

NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

CITY OF COURTENAY WINS AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FROM BCRPA *Native Sons Hall honoured with Facility Excellence Award.*

Richmond, BC (Friday, May 13, 2011) – The City of Courtenay has won a provincial Award of Excellence from the BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA). The Facility Excellence Award has been presented to the City for the renovation work done to the Native Sons Hall.

Rather than lose a piece of its history and culture, the City of Courtenay took on the challenge of renovating the Native Sons Hall to bring it up to modern day building codes and still maintain the building's unique historical character. Built in 1928, the Native Sons Hall stands as the largest free-span log building in Canada. Enormous 65-foot Douglas fir logs were used to construct joists and roof trusses for the building, and the unusual design features vertical cedar log walls. To repair damaged logs, new wood was spliced into existing logs, and metal support beams were camouflaged within the structure to avoid disturbing the original design.

The renovations included new wheelchair ramps and canopies that were designed to enhance the look of the original facility, a wheelchair accessible washroom, several new handicapped parking spots, a new replica maple floor, new kitchen and bar facilities, and new wiring, plumbing and heating systems. Previous additions to the facility were removed or altered to better reflect its historical importance.

“The City of Courtenay was able to renovate Native Sons Hall so it could better serve the community while still maintaining its historical, unique design,” states BCRPA Chief Executive Officer Suzanne Allard Strutt. “Not only did they preserve a significant part of the city’s cultural core, they did so in an environmentally conscientious way while minimizing the use of new materials.”

The Facility Excellence Award recognizes excellence in facility concept, design development, maintenance and operation. Award winners demonstrate outstanding innovation which has made, or could make, significant impact in the Recreation & Parks field. This award is one of several awards presented at the 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. Richmond is the host 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.

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