


# VANCOUVER SKATEBOARD AMENITIES STRATEGY

JUNE, 2022

VANCOUVER BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

This Strategy encompasses the planning of amenities and programming for all small-wheeled sports in Vancouver including skateboarding, BMX biking, roller and inline skating, scootering and other sports. Throughout this report, the word "skateboarding" or "skateboarder" is often used for brevity but is inclusively referring to all of these small wheeled sports and their users

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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This CitySkate Strategy plans for the future of Vancouver's skate amenities all of which are on the unceded territories of the the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətal (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We are grateful to learn from the Nations as we live on their lands and commit to supporting each other and the community through collaboration with indigenous youth and spreading the skate tradition of creating truly welcoming and rad spaces for everyone.

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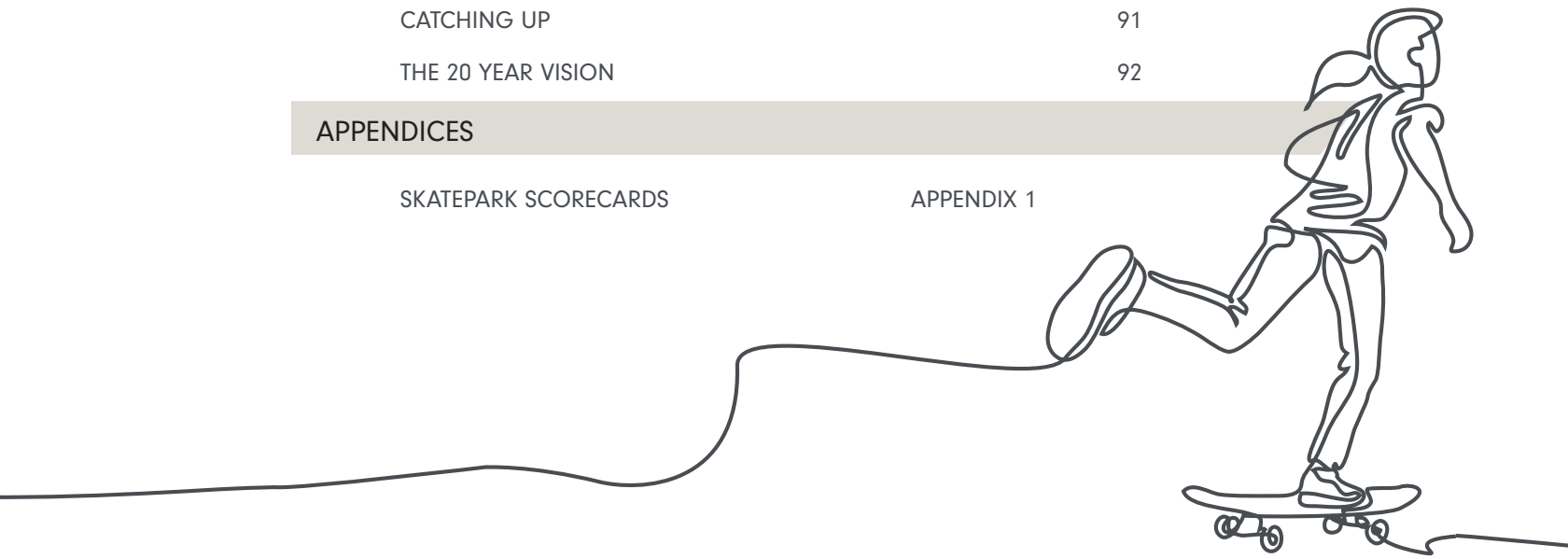
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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Skateboarding has a long and rich history in Vancouver and the city continues to foster a thriving and engaged skate community today. Skateboarding, BMX biking, roller skating, inline skating, scootering and other small-wheeled action sports activities are growing in popularity and offer benefits to individuals and the community, especially equity-denied community members. There is a lack of amenities to meet the growing demand and requests from the community continue to increase. This led to and inspired the need to create CitySkate – a strategy to support Vancouver's vibrant skate community. CitySkate provides a strategic outlook, with a clear and feasible plan for achieving a new vision and implementing skate amenities over the next 20 years.

In 2021, the Park Board brought together a team of community members, skate advocates and industry professionals to shape the future of skateboarding and small-wheeled sports in Vancouver. A vision for Vancouver's skate amenities was developed through two phases of public engagement and outreach including pop-ups, open houses, panel discussions, an educational video (Vancouver CitySkate) and two surveys with a total of over 3,300 unique participants - the highest number in Park Board history for a single sport.

In addition to public input, the project team undertook an extensive analysis of Vancouver's existing skate amenities, transportation network, population projections, development and growth areas, and a variety of other siting considerations and opportunities. Vancouver's parks currently host ten skate amenities, only three of which can be classified as standard skate "parks" (over 600$m^2$). The average age of existing skate amenities is 19 years old, and the most recent permanent skate spot at Mount Pleasant (at 370$m^2$) was built over 11 years ago. Vancouver celebrated the completion of the world-famous Hastings Bowl in 2001, and North America's first outdoor street style skate park at the Downtown Plaza in 2004. However, the overall age of existing infrastructure and lack of new construction means Vancouver has since fallen behind other cities in quantity and quality of terrain. Vancouver's skateparks are not equitably distributed across the city, are frequently over-crowded and are currently under-serving the skate community.

Besides planning for the development of skateparks, this strategy recognizes skateboarding and small-wheeled sports as inseparable from the fabric of the city and takes a creative approach to providing skate amenities beyond traditional park settings in order to meet the demand and develop a true skateable city. Providing skate friendly spaces 'between parks' in the public realm, along bike routes and greenways, and through innovative programming will improve geographic distribution, equitable access, reduce over-crowding at skateparks, and highlight opportunities for creating a sustainable transportation network between skate amenities.

In keeping with the feedback received through the public engagement process and the analysis undertaken by the project team, the CitySkate Strategy has defined the following principles, vision, mission and goals to guide the development of skate amenities:

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles provide the foundation of how the skate strategy will be implemented.

**Skateboarding in Vancouver is:**

1. EQUITABLE
2. INCLUSIVE
3. QUALITY
4. COLLABORATIVE

## VISION

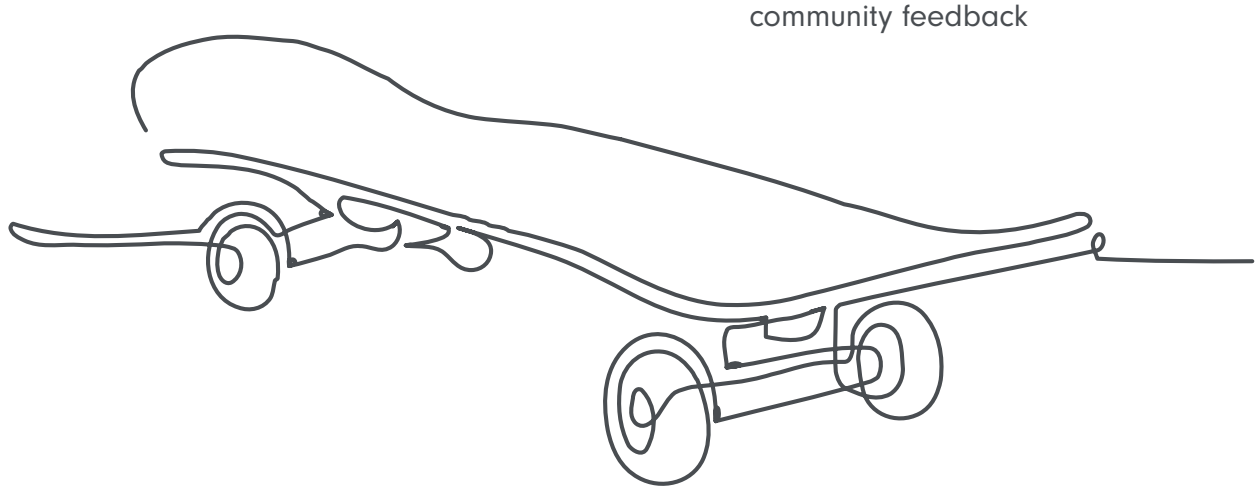
In the year 2042, Vancouver is home to a well connected network of approachable and welcoming skate amenities that serve a thriving and diverse skate community.

## MISSION

To support the skateboarding community through provision of amenities that meet demand, by enhancing user safety and promoting acceptance of skateboarding within recreation culture and are inclusive to a diverse user group with a variety of backgrounds and skill levels.

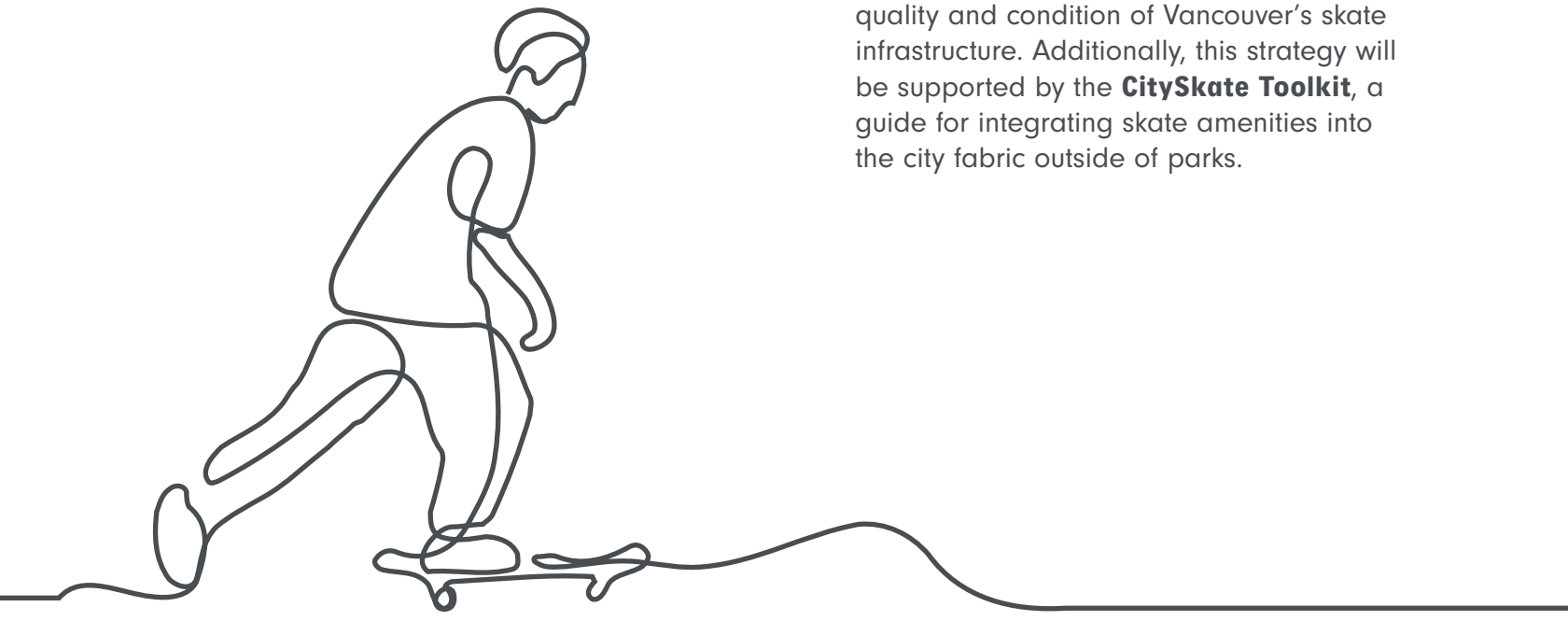
## GOALS

- **More Space:** Increase the overall area of skateable surfaces to meet Vancouver's growing needs
- **Year-Round Use:** Provide skate amenities that are dry when it rains
- **Better Distribution**: Distribute skate amenities around the city with convenient access to rapid transit
- **Community Support:** Support the skateboarding community through continued collaboration
- **Connecting the Network**: Improve opportunities for skateboarding as a mode of active transportation
- **Creative Integration:** Integrate skate amenities in a way that balances user enjoyment, safety
- **Terrain Variety:** Develop customized and diverse terrain types across the city based on site specific opportunities and community feedback



