



INFORMATION REPORT

TO:	Chair and Members Emergency and Community Services Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	July 12, 2017
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Skateboard Park Study (CES17031) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Sarah Cellini 905-546-2424 ext. 3859
SUBMITTED BY:	Chris Herstek Director, Recreation Community and Emergency Services Department
SIGNATURE:	

Council Direction:

Not Applicable

Information:

Project Background

The Outdoor Recreation Facilities & Sports Field Provision Plan (also known as the Outdoor Study) provides the City of Hamilton with a sustainable strategy for managing its portfolio of outdoor sports fields and other community-use recreational infrastructure. The Outdoor Study is used as a guiding document for the City's 10-year capital program, subject to annual capital budget review. This long-range study (to the year 2031) and implementation plan focuses on projects that can be undertaken within the next ten (10) years.

The Skateboard Park Study was initiated as a result of the Outdoor Study's City Wide Recommendation #61:

"Site selection criteria should be established and followed when evaluating potential locations for new skate parks. Further, all skate parks should be designed in consultation."

Due to the increasing popularity of wheeled sports (i.e. skateboard, inline skating, scooter, bicycle), there is increased demand for wheeled sport amenities. The need to accommodate these free, unstructured recreational physical activity opportunities that support a healthy lifestyle (improved health, fitness, strength and mental well-being) and improve skill development (activity movement, social and academic skills) is high. The

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

Outdoor Study identified a deficiency in the number of existing skateboard/wheeled sports amenities offered in Hamilton as well as areas that would benefit from community and neighbourhood level skateboard/wheeled sports amenities:

Community-level Skateboard Amenities

The Outdoor Study recommended three to four additional community-level skateboard parks be developed by 2021 and one to two more by 2031 to provide greater opportunities and a more equitable distribution. Community-level skateboard parks are larger (in the range of 10,000 to 12,000 sq. ft.) and serve higher skill levels. Priority areas for new community skate park development are as follows (in order):

- Lower Stoney Creek
- Hamilton Mountain
- West Hamilton/Dundas
- Ancaster
- Upper Stoney Creek

The order for community skateboard park development was determined based on a provision target (1 skateboard park per 7,500 youth), as well as spatial distribution across the City. The order established through the Outdoor Study will require reprioritization as information and trends relating to growth areas and demographics are outdated since the study was received by Committee (i.e. 2011). In addition, available funding and/or existing work plan efficiencies from existing park development or redevelopment plans may provide opportunities to alter the skateboard park development priority order established through the Outdoor Study.

Neighbourhood-level Skateboard Amenities

The Outdoor Study recommended the construction of four to five neighbourhood-level skate parks in smaller gap areas where there is an insufficient number of youth to support a community-level park. Neighbourhood-level skateboard parks are smaller (no more than 2,000 sq. ft.) and serve introductory skill levels. Potential candidate areas for neighbourhood-level parks include (in no priority order):

- Lower Hamilton
- Lower Stoney Creek
- Upper Stoney Creek

Report CES17031 outlines the key findings of the Skateboard Park Study and provides an evaluation of the candidate sites, identified through the public consultation process, using the criteria developed during the study. The findings of the Skateboard Park Study will be used to determine locations, typologies and design of future skateboard parks across the City of Hamilton.

Skateboard Park Study

The purpose of the Skateboard Park Study is to equip staff with a general understanding of skateboard park design elements, types, constraints and user preferences to create a standard process for selecting new skateboard facility locations across the City (using the priority areas identified through the Outdoor Study) and ensure that future skateboard/wheeled sport parks are fun to use and have minimal or no negative impact to the surrounding community. The City hired LANDinc Consulting to undertake the Skateboard Park Study, which was organized into three Study Phases:

- Phase 1: Communication Plan;
- Phase 2: Background Study; and,
- Phase 3: Implementation, Development and Analysis Report.

Phase 1: Communication Plan

A significant component of the Skateboard Park Study was public consultation, specifically with youth between the ages of 10 and 19 years of age, as this is the primary age user group for skateboard park amenities. The Communication Plan outlined the process for public consultation and project outreach, such as a stakeholder mailing list, online survey and public consultation sessions. An online user survey was deployed to understand skateboarder behaviours, characteristics and preferences. Public information centres were hosted to gather information from participants on draft evaluation criteria, design elements, and potential locations for future skateboard park development. The input gathered was helpful in understanding skateboard user concerns, needs and preferences to improve existing and future Skateboard Parks within Hamilton.

Phase 2: Background Study

While the Outdoor Study outlined general information regarding size and locational considerations, the Skateboard Park Background Study (attached as Appendix A to Report CES17031) provides a detailed review of the following elements of the sport of skateboarding:

- Hamilton's skateboarding history and culture;
- Inventory of existing skateboard parks;
- Skateboard park typologies and hierarchies;
- Skateboard park best practices and sport trends;
- A review of other municipalities skateboard park and provision rates; and
- A summary of the online user survey and public consultation sessions.

