

MEDIA RELEASE



AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE ANNOUNCED FOR COMMUNITIES ACROSS BC

*BCRPA presents Provincial Awards of Excellence for innovation
in the recreation and parks sector*

Vancouver (May 4, 2023) -- Seven communities were awarded Provincial Awards of Excellence from BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) today in recognition of their outstanding efforts and innovation in the recreation and parks sector. This year's Awards of Excellence were presented by BCRPA at their annual Symposium conference in Vancouver on behalf of more than 4,400 recreation and parks sector members from across the province.

Awards Included:

Parks Excellence Award:

The City of New Westminster for the *Sixth Street Play Area* (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards) and the **City of Surrey** for *Edgewood Park* (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards).

The Sixth Street Play Area in New Westminster supports the health and wellbeing of the community through improved connectivity, an expanded play program, and opportunities for social interaction. It also contributes to environmental health and climate resilience by integrating shade and weather protection with native and adaptive trees, increasing the urban forest canopy cover.

Edgewood Park in South Surrey's Grandview Heights neighbourhood features an accessible playground and is bordered by a natural corridor planted with native tree species, understory shrubs, and groundcover. The park includes two tiers of whimsical play circuits that were created from an existing mound during the design process, a multi-sports court, table tennis tables, and an informal soccer grass field. A pollinator meadow was also added adjacent to the playground with educational signage.

Facility Excellence Award for projects under \$3 million:

Panorama Recreation for the *Jumpstart Multi Sport Court* (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards). The Jumpstart Multi Sport Court has removed barriers to being active by providing free, accessible, outdoor options for physical activity and sport to all ages and community members with a variety of abilities. It has enabled Panorama Recreation to expand inclusive and accessible programming including reservable family pickleball, multisport physical literacy camps and programs, and specific sensory-friendly play times.

Facility Excellence Award for projects over \$3 million:

The City of Richmond for the *Minoru Centre for Active Living*. (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards) The Minoru Centre for Active Living was designed with excellence, sustainability and well-being in mind. Its guiding principles emphasize a balance of financial, social and environmental sustainability while ensuring cultural and physical accessibility and creating connectedness among diverse users. The Centre's physical space and inclusive and accessible programming are designed to encourage social connection, particularly among seniors.

Program Excellence Award:

Capital Regional District Regional Parks for the *CRD Regional Parks Exploring Indigenous Perspectives Program* (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards) and the **City of Kamloops** for the *Community Wellness Program* (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards).

CRD Regional Parks Exploring Indigenous Perspectives Program enables park visitors of all ages and abilities to gain a better understanding and respect for the cultural history of the region. Offered year-round, rain or shine, the program teaches participants time-honoured traditions through storytelling and activities about how the stewardship and sustainable practices of First Peoples can help reduce our impact on the environment.

The Community Wellness Program invites newcomers to Canada to experience weekly seasonal multi-sport and recreational opportunities, as well as community events exploring Canadian cultural, sport and recreation at minimal to no cost. Social inclusion, family integration, and quality physical activity experiences are key components of the Community Wellness Program.

Festivals and Events Excellence Award:

The City of Campbell River for *CR Live Streets*. (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards) *CR Live Streets* brings community, accessibility, and prosperity to Campbell River's downtown core through a series of large events, including music, market vendors and art. Throughout July and August, the main road in downtown Campbell River is closed to encourage pedestrian traffic and offer events that are free and inclusive, bringing together thousands of people of all ages, stages, and abilities to enjoy cultural activities.

"This year's Provincial Awards of Excellence recipients have each cultivated the intrinsic power of recreation in parks in innovative and inspiring ways unique to their communities," says Katie Fenn, CEO of BCRPA. "In doing so, they have set a remarkable standard to aspire towards, one that can benefit British Columbians from across the province in the promotion of greater inclusivity, accessibility, and sustainability."

The BCRPA Provincial Awards recognize outstanding special events, programs, facilities, and parks which reflect ideas, innovation, and services that have made an impact in the recreation and parks sector.

BCRPA Provincial Awards celebrate recreation and parks as essential social services that build healthy individuals, communities and environments. The Association supports communities in their efforts to enhance quality of life through leadership and advocacy in physical activity and healthy living initiatives, grants and professional development.

For more information:

Connie Mah

Administrator, BCRPA

p) 604.629.0965 ext. 258

cmah@bcrpa.bc.ca

BACKGROUND

BCRPA: Inspiring and connecting professionals to build healthy and resilient communities through the power of recreation and parks.

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), a not-for-profit organization, plays a central role in leading the enrichment and improvement of the quality of life of British Columbians and their communities. We do this by championing the power of recreation and parks.

Ours is a story of creating community connectedness and individual well-being based on the knowledge and recognition that recreation and active living, as well as access to parks and the natural environment, have significant impacts on our physical and mental health.

Since 1958, the BCRPA has provided leadership, training and support, fostering the principles of accessibility and inclusiveness, to help its members meet provincial and local mental health and physical activity priorities that improve the quality of life of every British Columbian.

www.bcrpa.bc.ca/about-us/