To determine the amount of skate terrain required to serve the user group over the next 20 years, the project team referred to both VanPlay recommendations and the Skatepark Adoption Model (SAM). Analysis shows that Vancouver's current skate infrastructure is greatly lacking, so in order to address the need for more skateable terrain, CitySkate looks at **five implementation areas** to creatively address demand across the city:

1. New Builds in Parks
2. Existing Skate Amenity Upgrades
3. Skateable City Spaces
4. Skate Friendly Greenways
5. Programming and Partnerships



## RECOMMENDATIONS

By 2042, Vancouver's skate amenity network will aim to achieve:

- Four new network hub scale skateparks
- Four new neighbourhood skateparks
- Ten new skate spots and dots in parks
- Over 11,000m$^2$ of new skate amenity space in parks for a total of 18,000 m$^2$ of space in parks
- Rain sheltered skate amenities for year-round participation.
- Multiple sanctioned DIY skate amenities
- Ongoing maintenance and care program to ensure safe and high-quality spaces
- Park Board supported skate events and programming

This strategy is supported by **Skatepark Scorecards** (appendix 1) which rate the quality and condition of Vancouver's skate infrastructure. Additionally, this strategy will be supported by the **CitySkate Toolkit**, a guide for integrating skate amenities into the city fabric outside of parks.

| IMPLEMENTATION AREA | KEY ACTIONS |
|---|---|
| New Builds in Parks | 1. Construct three new "network hub" and four new "neighbourhood" scale skate parks to act as the foundation of the skate amenity network |
| | 2. Construct 10 new skate "spots" and "dots" in parks throughout the city as opportunities arise |
| Existing Skate Amenity Upgrades | 1. Upgrade six existing skate amenities with modern construction standards to ensure safe and interesting spaces that meet future demand |
| | 2. Provide high level oversight on the condition and maintenance needs of skateparks |
| Skateable City Spaces | 1. Work with the City of Vancouver to explore opportunities for new or temporary or permanent spots and dots in the public realm |
| | 2. Collaborate with the Vancouver School Board to explore the creation of skate amenities as part of renovations in education settings and related amenity spaces |
| | 3. On private lands, encourage private developers to provide skateable features or spaces as part of the provision of public amenities where appropriate and where there is compatibility with the associated development and uses |
| Skate Friendly Greenways | 1. Collaborate with the City of Vancouver's Engineering department on the integration of skate spots and dots when upgrading existing or implementing new greenways in the city. |
| | 2. Explore with the City of Vancouver's Engineering department on the improvement of greenway connections between different skate amenities and rapid transit stops in support of small wheeled sports accessibility. |
| | 3. Consider small-wheeled accessibility of the overall greenway network to support skateboarding as a pivotal mode of sustainable transportation. |
| Partnerships and Programming | 1. Park Board to seek access to year-round, rain sheltered skate amenities |
| | 2. Designate existing and new spaces that promote a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) atmosphere. |
| | 3. Expand the Skate Hosts program for each neighbourhood or network hub scale skatepark |
| | 4. Coordinate skate programming and events internally and/or through partnerships with user groups |



# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND & HISTORY



# BACKGROUND & HISTORY

The unique history of skateboarding and its cultural roots on the west coast of North America set the foundation for the vibrant skate culture we see in Vancouver today. This chapter will briefly outline the purpose of the skateboard strategy, recount the origins of skateboarding, its integration within urban landscapes and the benefits skateboarding brings to a city as both a culture as well as a recreational activity.

## 1.1 ABOUT THE SKATEBOARD STRATEGY

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this strategy is to support the community by identifying opportunities to enhance and increase the inventory of skate amenities in Vancouver and develop a long term plan with priorities for capital investment.

### BACKGROUND

Vancouver has long been considered a mecca for skateboarding and is home to a thriving and diverse skate community, a number of professional riders, as well as several skate-related non-profit organizations. The popularity of skateboarding and other small-wheeled sports is surging and is overwhelming the city's existing skate amenities creating barriers for people looking to participate. This is particularly true for youth, women, indigenous youth, and marginalized communities who already face additional obstacles in participating in other small-wheeled sports

The social acceptance of skateboarding and other small-wheeled sports has varied over the years but with education and greater exposure to skateboarding, there is a growing level of acknowledgement and integration within the fabric of municipal recreation, public life and culture. In 2005, the Park Board created an initial Skateboard Strategy that led to the development of a few skate amenities, but no new amenities have been built since 2011. With Vancouver's population increasing and current infrastructure at capacity there is a strong need to renew, update and expand our network.

In response to increasing requests from the skate community, Park Board directed staff in 2017 to develop CitySkate to assess current user needs and service levels to help guide a 20 year implementation plan and sets the framework for closing this service gap through the creation of new skate amenities and integrating skate related activities into Vancouver's social, cultural and recreational future.

### PROCESS OVERVIEW

This strategy was developed through the following six main project stages (Flow chart on right.):

1. LAUNCH: Data collection, research and planning.

2. LISTEN: Understanding needs through the first phase of public and stakeholder engagement, surveys and open houses.

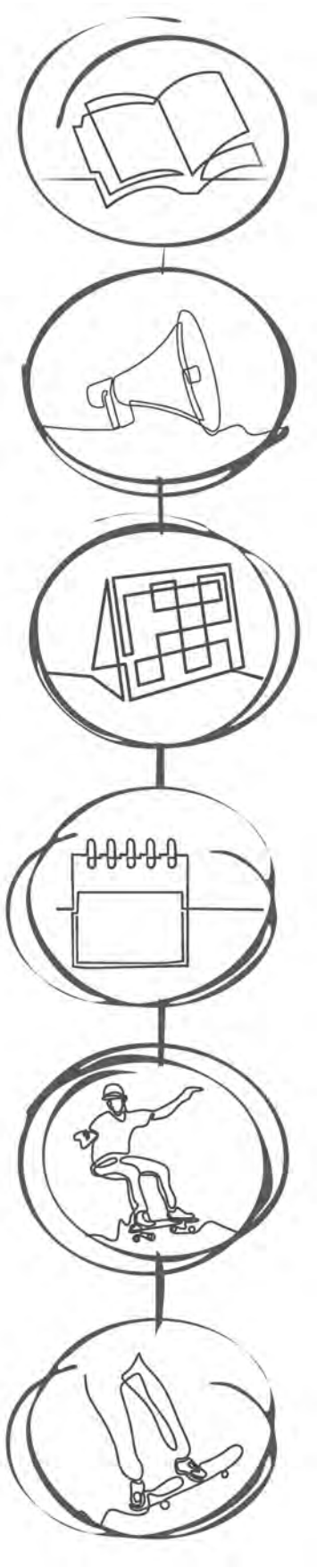
3. EXPLORE: Policy development and pop-up events

4. ENGAGE: Setting priorities through the second phase of public engagement, surveys and open houses.

5. SYNTHESIZE: Strategy development, recommendations and review.

6. FINALIZE : Confirm strategy with Park Board and City Staff, and present to the Park Board Commissioners.

PROCESS TIMELINE



SPRING
2021

LAUNCH

- Research
- Developing Working Groups

SUMMER
2021

LISTEN

- Survey #1
- Panel #1 and Pop-up Events
- Engagement
- Inventory and Analysis

AUTUMN
2021

EXPLORE

- Prepare Phase 2 Engagement
- Strategy Development

LATE-AUTUMN
2021

ENGAGE

- Open House
- Survey #2
- Pop-up Events

WINTER
2022

SYNTHESIZE

- Develop Recommendations
- Draft Strategy
- Review Feedback with User Group

SPRING
2022

FINALIZE

- Final Report
- Park Board Decision

## 1.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF SKATEBOARDING

Skateboarding was invented in the 1950s in California as an alternative to surfing when wave conditions were poor. Some of the first skateboards were essentially wooden planks modified with roller skate wheels and were ridden barefoot down sidewalks, mimicking the turns and manoeuvres performed in surfing.

In the early 1970s, skateboarding tipped from the subcultures of California into the mainstream with technological advances in the design of skateboards (refer to Figure 1). The emergence of polyurethane wheels gave skateboards grip on the roads and allowed for much more sustained rolls between pushes. The improved grip and control of these new skateboards inspired people to find new places to skate. Drained swimming pools emerged as the new frontier for skateboarding and provided a brand-new way for skaters to express themselves. With the boom in the popularity of skateboarding, private companies began building the first purpose-built skateparks all across the world. Unfortunately, poor design and substandard construction of these early parks made maintenance and upkeep very costly and proved to be a less than profitable business venture in most cases causing a widespread closure and decommissioning of these early parks.

Skateboarding continued to grow with informal wooden ramps and emptied swimming pools as the primary setting for skateboarding's progression through the 1980s, however access to these spaces remained limited to a privileged few and excluded much of the skateboarding population. The scarcity of skate space combined with the continued growth of the sport pushed skaters to reimagine the terrain necessary for skateboarding. The resulting innovations in skateboard tricks opened an entirely new direction for the sport in urban streets, plazas and public spaces.

## 1.3 STREET SKATING

The emergence of street skating in the late 1980s and early 1990s brought skateboarding out of the purpose-built ramps and bowls and into the urban sphere. It provided an opportunity for skaters from all different backgrounds to skate regardless of whether or not they had access to a drained pool or vert ramp. Benches, handrails, ledges, curbs, stair sets and other typical features of the cityscape were given alternate purpose as skate amenities reimagined by the new street skaters. The accessibility of this form of skateboarding propelled the sport into the limelight in the 1990s creating a whole suite of spin-off cultural industries in fashion, arts, music and entertainment. Parallel advancements in camera technology and media further drove skateboarding into centre-stage as skateboard movies, magazines and even video games became popular in households across the world.

