

MEDIA RELEASE



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AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE HANDED OUT TO COMMUNITIES ACROSS BC ***BCRPA presents Provincial Awards of Excellence for innovation in the recreation and parks sector***

Whistler, BC (May 2, 2019) – Four communities have won Provincial Awards of Excellence from the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) in recognition of their outstanding efforts and innovation in the recreation and parks sector. This year’s awards were presented in six categories:

Parks Excellence Award:

City of Surrey for *Forsyth Park* [www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards] –

Forsyth Park transformed a previously used, unsafe, and heavily littered area into a 7.5 acre accessible nature-inspired playground, which includes an off-leash dog area, picnic area, pathways, and trails. The park acts as a connector among two schools, cycling and walking routes, and to the future City Greenway. The design for Forsyth Park emerged out of substantial community consultation identifying a list of community needs – all of which were included in the final design.

Facility Excellence Award for projects over \$1 million

City of Trail for the *Trail Riverfront Centre* [www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards] – The 15,000 square foot Trail Riverfront Centre serves as the home of Trail’s cultural, literacy and heritage services, including Trail & District Public Library and Trail Museum & Archives. The Centre, located in the heart of the community, is designed to reflect the central role industry plays in sustaining the quality of life in the region. Exhibits inside the facility tell the socio-cultural history of the community, with particular emphasis on the role sport has played in raising the profile of Trail on the international scale.

Program Excellence Award – Population over 15,000

City of Surrey for the MYzone Drop-in Afterschool Program. [www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards] – The MYzone Drop-in Afterschool Program provides school-aged children accessible, affordable, and high quality afterschool programming, providing productive engagement that optimizes developmental learning. The program embraces a universal approach to access and offers a convenient drop-in, sliding-scale, low-to-no fee format, providing greater flexibility to families. The growing success and support from stakeholders and community partners has seen the program expand to 20 locations in Surrey, with two more set to launch in the fall.

Program Excellence Award – Population under 15,000

City of Kitimat for the *Mini Mud and Mud Games* Program [www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards] – Kitimat Mini Mud and Mud Games are team-focused recreational events open to both children and adults. The fun-filled competition includes an 8 kilometer course made up of 31 obstacles, utilizing as much of the natural environment as possible. The course is designed by a local resident on their personal property, and constructed by multiple sponsors specifically to challenge participants mentally and physically. The Games support the Kitimat Leisure Services’ mandate to promote a healthy lifestyle both physically and mentally, while encouraging the development of sportsmanship, leadership, skills and development, self-esteem, enjoyment, and creativity within the recreation community.

The BCRPA Provincial Awards showcase the innovative work being done throughout the province.

“These award recipients each illustrate tremendous creativity, innovation and a standard of excellence to aspired to,” said Rebecca Tunnacliffe, BCRPA Chief Executive Officer. “Each project reflects a notable dedication to

inclusion and access, and a focus on enhancing the quality of life of their communities by supporting recreation opportunities and active, healthy living.”

The Awards of Excellence are presented annually at BCRPA’s Symposium. The conference brings together members of the recreation and parks sector from across BC, including elected officials, volunteers, members of the business community and others interested in enhancing the physical and mental health, wellness, connectedness and quality of life of their communities. This year’s event was held in Whistler.

BCRPA Provincial Awards celebrate recreation as an essential social service which builds 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. The annual awards recognize excellence in the field of recreation as well as exceptional efforts to enhance recreation facilities, programs and services.

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Images available
Background included

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BACKGROUND:

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) is the voice of public recreation and parks, and champions the sector’s development of healthy people and connected communities. Representing over 90% of the provinces’ local governments, we play a central role in supporting the enrichment and improvement of the quality of life of British Columbians. Our work as a not-for-profit organization focuses on creating community connectedness and 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.

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