

MEDIA RELEASE



CITY OF NEW WESTMINSTER WINS BCRPA 2023 PARKS EXCELLENCE AWARD

Vancouver (May 4, 2023) -- BC Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) presented its **Parks Excellence Award** today to the City of New Westminster for the Sixth Street Play Area (www.bcrpa.bc.ca/membership/provincial-awards). The award recognizes outstanding design and development of park spaces using natural elements or repurposing materials. The park space must reflect innovative community culture, which is accessible to all patrons and encourages individuals and communities to get out into nature.

The Sixth Street Play Area supports the health and wellbeing of the community through improved connectivity, an expanded play program, and opportunities for social interaction. Through the diverse play opportunities and challenge levels, the play area design supports the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and young people. It fulfills a need for families living in New Westminster's urban core, and provides sheltered seating and games tables to further promote social interaction.

The Play Area also contributes to environmental health and climate resilience by integrating shade and weather protection with native and adaptive trees, increasing urban forest canopy cover and permeable surfaces. The design incorporates rubber surfacing made from recycled tires and locally produced and natural material.

"The City of New Westminster's Sixth Street Play Area beautifully increases social connection for community health while strengthening the community's climate resiliency," says Katie Fenn, CEO of BCRPA. "This recipient is well deserved of BCRPA's Parks Excellence Award for the exceptional contribution and positive impact that the Sixth Street Play has for New West residents."

The Parks Excellence Award is one of seven Provincial Awards of Excellence presented during BCRPA's annual Symposium conference in Vancouver. Each award is presented on behalf of more than 4,400 recreation and parks sector members from across BC working to enhance the physical and mental health, wellness, connectedness, and quality of life of their communities.

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BACKGROUND

BCRPA: Inspiring and connecting professionals to build healthy and resilient communities through the power of recreation and parks.

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA), a not-for-profit organization, plays a central role in leading the enrichment and improvement of the quality of life of British Columbians and their communities. We do this by championing the power of recreation and parks.

Ours is a story of creating community connectedness and individual 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 that improve the quality of life of every British Columbian.

www.bcrpa.bc.ca/about-us/