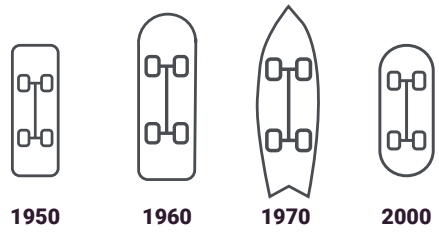



Figure 1. The Evolution of Skateboards

## 1.4 SKATEBOARDING IN VANCOUVER

Vancouver is one of the largest metropolitan regions in Canada and is characterized by its prominent location nestled between the Pacific Ocean and British Columbia's Coastal Mountains. Its unique geography also brings a more mild, coastal climate when compared to most other cities in Canada – a great asset for supporting skateboarding as a year-round activity. Its location just up the coast from the birthplace of skateboarding in California also made Vancouver one of the early adopters of the sport and has fostered a robust skateboard scene over the past several decades. With the mild coastal climate however, comes a tremendous amount of rainfall ranking Vancouver as the fourth wettest city in the country[1]. This is a significant obstacle for year-round participation in the city, with wet conditions making skating very dangerous and causing irreversible damage to equipment.

Support for the new and exciting sport was widespread in the early years of skateboarding in Vancouver, with the city constructing some of the first skate amenities in Canada including the iconic China Creek bowls in 1979. International events and competitions such as the Slam City Jam (North American Skateboard Championships) were also held in Vancouver annually from 1994 to 2005, cementing the city's place on the global forefront of the sport. Iconic locations across the city were even featured in a 2003 release of the cult classic "Tony Hawk" video game series.

Despite the popularity of the sport and clear trajectory of growth in the city, there were still many who saw the sport as a risk to public safety and property. In the mid-1990s, defensive attitudes towards the sport appeared in the widespread use of knobs, caps, and 'skate-stops' deployed



Figure 2. Kensington Skatepark (built in 2010) from above




Figure 3. Youth enjoying the Downtown Plaza Skatepark

at popular skate spots across the city. This effort to regulate skateboarding was reinforced by the City of Vancouver with the endorsement of Bylaw 77 which prohibited skateboarding and related sports in the streets. The effort to restrict street skating was justified by city officials through the provision of sanctioned skate parks where skateboarding could occur without potential overlap with other public users.

The unique combination of restricting street spots while providing new skateparks led to the creation of one of the first "street-style" skateparks in North America – the Downtown Plaza skatepark (2004). At that time, skatepark design was typically focused on more traditional transition terrain such as bowls, banks and ramps, whereas the Plaza pulled inspiration from many of the iconic street spots that had been shut down in the preceding years. The development of this skatepark also marked a turning point in Vancouver's skateboard history with the unlikely coalition of local skateboard advocates, city planners, landscape architects and the Vancouver Police Department all working together to create something that was beneficial to everyone. Not long after the plaza was built, the City of Vancouver amended Bylaw 77 restricting skateboarding and began to take a proactive approach to integrating skateboarding back into the fabric of the city.

1.Government of Canada Environment and Natural Resources, Canadian climate Normals 1981-2010

## 1.5 THE BENEFITS OF SKATEBOARDING

Skateboarding has grown as much as a culture as it has as a sport and as a result, brings a broad range of benefits to a city. Skateboarding creates opportunities for recreation, supports mental and physical health, builds community particularly among urban youth and increases economic activity in a wide range of spin-off industries such as fashion, music and arts[2].

### LOW BARRIER

Skateboarding is considered to have very low barriers to entry in that the equipment is relatively affordable and it can be practiced nearly anywhere with a hardscaped surface[3]. This puts skateboarding and other small wheeled action sports in the unique position to cross social and economic boundaries improving social ties between groups that may otherwise be divided. Providing equitable access to skate amenities across the city creates recreational opportunities for people facing barriers with more traditional sports and recreation.



Figure 4. First time skateboarders at Strathcona

| AVERAGE AGE OF PARTICIPANT BY SPORT | |
|---|---|
| Skateboarding | **14.0** |
| Soccer | **17.2** |
| Football | **17.9** |
| In-Line Skating | **19.8** |
| Baseball | **20.0** |
| Basketball | **23.7** |
| Softball | **29.1** |
| Tennis | **30.5** |
| Golf | **39.0** |

Figure 5. Average Age of Participant by Sport (Source: City of Seattle)

### PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

Skateboarding has been proven to provide a wide range of positive health outcomes for participants. Skateboarding is a physically demanding activity that improves flexibility, strength, coordination, endurance and can provide participants with the daily cardiovascular exercise as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control[4]. Regularly meeting these exercise recommendations has been proven to reduce the occurrence of chronic diseases such as high blood pressure and coronary heart disease[5]. In addition to physical health benefits, skateboarding has been proven to provide a wide range of mental health benefits to participants ranging from stress reduction to improved self-confidence[6]. Physical activity among youth has dropped off considerably in recent years, and 1 in 5 teens suffer from a form of mental illness[7][8] however skateboarding is a sport that has tremendous appeal to teens and therefore plays a significant role in the health

2. Borden, I. (2019). Skateboarding and the city: A complete history. London, UK.

of the youth in our city. CitySkate's public engagement process supports these findings with survey respondents citing "staying active" and "relieving stress" as primary reasons for participating in skateboarding and related sports.

### SOCIAL CONNECTION AND COMMUNITY

Skateboarding teaches important qualities such as creativity, confidence, perseverance, patience and resilience through the practiced effort of skateboarding[9]. These character traits are directly transferable into other aspects of life and are particularly important in the development of positive life skills among youth. Skateparks and skate amenities can be safe havens for young people in cities that often lack dedicated space to recreate, socialize and participate in urban life[10]. In addition to health benefits, people cited "hanging out with friends" and "meeting new people" as top reasons for participating in skateboarding and related sports[11]. Furthermore, the high degree of knowledge sharing, teaching, and supportive spectator culture builds bridges between demographics, and helps strengthen a sense of community, while building social resiliency across the city.

3. Snyder, G. J. (2017). Skateboarding LA: Inside professional street skateboarding..
4. Wiles, T., et al. (2020). Characterization of Adult Heart Rate Responses During Recreational Skateboarding at Community Skateparks. International Journal of Exercise Science.
5. Surgeon General (1999) Physical Health and Activity. Centers for Disease Control.
6. Health Fitness Revolution (2014) The Health Benefits of Skateboarding. https://www.healthfitnessrevolution.com/health-benefits-skateboarding/
7. Canadian Mental Health Association (2021) Fast Facts about Mental Health and Mental Illness. https://cmha.ca/brochure/fast-facts-about-mental-illness/
8. Canadian Institute for Health Information (2020) Child and youth mental health in Canada. https://www.cihi.ca/en/child-and-youth-mental-health-in-canada-infographic
9. Corwin, et al (2019) Beyond the Board: Findings from the Field
10. Borden, I. (2019). Skateboarding and the city: A complet history. London, UK.
11. CitySkate (2021) Engagement Summary Reports 1 & 2

## 1.6 COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS OF SKATEBOARDING

Through past engagement, research and experiences with implementing skate amenities, many myths about skateboarding have made the rounds in the industry, with broader technology and data sharing available. The following are some common misconceptions around skateboarding that are owed some clarification.

### "SKATEBOARDING IS DANGEROUS"

Skateboarding has traditionally had a reputation for being perceived as dangerous, however this has been widely disputed by communities across North America. According to the NSC (National Safety Council), skateboarding ranks lower on the injury list than many other sports [12]. The three highest positions are taken up by hockey, football and baseball. Skateboarding injuries tend to be relatively minor, consisting of ankle and wrist injuries and fatalities have only typically been associated through interactions with vehicles on the road.

| INJURIES PER 1,000 PARTICIPANTS | |
|---|---|
| Hockey | **2.7** |
| Football | **2.2** |
| Baseball | **1.8** |
| Basketball | **1.6** |
| Bicycling | **1.1** |
| Skateboarding | **0.7** |

NOTES: Skateboarders skating less than one week account for 1/3 of all injuries. Irregular riding surfaces accounted for over half of the skateboarding injuries due to falls

Figure 6. Average Age of Participant by Sport (Source: City of Seattle)

### "SKATEPARKS ATTRACT DELINQUENTS"

Skaters are often associated with "unsavoury behavior". Bad behavior in skateparks can often be attributed to the fact that skate parks are located in remote or secluded locations designed to remove skaters from public view. However, locating skateparks in central locations which are lit and visible to passersby, support more vibrant, activated spaces and are far less conducive to bad behavior. The Tony Hawk Foundation (THF) Law Enforcement Study (2009)[13], interviewed law enforcement officers from communities across the US after new skateparks were built in their community and 85% actually reported a significant reduction in complaints from local businesses and property owners on bad behaviour and crime, while officers widely agreed that giving youth "something to do and somewhere to go greatly reduces their chances of getting into trouble.

### "SKATEPARKS ARE NOISY"

Noise has been a common worry for some residents in anticipation of any skatepark. However, noise impact assessments validate the fact that skateboarding emits the same level of noise than many other park uses and residential settings. A study done by the City of Portland (2001)[14], reported that skateboarding noise was negligible at 50 feet, with tricks reaching 65-71 decibels, while playgrounds (65 dbl) normal street noise of passing cars or outdoor conversations (70 dbl), noisy restaurants (85dbl) and passing trucks (100 dbl) were found to be higher. There are several noise mitigating methods that can be included in the design of structures, along with siting in parks and planting buffer techniques, which help minimize concerns especially when considering benefits to the community.

### "SKATEBOARDING IS FOR BOYS"

Although participation in skateboarding has been traditionally dominated by young males, those demographics are shifting. Survey responses gathered during the engagement period of CitySkate suggests the diversity of skateboarders is growing with an average of 32.5% of participants not identifying as male[15]. A healthy skate community naturally fosters diversity and has been found to cultivate a greater sense of safety from judgement among skaters of colour than in non-skate contexts[16]. This has led to a new wave of organizations promoting diversity such as 'Skate Like a Girl', 'Make Life Skate Life', 'Nation Skate Youth' and 'Skateistan' which emerged to support marginalized groups that have historically been excluded from skateboarding.

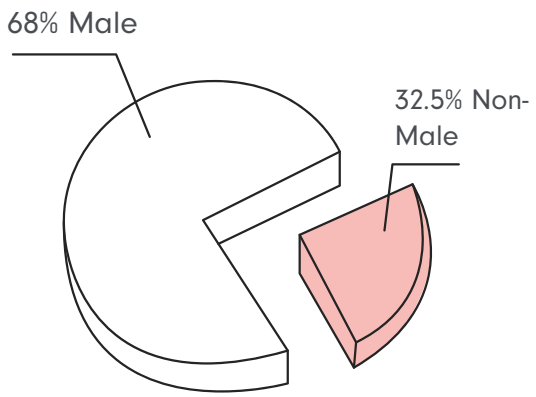



Figure 7. In Vancouver 32.5% of skaters don't identify as male.