Phase 3: Implementation, Development and Analysis Report

The Skateboard Park Implementation, Development and Analysis Report document (attached as Appendix B to Report CES17031) outlines the process by which a tool was developed to evaluate potential skateboard park locations. Draft evaluation criteria were developed by the consultants and were presented to participants during the public

consultation sessions. Although the evaluation criteria scored certain park locations to be good potential candidate sites for future skateboard/wheeled sports parks, the evaluation criteria is only one tool to be used in conjunction with a site-specific feasibility study to determine appropriate locations for future skateboard/wheeled sports park sites. Once feasible skateboard/wheeled sports park locations have been identified, consultations with the Ward Councillor and the local residents will be required to address constraints and opportunities.

This phase also identified safety, maintenance and design considerations for wheeled sport parks, funding sources and budget allocation considerations, options for park programming and park education, as well as a citizen-initiated skateboard/wheeled sports park request process for locations that were not submitted as part of the formal public consultation (i.e. online user survey, email and consultation sessions) for future consideration.

Relevant Consultation

A staff team was created to provide guidance to the consultant team during all phases of the Skateboard Park Study, with membership from the following departments and divisions:

- Public Works: Landscape Architectural Services, Parks and Cemeteries;
- Community and Emergency Services: Public Health, Recreation; and
- Corporate Services: Risk, Capital Budgets.

Staff comments have been incorporated into this report.

Public consultation during Phase 1 was integral to obtaining key findings of the Skateboard Park Study. Additional suggestions for skateboard park locations were received by email after the Consultants completed the Skateboard Park Study. To incorporate the suggested locations, the following sites were evaluated by staff using the evaluation criteria as described in the Skateboard Park Study Phase 3 Implementation, Development and Analysis document. The additional evaluated sites document is attached as Appendix C to Report CES17031.

Key Findings of the Skateboard Park Study

The following points summarize key findings from Phase 2 of the Skateboard Park Study:

- Skateboarding culture in Hamilton is unique, strong and historic (i.e. Beasley) and appeals to a wide variety of ages;
- Hamilton's existing skateboard parks are well used. The top three skateboard parks in Hamilton according to participants of the online survey are: Turner, Beasley and Waterdown;

- The consultant team does not recommend modular construction for the following reasons: noise, limited design and size options and liability. Modular skateboard parks are created from pre-fabricated pieces, made from wood, steel and concrete. Hamilton has two existing skateboard parks that are modular construction: Mohawk Sports Park Half Pipe and Fairgrounds Skateboard Park in Binbrook;
- Additional investment is required to increase the number of skateboard/wheeled sport parks across the City to meet demand and provision rates.

The Consultants recommend that Parks By-law No. 01-219 be amended to reflect that roller blade, scooter and skateboard use be permitted in designated park areas and hard surfaced trails, similar to bicycle use.

The following points summarize highlights from Phase 3 of the Skateboard Park Study:

- Site Selection Criteria was created through input gathered during public consultation and is one method of review that should be used as part of a feasibility review by staff to evaluate future requests for skateboard/wheeled sport parks;
- Recommended approaches to incorporate multiple users (i.e. skateboard, scooter, roller blade and bicycle) at existing skateboard parks; and,
- All sites identified by participants of the public consultation sessions were evaluated by the consultant team using the evaluation criteria. The five, highest scoring parks include:
 - Valley Park
 - Alexander Park
 - Ancaster Community Centre
 - Powell Park
 - Sir Wilfrid Laurier Recreation Centre.

Be advised that high scoring parks do not necessarily indicate feasibility of implementation. For example, site specific constraints (including but not limited to cultural and natural heritage considerations, detailed location and setback requirements from existing/proposed park amenities and residential property lines, etc.) at the ranked locations may limit development of skateboard/wheeled sports park development which were not considered during the evaluation criteria review.

Next Steps

The Skateboard Park Study will inform location and design decisions for future skateboard/wheeled sports park amenities in the City of Hamilton. Although the consultants identified potential parks as good locations for future skateboard/wheeled sports park, a more detailed feasibility review by staff is required to determine site-

specific opportunities and constraints such as land ownership, legislative considerations Ward Councillor consultation and community consultation, prior to inclusion on future capital budget plans. The following next steps are intended to assist staff with future skateboard/wheeled sports park requests:

- Recreation staff will work with Public Works staff to determine priority areas for future skateboard/wheeled sports park developments/redevelopments using findings from both the Outdoor Study and Skateboard Park Study, updated demographic information from the 2016 Census data and Environics, budget considerations/funding opportunities and project efficiencies/alignment within existing work plans;
- Staff will use the evaluation criteria developed through the Skateboard Park Study when considering requests for future skateboard/wheeled sports park locations; and,
- The scale of priority for skateboard/wheeled sports park development should focus on City-Wide and/or community level parks, as those parks are likely to have available space to accommodate the amenity without impacting other existing amenities and have existing support amenities (such as washroom facilities, access to drinking water and food, parking, etc.) in the park or within walking distance.

Staff will evaluate the list of parks that satisfied the Skateboard Park Study evaluation criteria screening process in conjunction with Ward Councillor consultations. The locations that are chosen for skateboard/wheeled sports park development will be included for Council approval in future capital budget processes.

Appendices and Schedules Attached

Appendix A to Report CES17031:	Hamilton Skateboard Park Study Phase 2: Background Study
Appendix B to Report CES17031:	Hamilton Skateboard Park Study Phase 3: Implementation, Development and Analysis
Appendix C to Report CES17031:	Additional Evaluated Sites