

Report to/Rapport au :

Community and Protective Services Committee
Comité des services communautaires et de protection

and Council / et au Conseil

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CITY WIDE / À L'ÉCHELLE DE LA VILLE

Ref N°: ACS2012-COS-PRC-0019

SUBJECT: SKATEBOARD AND BMX PARKS - INTERIM STRATEGY

**OBJET : PARCS POUR PLANCHE À ROULETTE ET BMX – STRATÉGIE
PROVISOIRE**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Community and Protective Services Committee recommend Council approve the interim three-year strategy for the development of skateboard and BMX parks outlined in this report.

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité des services communautaires et de protection recommande au Conseil d'approuver la stratégie triennale provisoire relative à la création de parcs pour planche à roulettes et BMX, décrite dans ce rapport.

BACKGROUND

The City has 13 outdoor skateboard parks and five BMX parks located in various neighbourhoods across the City, as well as one indoor skatepark at McNabb Arena during the summer months. These parks were developed over the last two decades without established standards and therefore vary significantly in terms of construction approach, size, types of ramps and equipment and amenities.

The 2005 Community Infrastructure report approved by Council recommended a two pronged approach to the development of skateboard parks. Firstly, to continue to develop the smaller neighbourhood and community level outdoor permanent skateboard parks across the City. Secondly, to pursue opportunities to provide District or City-wide serving skateboard parks in partnership with the private sector. Since 2005, progress has been made in improving and expanding existing parks as well as replacing and upgrading equipment. However, there has been less progress in developing larger District facilities that offer a more comprehensive and challenging experience for skateboards. The Department of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services will be developing a longer term strategy for the development of skateboard and BMX parks as part of a facilities strategy report that is due 2014, with implementation in the years that follow.

The purpose of this report is to recommend an interim strategy to move the City towards the timely development of District skateboard parks ahead of the more comprehensive strategy.

DISCUSSION

During the 2011 skateboarding season, a group of skateboarding enthusiasts, organized as the Ottawa Skateboard Community Association, became involved in discussions with the City over the relocation of a Barrhaven Skateboard Park. Aside from the specifics of the park relocation, the skateboarders demonstrated a willingness to work with the City to provide expertise on the broader need for skateboard parks across the City. Discussions to date have included such topics as the selection of ramp equipment, the physical layout of skateboard parks, and the need for more challenging parks to supplement the existing neighbourhood parks.

In order to maintain the enthusiasm and momentum of skateboarders in the development of larger District Skateboard Parks, it is recommended that the following interim strategy be pursued:

Recommended Interim Skateboard Park Development Strategy

Pending the development of a longer term skateboard park strategy, the City will focus its attention and resources over the next three years on the following approach to the development of skateboard facilities:

- Identifying suitable and appropriate parcels of City land in close proximity to Transitway corridors, the light rail corridor, major bus transit lines and large recreation complexes for the development of District skateboard parks.
- Prioritizing the development of District Skateboard Parks for the Central Core, South end and East end of the City.
- Developing strategies for the acquisition, retention or re-purposing of any identified suitable lands for skateboard parks.

- Designing the layout and components of new skateboard parks in consultation with the Ottawa Skateboard Community Association, local host community associations and skateboard park users.
- Working with Planning and Growth Management to redirect some new park development investments towards the development of District Skateboard Parks.
- Developing funding models for the creation of District Skateboard parks that includes:
 - Pursuit of sponsorship opportunities
 - Strategic use of Cash in Lieu of Parkland Ward and City-wide funds to support site acquisitions and park development, including the pursuit of collaborative projects involving multiple wards in instances where a well located District Park could meet the needs of more than one ward.

Though this strategy is focused largely on the development of skateboard parks, the Department recommends that the strategy also be applied to the development of new BMX parks. Two of the existing BMX parks are located adjacent to skateboarding facilities (at Trillium Park and Bob McQuarrie Recreation Complex - Orleans), and benefit from the same support amenities such as parking, maintenance and regular inspections. Accordingly, site selection criteria and approach to site design and layout are aspects of the strategy that fit well with the development of both types of facilities.

Next Steps:

It is anticipated that the next opportunities to apply this strategy will come with the development of skateboard facilities at the new Richcraft - Kanata North Recreation Complex. This park will be located in a high activity area adjacent to a major recreation facility and the design will be undertaken with the involvement of the Ottawa Skateboard Community Association and local community groups. There is also an opportunity to pursue the redesign of an existing skateboard park in Barrhaven and to relocate it on surplus transit land. At the same time, work will be undertaken to find an opportunity to create a District skateboard park in the core of the City that meets the strategy points highlighted above.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

This report focuses on the development of District Skateboard Parks in the urban parts of the City with well established transit links to facilitate easy access by users. The development of neighbourhood skateboard parks will continue to meet local demands in rural areas as opportunities arise.

CONSULTATION

The Department has consulted with the Ottawa Skateboard Community Association in the preparation of this report. The following two Councillors participated in discussions with the Association and provided the following comments:

Councillor Harder: Developing a strategy and identifying locations and funding strategies will be key to successful skateboard opportunities for enthusiasts who use the transit system to connect to existing locations and who will continue to use transit as the main tool for accessing skateboard parks offering recreational and programming options to a very engaged population

Councillor Taylor: I am supportive of this strategy moving forward and see it as a relatively low cost / high benefit tool for engaging the skateboarding and BMX communities.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to the implementation of the recommendation in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications to implementing the recommendations in this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations in this report.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Projects will be in compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* (AODA.)

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

This report aligns to Council Strategic Objective HC2, improve Parks and Recreation.

DISPOSITION

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services department will carry forward the recommendations from this report.