12. NSC Safety Statictics - https://skateboardsafety.org/injury-statistics/
13. https://publicskateparkguide.org/advocacy/thf-police-study/
14. https://publicskateparkguide.org/maintenance-and-operations/noise/#:~:text=The%20chief%20noise%20officer%20for,between%2054%20to%2065%20decibels.
15. Vancouver Park Board (2021) Engagement Summary #1 + #2
16. Seattle Skate Park Plan (2007)

## 1.7 TRENDS AND PRECEDENTS OF SKATE AMENITIES

The growth of skateboarding over the past several years has led to new and innovative approaches to providing skate amenities. One significant evolution in skate amenity planning is the breakdown of traditional boundaries between skateparks and public space with cities around the world planning for the intentional integration of skate amenities into public plazas and general public space. This section breaks down some notable trends and precedents in current skate amenities.

### DO-IT-YOURSELF (DIY)

Do-it-yourself (DIY) skate amenities are grassroots initiatives that reclaim under-utilized spaces and repurpose them as skateparks. DIY skate amenities are typically composed of numerous "homemade" skate features that are donated or constructed by the community. The dedication and work that goes into creating DIY skate amenities cultivates a strong sense of community and responsibility over the space. While these amenities are well loved by the community, they can pose challenges identifying ownership and liability.



Figure 8. The Courts' DIY at Britannia



Figure 9. Malmo, Sweden "Skate Malmo"

### MODULAR AND MOVEABLE

Moveable and modular skate amenities have gained popularity in the last several years for their adaptability to different spaces and relatively low barriers to implementation. Using heavy and durable materials ensures the features stay put but can still be removed or rearranged. Modular skate amenities can activate under-utilized plazas, parking lots and urban space and be moved around the city to new locations as needed.



Figure 10. Rotterdam "Character Type" Modular Pieces




Figure 11. Embâcle Fountain in Quebec

## SKATABLE ART

Much like skateboarding, public art contributes positively to the cultural identity of the community and invites creativity into the fabric of the city. Skateable public art brings these two worlds together by creating skate amenities in public space that double as aesthetically interesting art pieces. Involving people with an understanding of skateboarding is critical in making these unique features functional.



Figure 12. Blue Carpet Square, Newcastle England

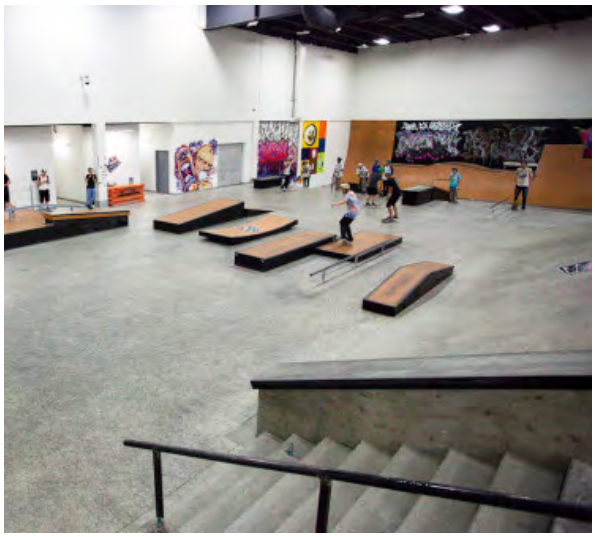
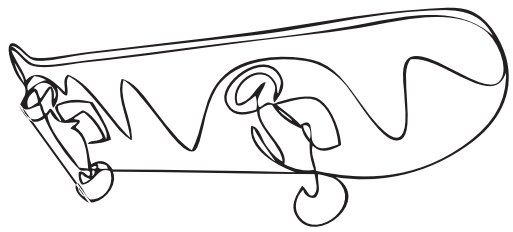


Figure 13. Indoor: The Edge Skatepark, Winnipeg

## INDOOR & SHELTERED FACILITIES

Skate amenities are often impossible to use safely in wet or rainy conditions making year-round participation in skateboarding and other small-wheeled sports very challenging in many parts of the world. As a result, many cities are finding ways to create rain-sheltered skate amenities to support skateboarding as a year-round recreation opportunity. Existing covered spaces below bridges, awnings and overhangs can often be repurposed and indoor skate amenities in community centres and indoor skate facilities have been used around the world as highly popular and successful community hubs.



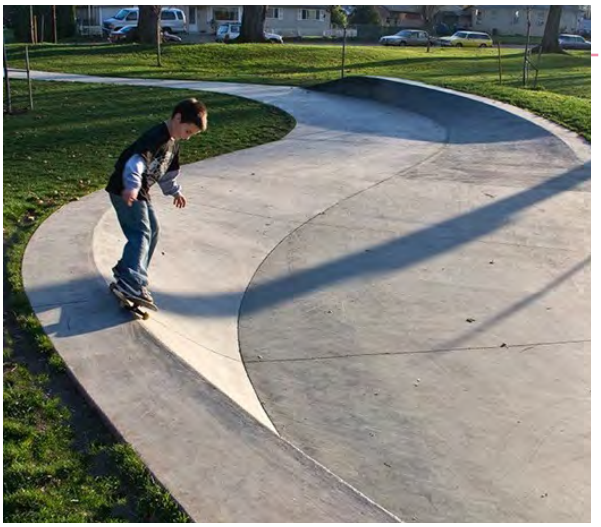


Figure 14. Wavewalk Pier Skatepark in Portland



Figure 15. Israels Plads in Copenhagen

## GREENWAYS AND PATHS

Skateboarding and other small-wheeled sports are popular and efficient ways to get around the city especially for youth. Skateable features integrated into greenways, paths and active transportation corridors have been a natural progression in many cities and invites an element of play into the transportation network. Ensuring skate amenities are thoughtfully designed with safety and cohabitation in mind is key in achieving a successful skate amenity on greenways and paths.



Figure 16. Skate path in Utah by Spohn Ranch

## SKATE PLAZAS

Large, flat and smooth surfaces characteristic of many public plazas can make them ideal spaces for skateboarding and small-wheeled sports. The sharing of space between incongruous uses can create dynamic, diverse and accessible urban spaces. To ensure these spaces work for everyone, careful design and space planning can mitigate conflict and enhance harmony between different user groups. Cities that take this approach are blurring the lines between traditional plazas and skateparks by deliberately including skate elements in their design.



Figure 17. Peace Park in Montreal

## ICONIC LOCATIONS

Iconic landmarks in a city help define its identity on the global stage as well as in the hearts of its residents. Skateparks are no longer relegated to back alleys and industrial areas. Internationally, you can find skateparks in visually stunning locations that showcase the city's defining features and unique geography. Exciting and iconic locations also lend themselves to mainstream skate media, establishing the city as a skate-friendly destination for visitors from all over the world. Locating skateparks in iconic locations shows a commitment to and celebration of skateboarding while creating vibrant destinations for the non-skate community to enjoy.



Figure 18. Banff Skatepark



Figure 19. St. Kilda Australia

## SUSTAINABILITY

Skate amenities are also becoming increasingly innovative and responsive to their surrounding environments as sustainable design and construction techniques become more prevalent. The use of alternative cement and fiber materials, incorporating local and recycled materials and including storm water management and bio-filtration practices are techniques being utilized as a means to both reduce environmental impacts and create engaging and unique skateable features.



Figure 20. Sculptural skate feature at the Ed Benedict Skate Plaza in Portland, Oregon.



Figure 21. Bio-retention island at the Ed Benedict Skate Plaza in Portland, Oregon.



# CHAPTER 2 : INVENTORY OF VANCOUVER'S SKATE INFRASTRUCTURE



# 2 INVENTORY OF VANCOUVER'S SKATE INFRASTRUCTURE

It is important to understand the skateboard infrastructure that exists today to help inform decisions regarding how best to build a skate friendly city for the future. While the emphasis of the existing skate infrastructure has been in the provision of skateparks on parkland, it is also necessary to acknowledge the importance of skate spaces that occur outside of traditional park settings. Furthermore, the state of skateboarding in Vancouver would not exist were it not for the thriving skateboard community that breathes life into these spaces.

## 2.1 EXISTING SKATE AMENITIES

Vancouver currently has four skate parks and six skate amenities in parks and engineering jurisdiction across the city including iconic parks like the Downtown Plaza, Hastings Skatepark and the China Creek Bowls. In the early 2000s, Vancouver pushed to develop several skateparks across the city constructing 6 of the 10 skate amenities we have today. The initial push to establish skate amenities came as the sport was booming in popularity in Canada and while Vancouver was home to the Slam City Jam (North American Skateboard Championships). After this initial blitz of development in the early to mid-2000s, Vancouver has only established two additional skate amenities with the most recent at Mt. Pleasant Park being built in 2011. This lack of new parks of high quality national and international level skate facilities has forced competitive athletes to relocate to train. This issue was brought to the forefront during skateboarding's inaugural Olympic Games in Japan where it was noted that BC's top riders train in California. In the last decade the skate community has also grown, further intensifying pressures on the limited skate space across the city.



Figure 22. Andy Anderson skating Vancouver in 2015

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Vancouver has 10 skate amenities including four skateparks. The majority of skate amenities in the city were built in the early 2000's and while the skate community has since grown dramatically, no new skate amenities have been built since 2011. The result has been aging and overcrowded skate amenities across the city.

> "Sometimes the parks are too busy for beginners so I will often go with my daughter to a less crowded area to roll around..."

Survey 1 respondent, Summer 2021

## EXISTING SKATE AMENITY INVENTORY

| | Name | Type (refer to page 26) | Size ($m^2$) | Year | Notes |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Downtown Plaza | Network Hub | 2,000 | 2004 | Iconic street style skatepark located under the Georgia and Dunsmuir Viaducts. |
| 2 | Hastings | Network Hub | 1,300 | 2001 | Large flow bowl with separated street course located in Hastings Park. |
| 3 | Leeside | Neighbourhood | 670 | 2005 | Sanctioned Do-it-yourself (DIY) skatepark located in the tunnel under the Cassiar St. Connector adjacent Empire Fields. |
| 4 | Quilchena | Neighbourhood | 630 | 2001 | Includes a range of beginner to intermediate street-style terrain locatec adjacent the Arbutus Greenway. |
| 5 | Kensington | Spot | 560 | 2010 | Vancouver's only pool style bowl with a miniramp,street-style features located in the Kensington-Cedar Cottage neighbourhood. |
| 6 | China Creek | Spot | 520 | 1979 | One of North America's first concrete bowls located along the Broadway Corridor at Clark. |
| 7 | Strathcona | Spot | 480 | 2003 | A mix of asphalt surfacing and concrete features located in the Strathcona Park. |
| 8 | Mt. Pleasant | Spot | 370 | 2011 | Approachable for beginner and intermediate riders in the Mt. Pleasant Park. |
| 9 | Coopers' | Dot | 140 | 2003 | Partially covered skateable features located under the Cambie Bridge in Coopers' Park. |
| 10 | Adanac-Vernon Plaza | Dot | 130 | 2017 | Neighbourhood plaza at the Union-Vernon-Adanac intersection which features seating, a ping-pong table, and two skateable ledge features. |

* Informal or temporary spaces are not included in the above inventory listing.



