

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

## **For immediate release**



### **CITY OF SURREY WINS BCRPA 2021 PARKS EXCELLENCE AWARD**

**Vancouver (May 5, 2021)** - The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) presented its Parks Excellence Award to the City of Surrey today for Unwin Park and Jumpstart Playground. The award recognizes a unique example of excellence in the concept, design, and development of parks and open spaces.

Unwin Park and Jumpstart Playground is a 12,000 square foot picturesque, inclusive play space developed in partnership with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities. The playground, located within Unwin Park, is intentionally designed to be an imaginative, inclusive, and accessible space that provides children with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities an environment that promotes well-being and collaborative play. The park is located within easy walking distance from eight schools within the highly diverse community of Newton.

The playground at Unwin Parks truly sets the standard for playground accessibility, and includes features such as the We-Go-Round™ - a merry-go-round designed for wheeled mobility devices to roll directly on, and enjoy the merry-go-round experience, as well as slides with transfer benches that allow children to use the slide with their peers, and then easily transfer themselves from the slide to their mobility device. Other creative play elements include sails, flags, and canopies to encourage creative play as well as platforms and ramps with nooks and crannies that often generate imaginative play activities. Areas of shade are also provided within and around the playground so children can stay cool as they play.

Ongoing communication and collaboration with park users and community members has been essential to the playground's success. These connections helped build excitement and anticipation for the park, which has resulted in increased popularity with a broad cross-section of the local community, as well as with residents from the entire City of Surrey as a destination and multi-generational family experience.

"We are proud to award the City of Surrey the BCRPA Parks Excellence Award for their work on the Unwin Park and Jumpstart Playground," said Rebecca Tunnacliffe, CEO of the BC Recreation and Parks Association. "This state-of-the-art playground truly has set a new standard for creativity, accessibility, and inclusion both within the design and the nature in which the community was engaged in the entire process and is now experiencing the unique benefits of recreation and parks within their community, particularly at a time it's needed more than ever."

The Parks Excellence Award is one of four provincial awards presented virtually today by BCRPA on behalf of their over 3,700 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.

**For more information:**

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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.

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