

Schedule 2 to the Minutes of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee meeting of Richmond City Council held on Tuesday, February 23, 2015.

TO PACS - Feb 23, 2016
Item # 1(2)

SKATE PARKS IN RICHMOND

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Parks, Recreation, and
Cultural Services Committee
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Existing Parks

Current skate parks in Richmond are poorly designed, unsafe and not covered.

Thompson community skate plaza was designed as a multi use plaza with skate-able elements and seating areas.

- The design results in a poorly made park with weird elements for advanced skaters only.
- This plaza does not encourage beginner skaters to skate there. It is a frustrating park to learn on.
- This plaza has been constructed with materials that are not good for skateboarding. One element is lined with tiles rather than concrete making it difficult to skate. In the middle of the skating area there are rubber circles and ditches full of rocks which are not skateboard friendly.

River Road is an old park which, despite the fact that it is falling apart, is heavily used.

- River Road is better designed than Thompson but there is no flow to the park. No "flow" means you do a trick on one obstacle and then you roll away onto flat ground.
- River Road is also geared towards more advanced skaters. For example, in order to jump up to any of the street obstacles to do a trick you need to know how to Ollie at least a foot off the ground. This is very difficult for learning tricks.
- River Road is being heavily used by all wheeled vehicles even though it was not designed for this.

What is Needed?

Richmond needs a new skate park; one that is well designed, covered and safe!

Good Design in a skate park includes a park that has all disciplines of skating: Vertical (bowls and pools), Street (ledges, rails, stairs, flat ground), and Park (hills, quarter pipe, snake run). Good design has flow from one element to the next and back around again. Examples of well designed parks include:

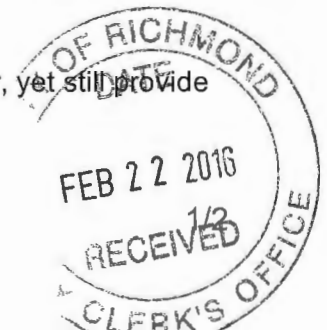
- Bonsor Skatepark, Burnaby BC. This park has all the disciplines of skating wrapped up into one park. It has a Vertical bowl section, a street section with beginner to advanced elements, and a park section which is a bunch of rolling hills to speed around and go fast.
- UBC Skatepark. Even though it is a small park, it has the most amazing flow. Each element rolls into the next and a huge bank wall ties the park in by sending you back around for another run. It has elements that incorporate each discipline of skating.
- Seylynn Bowl North Vancouver. This is one the oldest parks in BC. It is great because anybody can ride it and have an awesome time even if they have no skill. But at the same time professional skateboarders travel to skate this spot because of its legendary flow and style.

While all of these are excellent parks they also have their drawbacks. None of them are covered, nor do they have lights. And most importantly, none of them are in Richmond.

Covered: It would be great to have a place to skate in the winter. Even if it is not raining, River Road is often wet and slippery because it is north facing and has a dew problem starting in the fall.

Safety Features:

- For younger children and experienced skaters, parks with gentle curves are safer, yet still provide good fun for skaters of all abilities.



- Lights are important because it is dangerous to skate in the dark. Lights would enable skaters to make use of the park in the evening in the summer when it is cooler and less crowded. While River Road has some lights, they are only on the park and not around the surrounding area. To make the area safer we need more lights around the park.
- A roof will make a park safe because wet concrete is slippery, leading to potential disaster.
- To address some of the safety concerns at River Road it needs to be repaired. River Road is aging: the concrete is breaking off in chunks on the ramps, and the coping (round metal edge) is dented throughout most of the park.

Why do we need a new park?

- A well designed, covered, lighted skatepark is good for youth, families, the local community, and supports Richmond's urban vision. Many benefits flow from providing a facility for people to pursue an athletic activity that they love. For example:
 - Fitness
 - Calorie burn (sweat/cardio)
 - Fine motor skills
 - Agility and balance
 - Situational awareness
 - Never-ending learning curve
 - Community Building
 - Multi-age activity. People from ages 5 to 50+ are skating, so a well designed park will attract families, along with experienced skaters who can mentor and encourage others. Today, there are not many places where people of different generations truly interact.
 - Multi wheel: a good park can accommodate bikers, skaters, and scooters.
 - Outdoor setting: Good outdoor spaces enable families to be together. A skatepark with places for parents to sit encourage families to come.
 - Reinforces etiquette and patience. Everybody gets a turn; there is a code of safe skating.
 - Accessible for low income families. Skateboarding is a relatively cheap sport to get into. All you need is a skateboard and a helmet and pads.
 - Supporting Richmond's Community Plan. It is part of the OCP to have "a system of parks and open spaces that provides a diversity of recreational, social, cultural and environmental experiences" http://www.richmond.ca/shared/assets/26_parks23842.pdf Investing in a new skatepark helps Richmond to fulfill its 2041 Official Community Plan by "making this part of our community more attractive, livable, vibrant and sustainable, with great spaces and experiences."

Ways Forward

- Build a brand new covered, well designed skatepark. Possible locations are
 - Under the future George Massey Bridge. Advantages are huge space for development for future generations. However it is not in a good location for most kids in Richmond.
 - Under the south side of the Number Two Road bridge. Advantages:
 - it is an existing structure, close to central Richmond, and transit accessible
 - a skatepark can connect to the whole Dyke/Oval/River road park system
 - Redevelopment of the River Road Skatepark. We would need to rebuild existing elements and add new features so that the park will be friendlier to all ages and abilities, and have "killer flow".

For information on construction and design see the **New Line Skateparks** Website.
<http://www.newlineskateparks.com/About/>

For ideas and vision read **The Tony Hawk Foundation** Public Skatepark Development Guide
<http://publicskateparkguide.org/>