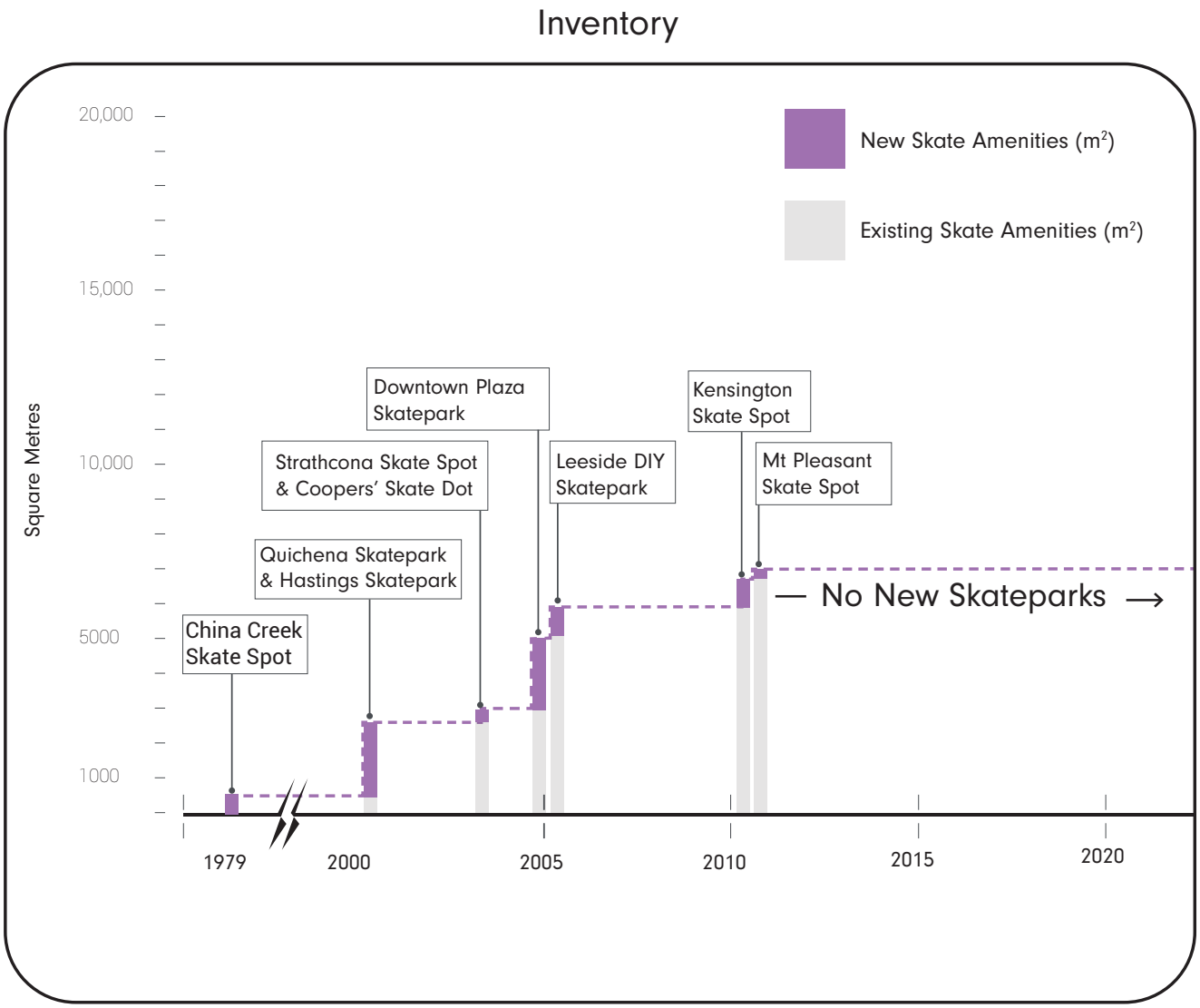

Figure 23. Map of Existing Skateparks in Vancouver

## SKATEPARK DEVELOPMENT OVER TIME

After the relatively rapid development of Vancouver's skate amenities in the early 2000s, the creation of new skate amenity spaces has dropped, with no new skate amenities being built since Mt. Pleasant in 2011.



Figure 24. Downtown plaza under construction in 2005



## 2.2 SKATE AMENITY TYPOLOGIES

Skate amenities come in many shapes and sizes. Vancouver's skate amenities can be broken into four primary categories based on size: network hub skateparks, neighbourhood scale skateparks, skate spots, and skate dots. While network hub and neighbourhood scale skateparks provide the necessary larger contiguous space for small-wheeled activities, skate dots and spots can improve geographic distribution across the city, improve overall access to skateboarding, and provide relief for the larger skateparks during busy peak times.

| | CHARACTER | EXAMPLE | SETTING +ACCESS | TYPICAL SIZE |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| DOT |  |  | Ideally highly accessible by walk, roll, bike or transit in a local park or more urban setting | > 150m$^2$ |
| SPOT |  |  | Ideally highly accessible by walk, roll, bike or transit in a local park or more urban setting | 150m$^2$ - 600m$^2$ |
| NEIGHBOURHOOD |  |  | Flexible in location, generally in larger parks/ plazas. High density areas will reach capacity more quickly in urban areas. Access to local and rapid transit is ideal. | 600m$^2$ - 1,200m$^2$ |
| NETWORK HUB |  |  | Ideally located at larger destination parks or community centres. Adjacent to greenway or rapid transit is necessary for equitable city-wide access. | 1,200m$^2$ - 2,500m$^2$ |

## 2.3 SKATE SPACES BETWEEN PARKS

Skateparks are a valuable resource for skateboarding in a city and provide opportunities to design for a variety of users, manage programming and uses, and provide a structural anchor to the network of skate amenities across a city. Nevertheless, the identity of skateboarding is deeply embedded in the urban fabric and cannot be limited to the extent of skateparks regardless of how many are built.

Urban squares, plazas, sports courts and other public urban spaces have long played an important role in providing the diversity of skate spaces that are fundamental to a thriving skateboard culture. As an early adopter of street skating, Vancouver is home to world renowned spots that are part of what make the city a global skate destination.

Geographic constraints, incompatible land uses and other contextual factors limit the number of ideal skatepark locations in Vancouver and affect the ability to provide equitable distribution for all residents. Finding opportunities to integrate skate amenities into streetscapes, public realm, and other under-utilized spaces will work to improve equitable distribution and access across Vancouver.



Figure 25. The iconic "Commerce Place"

While these non-traditional skate spaces are critical to the identity of skateboarding in Vancouver, they are also the source of friction between skaters and the other users of the space including residents, business owners and people who walk/roll. By taking a proactive approach and intentionally designing for skateboarding outside of skateparks in suitable locations that minimize conflicts, Vancouver has the opportunity to foster better cohabitation and improve outcomes for everyone.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Skateboarding and small wheeled activities are tied to urban space and are practiced beyond the boundaries of purpose-built skateparks. Skating in public spaces outside of skate parks has been a point of contention between different user groups but can typically be managed for through proper consideration of design, use, and scheduling. Incorporating skate amenities between the parks will improve distribution and access to skating and related sports across the city.

## 2.4 RAIN-SHELTERED SKATE AMENITIES

While many sports such as basketball and tennis are not typically played in the rain, there are indoor gyms available for use. Skateboarding is not possible in the rain due to surfaces becoming dangerously slippery to ride on and equipment becoming irreparably damaged (ie. rusted bearings and water-logged or delaminating decks).

Despite having one of the wettest climates in North America, Vancouver only has one functionally rain-sheltered skate amenity at the Leeside DIY skatepark and two partially covered skate amenities at Coopers' Park and the Downtown Plaza Skatepark. As a result, the rainy months of the year present significant barriers for skate related activities and limits the ability for Vancouver's skate community to participate in the sport.

There are a number of challenges in creating rain-sheltered skate amenities in Vancouver including equitable programming, encampments, appropriate siting and additional costs of construction and maintenance. Overcoming these barriers to implementation will require a creative approach and could include identifying opportunities to create skate amenities under existing bridges, awnings, and other covered spaces. Temporary, fabric or other deployable shelters may also offer a viable option to meet this need in the short-term while testing the operational feasibility of the infrastructure moving forward.

Partnering with Vancouver's numerous recreation and community centres could be another viable solution for providing fully enclosed temporary or permanent skate amenities. In addition to ensuring skate amenity space through the rainy months, locating a purpose built indoor facility offers a number of additional benefits including a safe and clean facility, adequate supporting amenities like water fountains and washrooms, as well as improved opportunities for programming like lessons and events. Vancouver's 24 community centres are well dispersed across the city, but each have their own specific opportunities and limitations with regards to supporting skate amenities and would need to be investigated on a case-by-case basis.

A key element of achieving a robust skate amenity network will be finding ways to provide rain-sheltered spaces across the city that allow for year-round participation in the sport. Developing a specific rain sheltered skate amenities study may be necessary to determine the best way to ensure skaters have a place to go when it rains.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Throughout the public engagement process for CitySkate, the provision of a covered skate amenity was the top priority. Rain-sheltered skate amenity spaces are an important piece of achieving year-round equitable access to skateboarding and other small-wheeled sports, particularly in Vancouver's climate. Despite the many challenges, there are a number of opportunities to creating skate amenities that are functional in the rain including repurposing existing covered spaces, collaborating with community centres, and deploying temporary shelters. A detailed study focusing on rain-sheltered skate amenities may be necessary to fully understand the options for meeting this need in Vancouver.

