

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

NEW WESTMINSTER WINS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FROM BCRPA

Step up to 12th Street honoured with Parks and Open Spaces Award.

Penticton, BC (Friday, May 14, 2010) – The City of New Westminster has won a provincial Award of Excellence from the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA). The Parks and Open Spaces Award was presented for the creative redevelopment of 12th Street through the City's *12th Street Public Art Community Initiative*.

The renovation and revitalization of 12th Street illustrates how a public art community initiative can turn a 'routine' street improvement plan into a project that galvanizes a community and transforms an area into a point of community pride. The granite street markers, poetry slabs and mosaic tile images that now adorn 12th Street are the result of the collaboration and joint efforts of city departments, business owners, and residents. The project brought the community together and produced works of art that stand as testaments to their commitment to improving their city and quality of life.

"It's impressive to see how the community has poured its energy into breathing new life into this street," comments BCRPA Chief Executive Officer Suzanne Allard Strutt. "In addition to increasing the city's walkability it has created an engaging and welcoming open space that showcases the culture, history and individuals that make the neighbourhood, and city, what it is."

The Parks and Open Spaces Award recognizes excellence in the concept, design and development of parks and open spaces. The space demonstrates outstanding and/or innovative aspects which have or could have significant impact in the Recreation & Parks field. The Parks and Open Spaces Award is one of several awards presented at BCRPA's Symposium today. The conference brings together members of the parks, recreation, physical activity and culture sector from around BC, including elected officials, volunteers, members of the business community and others. Penticton was the partner community of this year's event.

BACKGROUND:

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association is a not for profit organization dedicated to building and sustaining active healthy lifestyles and communities in BC. Established in 1958, the Association is a central resource agency for members and stakeholders of the parks, recreation, physical activity and culture sector, providing leadership, training and support to help meet national, provincial and local priorities. Through a diverse network of partners and extensive programs and services, BCRPA actively advocates accessibility and inclusiveness to recreation and physical activity and strives to bridge the gap between recreation and sport.

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