



## MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

### THREE ACCESSIBLE PLAYGROUNDS BEING BUILT IN 2010 VENUE CITIES

Vancouver, B.C. (October 23, 2009): The Province of British Columbia, Ronald McDonald House Charities of Canada, Rick Hansen Foundation and 2010 Legacies Now are funding three world-class accessible playgrounds. Announced today in Richmond, these playgrounds will meet the needs of children with disabilities, and enable these children to play side-by-side with their siblings, friends and families.

"The Province is proud to support a legacy from the 2010 Winter Games that ensures accessibility for all children in B.C.," said Mary McNeil, Minister of State for the Olympics and ActNow BC. "These playgrounds will offer a new standard by which playgrounds across B.C. can be measured and designed."

The new playgrounds will be located in Vancouver, Richmond and Whistler, the three venue cities for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. The Province of B.C. has committed \$750,000 to the project, while Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) of Canada has contributed \$300,000, and the Rick Hansen Foundation has provided \$150,000.

"Ronald McDonald House Charities of Canada is thrilled to support the 2010 Legacies Now playgrounds project," said Rem Langan, chairman, RMHC of Canada. "At RMHC, we are proud to support programs aimed at improving the quality of life of special needs kids. The accessible playgrounds built from this partnership will bring many smiles to kids and their families. And by offering a universal play environment, together we will enable kids of all abilities to play together."

"I am excited to partner in the creation of these three inclusive play spaces that will welcome children, caregivers and families of all abilities to play together, through our Foundation's Let's Play program," said Rick Hansen, president and CEO of the Rick Hansen Foundation. "In less than one year, Vancouver will host the world at the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games. I am so proud of how far we've come and look forward to the opportunities to profile our values and progress towards creating an accessible and inclusive country."

With 2010 Legacies Now coordinating the project, this funding supports the creation of the three playgrounds. The City of Richmond, City of Vancouver through the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and Resort Municipality of Whistler provided the land space, and are overseeing the building and ongoing maintenance of the playgrounds.

"This project is a prime example of how 2010 Legacies Now finds innovative partnerships to create lasting legacies for British Columbians as a result of B.C. hosting the 2010 Winter Games," said Bruce Dewar, CEO of 2010 Legacies Now. "We are proud to be a part of this project to create community legacies which will benefit so many children and their families for years to come."

The playgrounds are being designed by Shane's Inspiration, a California-based not-for-profit organization, which has designed over 40 inclusive playgrounds throughout the world. Shane's Inspiration is donating its services, free of charge, to design the three playgrounds.

The playgrounds will be located at Kitsilano Beach Park in Vancouver, along the Middle Arm Waterfront Greenway in Richmond, and at the Celebration Plaza in Whistler. The Richmond playground and 60 per cent of the Whistler playground will be completed in time for the 2010 Winter Games; the playground in Vancouver will be finished in the summer of 2010.

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Backgrounder attached.

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