## 2.5 SMALL WHEELED SPORTS AS TRANSPORTATION

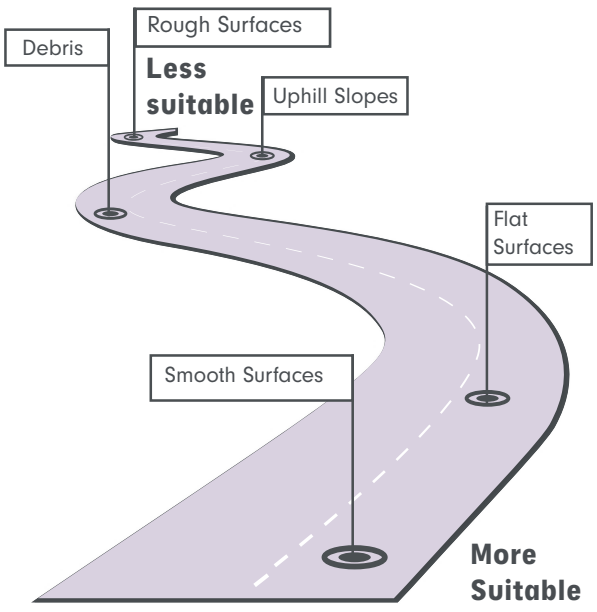
Developing a world class network of bike lanes, greenways and active transportation corridors has been a priority in the city and has paid off with Vancouver ranking in the top 20 bike friendly cities in the world[17]. The integration of other modes of active transportation however has been less developed. Skateboarding and related sports offer a number of key advantages to improving sustainable transportation within the city, primarily in their flexibility.

In transportation planning, the "last-mile" problem describes a barrier to rapid transit access due to inadequate access to fast and reliable transit service from an individual's trip origin. If the distance to the nearest transit stop or station is more than an easy walk or roll away, individuals may need or want to make the trip by personal vehicle. The compact size and portability of a skateboard naturally lends itself to multi-modal transportation and has the potential to greatly improve access to transit for those skateboarding and using other small-wheeled devices. By combining public transportation options with pedestrian and active transportation routes, skateboarding can unlock new possibilities for the city's sustainable transportation network.

Skateboarding as transportation also has several constraining factors. Travelling efficiently by skateboard requires a certain level of skill and is less accessible to beginners or individuals with less confidence in their abilities. Skateboarding is also highly weather dependent, with wet surfaces reducing the viability of skateboarding for transportation. Topography also impacts the practicality of skateboarding as a means of transportation with small to moderate uphill slopes as well as steep downhill slopes reducing skateability. Surface variability also plays a key role in the potential for skateboarding as a viable means of transportation with debris, cracks, rocks, and generally less smooth surfaces being substantially less suitable to skateboarding for sustained distances. Understanding the opportunities and the constraints of skateboarding as a means of transportation will highlight areas of the city with the highest potential for skateboarding as a means of transportation.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Skateboarding, scootering and other small-wheeled activities are popular forms of transportation and are an efficient way to get around the city. Skateboards and other small wheeled equipment are very portable and naturally lend themselves to multi-modal transportation. Small wheels are more easily caught on cracks, debris and other inconsistencies on the surface and are safer on flat areas than steep slopes. Considering skateboarding and other small-wheeled activities in transportation planning will advance sustainable transportation and improve accessibility for all.



## 2.6 THE VANCOUVER SKATE COMMUNITY

The Vancouver Skateboard Coalition (VSBC) has been a foundational organization in cultivating the vibrant skate scene in Vancouver. Formed in the mid-1990s, the non-profit volunteer led organization formed to advocate for acceptance of skateboarding and to help develop new skateparks in the city. The VSBC was critical to the development of the historic Downtown Plaza and Hastings skateparks, the preservation of the China Creek bowl, and continues to be at the heart of all things skateboarding in Vancouver.



Figure 26. Britannia DIY Park

The skateboard community in Vancouver is larger than ever and with the sport's recent adoption into the Olympic Games, promises to continue to grow into the future. The growth of skateboarding as well as an increasing popularity of related sports like freestyle BMX, roller-skating and scootering has overwhelmed Vancouver's current skateboard infrastructure and pushed the community to innovate through the creation of "Do-It-Yourself" (DIY) skate spaces such as the Britannia Courts in east Vancouver. The grassroots atmosphere of DIY skate spaces often contributes to a strengthened sense of community amongst users creating a valuable social gathering space for people to connect with one another.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Vancouver is home to a vibrant and diverse skate community that is growing every year. Do-It-Yourself spaces spearheaded by the skate community have emerged in Vancouver over the years and are some of the most popular skate amenities in the city. The skate community holds a unique understanding of the needs of skateboarding and can contribute an important perspective in decisions around skate amenities.

17. https://copenhagenizeindex.eu/ (2019)

## 2.7 HOW VANCOUVER STACKS UP

In order to understand how Vancouver is doing, it was critical to look at local, regional and international comparison cities that share commonalities of culture, climate, size. The following cities have benefited from skate positive culture or the implementation of a skate strategy and were used in a benchmarking analysis:

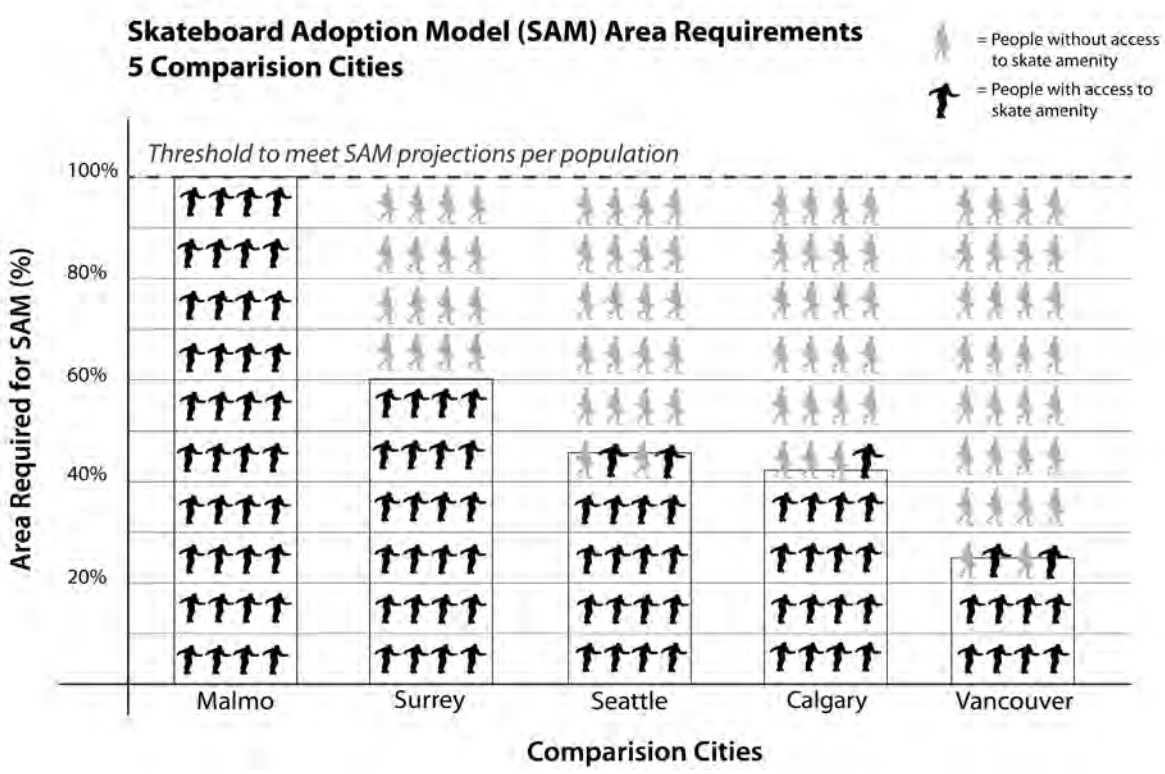
- **Malmo** is a world leader that has both achieved the goals of the Skateboard Adoption Model terrain calculation in skate amenities through skateparks and by developing a number of skateable plazas throughout the city.
- **Surrey** is a close neighbour that has recently implemented a large amount of skatepark terrain by combining skatepark development projects with larger multi-purpose site renewals and community centre redevelopments.
- **Seattle** is a regional neighbour with similar climate and culture that implemented a skate strategy in 2007. As a result, the city has developed a number of skateparks and achieved good coverage across the city.
- **Calgary** is a Canadian city that implemented a skate strategy 10 years ago and has reaped the benefits of a well distributed skatepark network. It had a single park until 2012 and has since increased to 13 with more to come.

### City Benchmarking Analysis Table

| City | Malmo<br>Sweden | Seattle<br>USA | Surrey<br>Canada | Calgary<br>Canada | Vancouver<br>Canada |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Population** | 350,000 | 737,000 | 518,000 | 1,285,000 | 675,000 |
| **Population per 1,000m² Skate Terrain** | 43,000 | 62,000 | 47,000 | 67,000 | 90,000 |
| **Total Skateable Area** | 12,300 | 13,130 | 11,045 | 19,177 | 7,390 |
| **Area of Skateparks (>600m²)** | 8,000 | 11,960 | 10,015 | 17,040 | 5,693 |
| **Number of Skateparks (>600m²)** | 8 | 10 | 6 | 8 | 5 |
| **Skatepark average size** | 1,300m² | 1,074m² | 1,670m² | 1,000m² ** | 1,138m² |
| **Area of Skate Spots and Dots (<600m²)** | 4,300 | 1,170 | 1,030 | 2,137 | 1,697 |
| **Number of Skate Spots + Dots (<600m²)** | 11 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| **Urban Plazas that are Skate Friendly** | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| **Distribution of Skate Spaces*** | Good | Good | Fair | Excellent | Poor |
| **Fun Facts** | Malmo has a skateboard high school and a strong DIY culture<br><br>High level of festivals and events | New 'Plaza' Streetstyle Skatepark below the Space Needle<br><br>Implemented a Skate Strategy in 2007 | Surrey has two covered skate parks, one at Chuck Bailey and the other at Cloverdale Youth Park | Built Canada's largest skate park at the turn of the Millenium (6,900m²)<br><br>Implemented a Skate Strategy in 2011 | One of North America's first bowls was China Creek in 1979<br><br>Built North America's first plaza style skatepark beneath the viaducts |

*Distribution assessment based on coverage by residential/urban areas. Poor = small portion of City with coverage, Fair = Some parts of City have coverage, Good = Generally equitable coverage, Excellent = optimal coverage

**Excludes Calgary's Millenium Skatepark at 6,900m²




Developed by the Skatepark Project in the United States, "Skatepark Adoption Model" (SAM) is a well-established method for determining the amount of skate amenity space needed to serve a population. The calculation is described in section 4.12 Determining Required Space. The following table shows this calculation for each city in the benchmarking analysis table.

## PANEL DISCUSSION "LESSONS FROM MALMO"

As part of CitySkate process, a virtual panel was held in March of 2022 with industry experts Gustav Eden (City of Malmo, Sweden), Kanten Russell (Pro-Skateboarder turned Designer, New Line Skateparks), Travis Martin (CitySkate Project Manager, van der Zalm & Associates) and Evertt Tetz (Manager of Community Outreach). Below are excerpts from the panel discussion:



**Gustav Eden**, Skateboard Coordinator (and Skateboarder) City of Malmo



**Kanten Russell**, Pro-Skateboarder turned Designer, New Line Skateparks

"Since I started, I've tried to develop the urban side of skateboarding, to introduce skateboarding as a function out of many in the urban context, to adapt spaces for street skating, and also to activate them and encourage the development of social spaces for skateboarding, that aren't necessarily skateparks. Skateboarders don't necessarily want to be separated from the urban life, we want to be part of it.

