



News Release

New Natural Playground coming to Ridgeway Elementary in North Vancouver

Community Supported Playground Breaks Ground March 13

North Vancouver, B.C., March 5, 2021 - On March 13, 2021, Ridgeway Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and North Vancouver School District #44 will break ground on a custom natural playground at Ridgeway Elementary. "We are very excited to see these play areas come to life," notes Arieanna Schweber, who led the project on behalf of Ridgeway PAC, "This project is the result of three years of work, collaboration, fundraising, and the amazing support of our community."

The idea for new play spaces began in 2018 in response to growth in the student population and community around Ridgeway Elementary. Spread across two zones on the property, the new play spaces offer new opportunities for imaginative open-ended play for the school's 610 K-7 students. Dean Yeo, Ridgeway Elementary Principal, notes "This project will create excitement for students and staff about outside learning and playing, not only during the times of this pandemic, but for years to come."

The new playground pays respect to the natural environment, featuring five custom-designed natural log and rope play pieces designed by Projects in Place Society, a full design-to-build non-profit society helping build stronger communities through sustainable design. The play pieces were designed based upon ideas generated from Ridgeway staff, family surveys, student brainstorming events, and environmental impact assessments. The playground has been designed to be inclusive, featuring accessible recycled tire surfacing, supported by a grant from the Tire Stewardship BC (TSBC), as well as inclusive sensory musical flowers.

"Every child deserves a great place to learn and play," said City of North Vancouver Mayor Linda Buchanan. "Outdoor spaces such as our park and playgrounds are crucial in supporting the well-being of children. The City is proud to contribute to this new natural play space and appreciates the PAC's and School Board's investment in this inclusive and accessible playground."

Ridgeway PAC raised almost \$200,000 towards the project, with additional in-kind donations of design services, labour, equipment and materials raising the value of the project to nearly \$400,000.



The new play spaces are the result of a “by the community, for the community” approach to development. The playground is made possible thanks to the generous in-kind labour and equipment support of Houston Landscapes, Gauthier & Associates Landscape Architects, and Natural Impressions Outdoor Play, as well as materials donated by Veratec, Specimen Trees Wholesale Nurseries Ltd., Emterra, and J K Truck & Crane.

“At Houston Landscapes, we believe in giving back to the communities in which we live and work,” notes Jeremy Miller of Houston Landscapes, “We have been seeking out a project where our equipment, our connections to suppliers, but most importantly, our skillset could be put to use to help grow our communities and are very excited to work with the North Vancouver School District, Projects in Place, and Ridgeway PAC to bring this project to fruition.”

This project gratefully acknowledges the support of the City of North Vancouver through their Community Grant program and Living City Grant, as well as grants received from the Can.Aid.Ian Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation, and generous partner support from Anthem Properties, Cascadia Green Development, Morrison on the Park by CREO Developments, Wasserman, and Whole Foods Market. Thanks also goes to the many Friends of Ridgeway PAC who participated in fundraisers or who donated generously toward this project.

The press kit and photos are available for download [HERE](#).

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