

MEDIA RELEASE



DISTRICT OF PEACHLAND WINS BCRPA PARKS EXCELLENCE AWARD

Ray Kandola Heritage Pier in Peachland honoured with 2020 Parks Excellence Award

Vancouver (June 22, 2020) - The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), in celebration of June is Recreation and Parks Month, presented its Parks Excellence Award today to the District of Peachland for Ray Kandola Heritage Pier. The award recognizes a unique example of excellence in the concept, design and development of parks and open spaces.

Ray Kandola Heritage Pier is a 120 metre, wheelchair accessible, multi-use pier that runs parallel to Peachland's downtown public waterfront. Built alongside the community's well-established gathering place, Heritage Park, the pier removed long standing challenges to accessing the 13 kilometers of Peachland's steep public waterfront along Okanagan Lake, and has served to enhance community culture by providing locals and visitors alike an accessible destination to enjoy a variety of activities and community events.

The project design, spearheaded by three local community groups – Peachland Sportsmen's Association, Peachland Lions Club and Peachland Rotary Club, also involved planting new trees and shoreline restoration using native plant species, which has been a goal of the District since the community was impacted by large flooding in 2017.

The Pier now supports and promotes an active, integrated lifestyle, welcoming community members to walk, fish, socialize and interface with nature along the waterfront as the new hub of Peachland. With tourism as the main industry within the District, the Pier now supports new programs to thrive, such as providing free fishing rods to visitors through the Peachland Visitors Centre, providing unique and memorable recreation experiences for tourists and locals alike.

Peachland, Mayor Cindy Fortin stated, "Accessibility is a vital ingredient for any liveable, enjoyable community. This pier gives everyone, including people in wheelchairs and walkers, a chance to better enjoy our beautiful lakeshore."

"We are proud to award the District of Peachland the BCRPA Parks Excellence Award for their work on the Ray Kandola Heritage Pier," said Rebecca Tunnacliffe, CEO of the BC Recreation and Parks Association. "This important project has not only increased the vibrancy of Peachland's downtown, but it has opened up access for all community members to experience the health and wellness benefits of its beautiful waterfront and recreation activities. Not being able to hold our annual awards ceremony in person this year, we have chosen instead to present them today as another way to celebrate June being recreation and parks month. Recreation and parks have never been more important to our lives than they are right now and our awards help further highlight the impactful work being done across BC."

The Parks Excellence Award is one of four provincial awards presented virtually today by BCRPA on behalf of their over 3300 recreation and parks sector members from across BC, each working to enhance the physical and mental health, wellness, connectedness and quality of life of their communities.

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 95% 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/