So we'd rather go to the square where people are walking their dogs and playing chess, and hanging out and doing all kinds of things and skate there on something simple like a bench or rail or bank, and be part of the life of the city, than being told to go somewhere else. That means the city can really save money because you can introduce some simple skate friendly furniture in a square and have people skate there at certain times.

If you have young people and old people hanging out in the same space then they learn how to navigate around each other, then you're building more sustainable citizenship."




# CHAPTER 3 : PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT


TELL US WHERE YOU SKATE NOW AND WHERE YOU WANT TO SKATE!
North District
NORTH DISTRICT
SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS
VANCOUVER BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION
CITY OF VANCOUVER

# 3 PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

## 3.1 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Public engagement was the cornerstone in developing CitySkate and was carried out through two main phases. In both phases, a series of public outreach campaigns were conducted to build interest in the development of the strategy and encourage public feedback. The outreach efforts included social media posts, open house events, pop-up skate events, public panel discussions, video and documentary collaborations, online and in-person surveys as well as focused consultations with multiple community advisory groups. The engagement was also designed to reach out to and consider the needs of non-skaters in the community to understand their needs. The following section outlines these two phases with a high level summary.

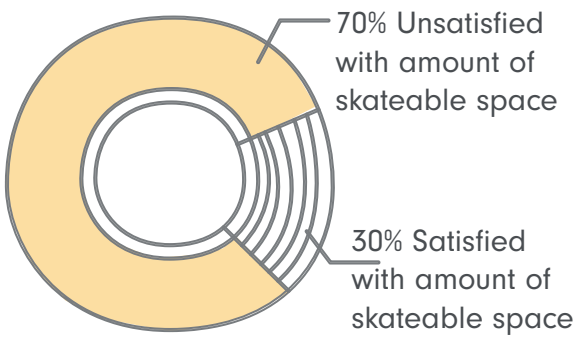
### PHASE 1

The foundation of phase one engagement and outreach activities was an online survey hosted on the Shape Your City website in May and June of 2021. Over 2000 people responded to this survey, highlighting the vibrant and active skate community in Vancouver. A key insight from this survey is that participants cited skateboarding and other wheeled-sports as key in strengthening social ties, personal well-being, and a sense of community. Nearly 90% of respondents cited skateboarding and related activity as a way to stay active, relieve stress, and hang out with friends or meet new friends. This first survey also brought to light that participants cited skateboarding as a mode of transportation, with 50% of participants listing it as a way they move through the city.

> In general the parks are quite small so when you get more than 5 people it feels really crowded.

Survey 1 respondent, Summer 2021

Respondents to Survey 1 also highlighted key issues that helped shape the direction of CitySkate early on, listing a need for more skateable terrain, covered skate spaces and improved distribution across the city as top priorities for the strategy to address.



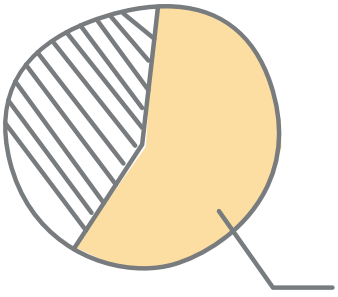

Phase 1= 2,146 online respondents



Figure 27. Riley Park Pop-Up

## PHASE 2

The second phase of the engagement strategy built on the insights gained from phase one and dove deeper into specific needs, prioritization, as well as levels of support for new skatepark locations. A second survey was available on the Shape Your City website in October and November of 2021, and reinforced many of the findings from the initial survey, particularly highlighting the importance of providing covered skate amenities, improving skate transportation infrastructure and prioritizing locations of skate amenities across the city. At the Sunset Beach and Cambie bridge pop up events, over 50 participants identified on a map "where they skate" and "where they want to skate", which has been included in the analysis and planning of skate amenities (refer to Chapter 4).



Over 50% of respondents listed covered amenities as the most important element of the skateboard strategy to them

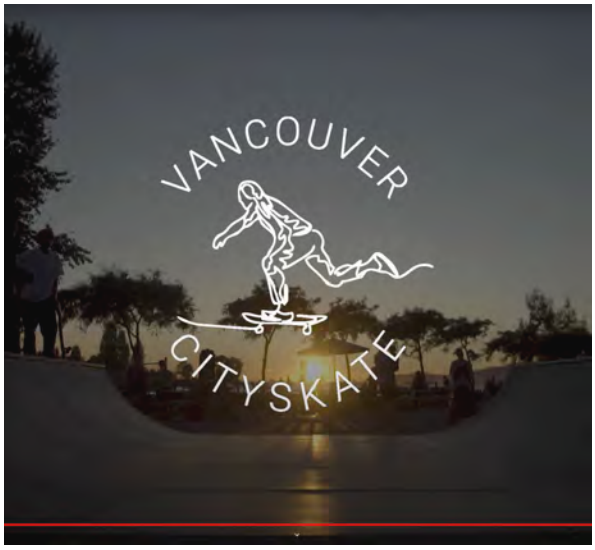
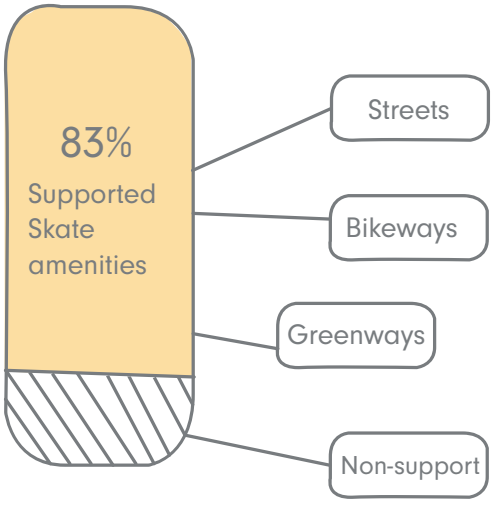



Figure 28. Uytae's video "Vancouver CitySkate Full" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZiGTmp_QW8s




83% of survey 2 respondents supported incorporating skate amenities into streets, bikeways and greenways

> Add to the existing skateparks and cover them so we can use them more than 3 months of the year.

Survey 2 respondent, Fall 2021



Figure 29. Sunset Pop-Up and Panel

## 3.2 STAKEHOLDER & STAFF ENGAGEMENT

### SKATE ADVISORY GROUP FOR ENGAGEMENT (S.A.G.E.)

The Skate Advisory Group for Engagement (S.A.G.E.) was a committee of representatives from a variety of community organizations that collectively form the heartbeat of skateboarding and small-wheeled sports in Vancouver. The committee was made up of representatives from the:

- Vancouver Skateboard Coalition (VSBC)
- Nations Skate
- The BMX community
- The roller skating community
- Vancouver Queer Skate / LGBTQ+ Community
- The longboarding and skate as transportation community
- The East Van Skate Club
- Under Toe Skate
- The Late bloomers/Takeover +
- Adult Skate Club
- Skate Canada.

The S.A.G.E. provided important insight and feedback throughout the process on what was most important to the skate community and how CitySkate could be most effective in meeting the community's current and future needs.

### THE SKATEBOARD PLAN & OVERSIGHT TEAM (S.P.O.T.)

The Skateboard Planning and Operations Team (S.P.O.T.) was a committee formed specifically to help bridge the Park Board and the City of Vancouver's departmental and institutional boundaries in the planning, design and implementation of CitySkate outside of traditional park land. The committee included City of Vancouver Engineering Department's Street Activities and Transportation Divisions, Planning Department, Real Estate Facilities Management as well as Park Operations and Recreation. Each representative offered unique expertise on the barriers and opportunities for integrating skate amenities into spaces beyond parks. Maintaining communication and collaboration across these departments will be important in establishing a truly connected network of skate amenities in Vancouver.

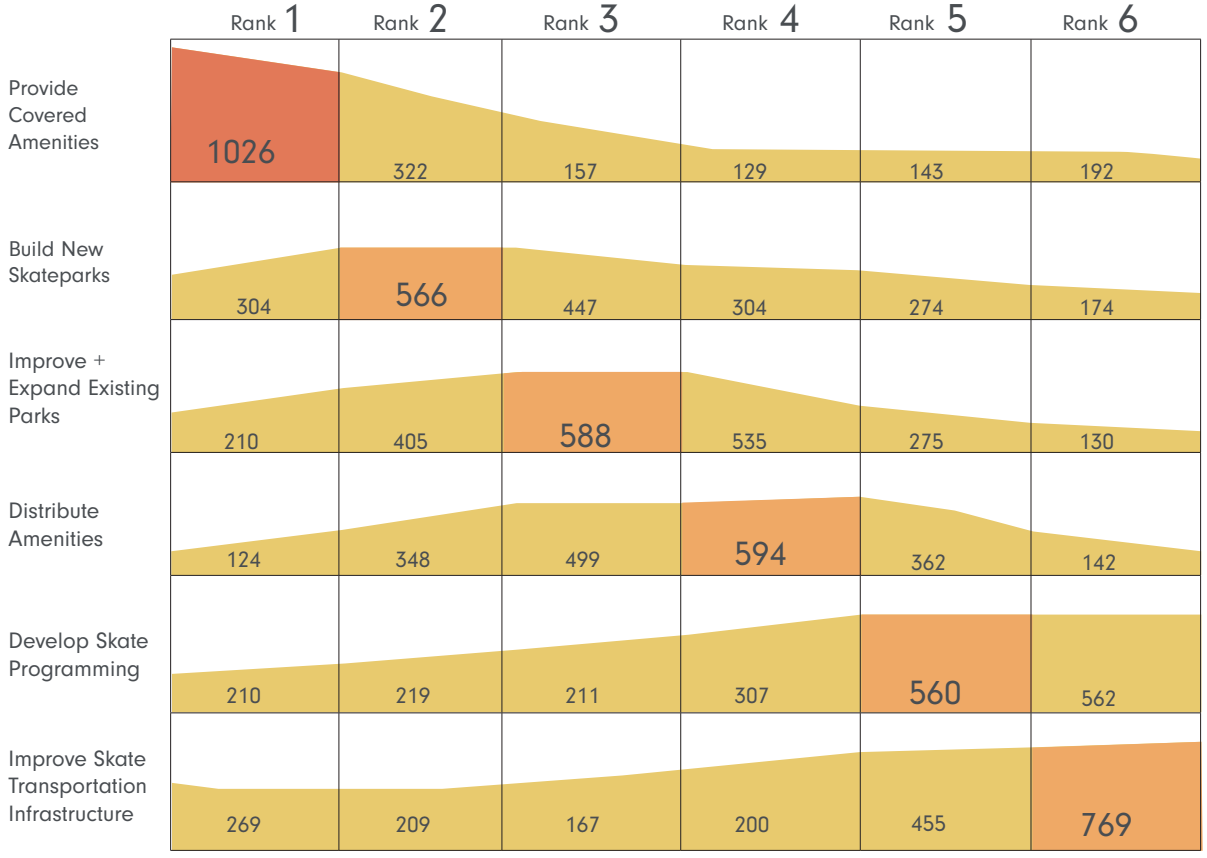
### YOUTH WORKSHOP

Youth are typically a hard to reach demographic on most Park Board and city wide engagements, especially those who are equity-denied. And so in October of 2021 a targeted workshop was run with youth in the Strathcona area. Attendees participated in a workshop, discussion group, and beginner pop-up skateboard event to explore the topic of accessibility of skateboarding for youth in general as well as for youth in high barrier neighbourhoods such as Strathcona. This survey was valuable as it provided excellent insight into how youth use the skate parks and included suggestions on how to support youth through amenities and programming.

