practices

The offset provider for each retailer at The Corner-Virginia Highland is Valley Wood, Inc, a sustainable forestry manager, and 100 percent of offset profits are donated to the Humane Society and other charitable organizations. Carbon offsets include the development of projects like solar and wind power, reforestation/afforestation and methane collection. All offsets that are approved by the Chicago Climate Exchange have been 3rd party verified to ensure transparency, rigor and integrity. Chicago Climate Exchange is the world’s first and North America’s only active voluntary, legally binding integrated trading system to reduce emissions of all six major greenhouse gases (GHGs). Carbon offsets also provide some side benefits that include: lowering our dependence on foreign oil, habitat creation and reuse of waste products (methane) for energy production.

The Corner-Virginia Highland Businesses Celebrate Announcement with “Green Saturday” Event

The Corner has dedicated Saturday, November 15 as a green celebration of local businesses and neighbors working together for the better of the community. Atlantans are encouraged to walk or bike to learn more about the Carbon Neutral Zone. Eric Taub and Andrew Keenan, Verus Carbon Neutral Partners, will be on hand to explain the process and answer questions on how individuals and corporations can reduce their carbon footprint.

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About the Verus Carbon Neutral Partnership

The Verus Carbon Neutral Partnership is an innovative and eco-conscious company that aids businesses and individuals looking to reduce their carbon footprints. After conducting an audit to determine their size of their footprint, Verus provides a simple way to reduce or completely offset their CO2 emissions, and supplies them with a tangible way to communicate their commitment to improving the environment. Privately held, Verus is based in Atlanta and more information can be found at their website: www.tvcnp.com.

About Corner-Virginia Highland

Developed in the 1900's and now owned by The Meddin Company, the historic Corner-Virginia Highland shopping and dining neighborhood retail district is located on the corner of North Highland and Virginia avenues in Atlanta, Georgia. The eighteen businesses that are part of the Carbon Neutral Zone include: Bella Cucina, dabberdoo, Dakota J's, Eco-Bella Organic Lifestyle Boutique, Everybody's Pizza, Fontaine's Oyster House, Half Moon Outfitters, The Highland Tap, La Tavola Trattoria, Lulu Blue, M/3, Mitzi & Romano's, Mitzi's Shoebox, Nadine's Triple Crown, Noche, Paper Source, South of Market, and Wired & Fired Studio.