



## **NEAT (NORTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION TEAM)**



NEAT is introducing new eco-friendly products to the communities of Northeast BC. Paving the Way Recycled Rubber Tire Tiles is a fundraising project to further awareness of practical actions toward a sustainable future. The paving tiles are made from recycled rubber tires and

can have your name, company name or a friend's name engraved on it. This eco-friendly gift is a step in the right direction toward sustainable and durable surfaces for trails, pathways, sidewalks, playgrounds and driveways. Contact NEAT at 10027 100 Street Fort St. John, B.C. V1J 3Y5 or [www.neat.ca](http://www.neat.ca)

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# Green gym an investment in community health

•CONT. FROM A1

These fees support the operation of the B.C.-based scrap tire recycling program, including transportation and recycling of scrap tires to ensure they are disposed of in an environmentally responsible way.

Since the scrap tire recycling program was launched in 1991, more than 50 million vehicle tires have been recycled.

April van Ert, Media Relations Manager with Laura Balance Media Group who works with TSBC, said that Fort St. John's intended use of the grant is a great story on how something with a large environmental footprint can get a second life that is good for both the local community and the environment.

O'Donnell agrees and pointed out that the green gym as a whole is an investment in community health.

"It's outdoor fitness equipment," said O'Donnell. "It would be appropriate with parental supervision, but green gyms tend to be most utilized or taken advantage of by seniors or adults. But it could be appropriate for all ages."

The equipment at the park will be anchored fitness equipment on which users employ their own body weight to work out. O'Donnell said activities like pushes, pulls and shoulder presses are just some of the things community members will be able to do there.

"It's free and it's accessible to people who are walking along the trail system. It's something they can just stop and try out during their walk and they don't need a membership."

O'Donnell also pointed out that one of the large benefits of using the rubber matting is the accessibility that it offers. Unlike activity areas that utilize gravel, sand, red rock or uneven pavement, rubber matting is fully wheelchair accessible. Much of the equipment being installed will be as well.

"Perhaps not all the equipment will be accessible, but certainly in a lot of the materials I've looked at about green gym installations, a lot of it is. People can be in a wheelchair and use the upper body equipment."

TSBC said that there are many other benefits to the rubber matting including the cushioning support it provides



METRO PHOTO

Another option for outdoor fitness should be ready for this summer after Fort St. John received a \$10,000 grant to install rubber matting for the green gym equipment that is waiting to be erected in Kin Park.

while walking and jogging, that it is easily installed and maintained and that it is friendly to plant root systems because it is water permeable.

O'Donnell said that she hopes it will also inspire the camaraderie that has happened in other communities as a result of green gyms.

"There have been senior fitness clubs started up or [in other communities] or other fitness groups that show up and do their workouts there.

So that's nice to see."

Victor Shopland, Director of Infrastructure and Capital Works, said that the concrete pad for the rubber matting is already poured and the installation of the matting will begin either in May or when the weather is appropriate this spring.

The city hopes to have the green gym operational by early this summer.

The green gym will be located on the east side of Kin Park.



# City puts rubber to pavement

**BRIANNE ZWAMBAG**  
*Staff Writer*

Hitting the pavement for a workout in Kin Park will take on a new meaning this summer as nearly \$10,000 in grant money has been received by the city to install rubber matting at their new green gym location.

The rubber matting will cover a concrete pad that has already been poured at the intended site for the green gym equipment and will provide

benefits to users ranging from safety and comfort to accessibility.

"It's a great opportunity to use recycled material. They use recycled scrap tire material for this, so it's nicer than going out and buying something new because it's something that has been repurposed," said Tara O'Donnell, Community Services Coordinator at the City of Fort St. John.

The \$9,996 grant comes from the Tire Stewardship B.C. (TSBC) program that provides grants for communities in B.C. to put towards the

use of recycled crumb rubber in their various community projects.

Fort St. John was one of 29 communities who received a total of \$559,318 to amp up the use of recyclable materials in community projects.

The 29 grants awarded across the province have kept over half a million pounds of tires out of B.C. landfills.

"This amounts to nearly 38,000 tires that were kept out of landfills and instead were recycled for use in playgrounds, water parks and indoor and

outdoor athletic facilities," said TSBC Executive Director Mike Hennessy.

"In total, TSBC's Community Grant Program recycled more than 680,000 pounds of rubber tires in 2011, benefiting the environment and helping to build B.C.'s economy."

Funding for the grant program comes directly from the Advance Disposal Fee or "eco-fee" that each retailer remits to TSBC for every new tire sold.

•SEE GREEN ON A3