

MEDIA RELEASE

Embargoed until Thursday, May 2, 2019



CITY OF SURREY WINS BCRPA PARKS EXCELLENCE AWARD ***Forsyth Park in Surrey honoured with 2019 Parks Excellence Award***

Whistler, BC (May 2, 2019) - The BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) today presented its Parks Excellence Award to the City of Surrey for Forsyth Park. The award recognizes a unique example of excellence in the concept, design and development of parks and open spaces.

Forsyth Park is a new, 7.5 acre neighbourhood park that has transformed a previously used, unsafe, and heavily littered area into a destination nature-inspired playground. The park also includes an off-leash dog area, picnic areas, pathways and trails and now acts as a connector among two schools, cycling and walking routes, and to the future City Greenway. Phase two for the project will include a sports field/courts, parking lot and washrooms.

The design for Forsyth Park emerged out of substantial community consultation which included public open houses and surveys. This process assisted in the development of a list of community needs, all of which were included in the final design of Forsyth Park with the goal of creating a park that could cater to all facets of the surrounding community.

To ensure all mobility levels and ages were able to use the park, each pathway is accessible by wheelchair and walker users, skateboarders, bicyclists, children on tricycles, pedestrians and joggers. Accessible play equipment, picnic tables, and bench pads were also included. All primary pathways are wide and paved, including a ramped pathway up to the playground hill.

Forsyth Park has been developed in an area where household incomes are lower than other parts of Surrey, and fills a much needed gap, providing active living and outdoor spaces where community members can gather and socialize.

“We are honored to award the City of Surrey the BCRPA Parks Excellence Award for their work on the *Forsyth Park* project,” said Rebecca Tunnacliffe, CEO of the BC Recreation and Parks Association. “This project has taken a previously unsafe and unused parcel of land and transformed it, with the guidance of its citizens, into a vibrant community hub that facilitates an active lifestyle and connection to others and to nature.”

The Parks Excellence Award is one of four provincial awards presented at the BCRPA’s annual Symposium today in Whistler. 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.

Images Available

Background included

For more information:

Connie Mah

Administrator, BCRPA

p) 604.629.0965 ext 258

cmah@bcrpa.bc.ca

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/