## 3.3 KEY TAKEAWAYS

The following section summarizes the key takeways at a high level, in order to understand how these were incorporated into the project process and recommendations.

### TOPICS MOST IMPORTANT TO THE COMMUNITY:




### PUBLIC PRIORITIES ON SKATE AMENITIES

- The above chart shows respondent preferences by ranking the six options. Over 50% of respondents selected "Provide Covered Amenities" as their number one choice. It is clear this is in high demand. Ranking is not representative of a lack of desire for these amenities, however it does showcase immediate need.
- Respondents have identified covered space as their most immediate need. This is followed by the construction of new parks, the expansion and improvement of existing parks, further distribution of skate amenities throughout the city, developed programming for skateboarding, and finally improved skate transportation infrastructure.



# CHAPTER 4: SKATE AMENITY ANALYSIS + PLANNING


SPITFIRE WH
S-ONE
WOODWARD
HOTEL ZED

# 4 SKATE AMENITY ANALYSIS + PLANNING

Skate amenities require a wide range of qualities to be successful both individually and within the city-wide network. In a growing city like Vancouver, vacant public space is relatively limited and in high demand adding further complexity to dedicating space for new skate amenities. Evaluating locations based on key criteria helps determine how suitable a location may be for a skate amenity and informs the skate amenity planning process.

This chapter highlights critical evaluation criteria for the CitySkate Strategy and explains how transportation, population density and growth, existing skate facilities and public input, all play a role when considering an equitable network of skate amenities around Vancouver.

## STEPS IN PLANNING FOR SKATE AMENITIES

1. **Policy**
   Aligning with other plans, policies, and strategies that have shared interests

2. **Prioritizing Locations**
   Determining the key criteria needed for evaluating locations and analyzing them to determine recommendations for various implementation areas

3. **Area Requirements**
   Determining the required space to meet the needs of the skate community now and in the future

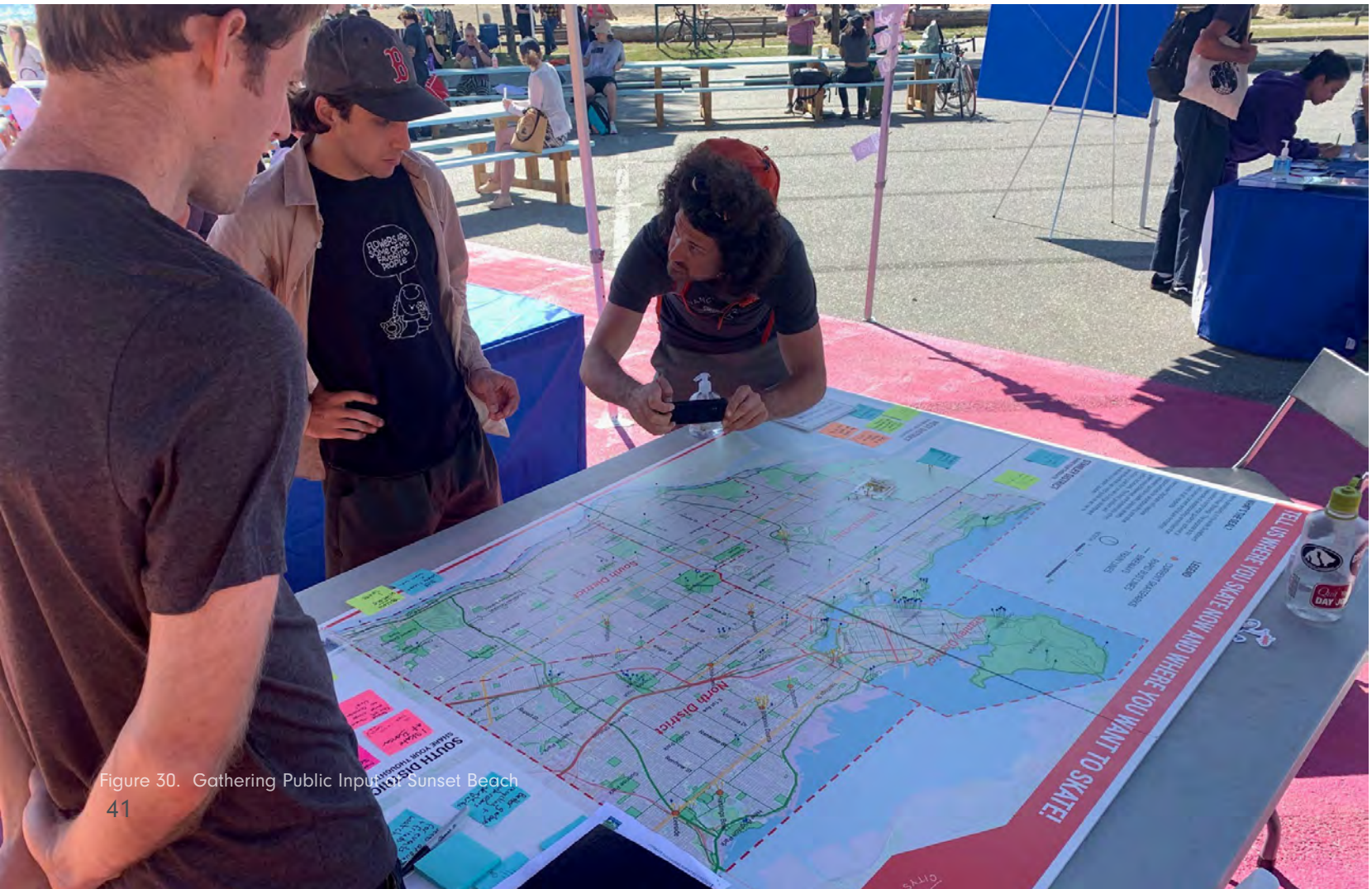



Figure 30. Gathering Public Input at Sunset Beach

## 4.1 SUPPORTING PLANS AND STRATEGIES

Aligning with existing Park Board and City of Vancouver plans and strategies ensures the implementation of the CitySkate Strategy delivers the most for the city and its residents. Through a detailed literature review and building on the feedback gathered during the public engagement phases, four City policies have been identified as most important for aligning the CitySkate Strategy with: VanPlay, the Vancouver Sport Strategy, the Transportation 2040 Plan, and Culture|Shift.

| Policies | Description | Aligning Goals |
|---|---|---|
| VanPlay | As the guiding document for all the work of the Vancouver Park Board, VanPlay sets the framework for connecting people to green space, active living and community. | CitySkate contributes to VanPlay's "Strategic Bold Moves" by creating equitable access to quality and low barrier social, cultural and recreational activities through a connected network of skate amenity assets. |
| Vancouver Sport Strategy | Approved in 2008, the Vancouver Sport Strategy provides the roadmap for planning and implementing sports opportunities, facilities and programming for all Vancouver residents. | The CitySkate Strategy has the potential to contribute to the "Sport for Life" model in multiple ways including by addressing the gap in the "excellence" area by creating new skate amenities that allow for elite level training. |
| Transportation 2040 | Transportation 2040 is the City's long-term strategic plan to guide land use and transportation decisions towards a future with efficient, sustainable, safe, and accessible transportation system. | Small wheeled activities offer many of the same benefits as low barrier forms of active and multi-modal transportation. The CitySkate Strategy will contribute to the Transportation 2040 goals of increasing the proportion of trips made by active transportation, integrating transit with other modes of transportation. |
| Culture\|Shift | In recognition of the importance art and culture play in the identity of Vancouver, the City has created Culture\|Shift, a plan for supporting and growing the arts and culture community of Vancouver. | By improving the quantity, accessibility and distribution of skate amenities, the CitySkate Strategy contributes to the key directions of Culture\|Shift to put arts & culture at the centre of city building as well as to improve access for Vancouver audiences to experience arts & culture. |

Figure 31. Key Policies that the CitySkate Strategy Aligns With

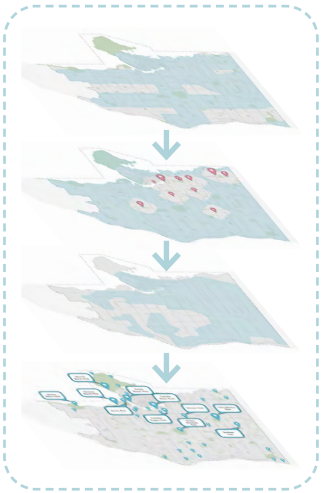
## 4.2 PRIORITIZING LOCATIONS

The process for prioritizing locations for new skate amenities can be summarized in three steps. The first step is to identify the key criteria that are important in considering the locations of new skate amenities. This includes access to transit, current and future population density, provision and access to park space, demand for low barrier access to recreation, local gaps in current skate amenity infrastructure and feedback gathered through the public engagement process. The second step is to overlay the data that is relevant to the type of skate amenity being prioritized. This overlay process highlights locations where multiple criteria can be met. Finally, the third step involves prioritizing the resulting locations for implementation. Areas with the most criteria met are categorized as highest priority while areas that met fewer criteria are categorized as lower priority.

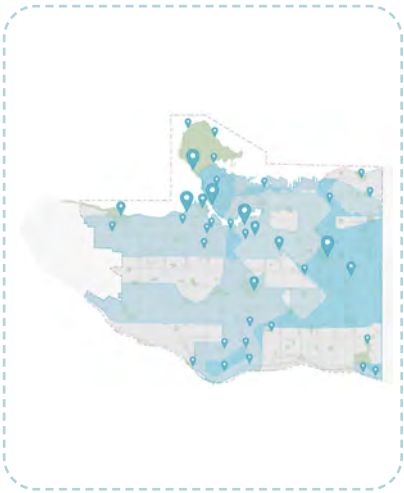
1. Key Criteria



2. Overlay Data



3. Prioritize Areas





## 4.3 DETERMINING THE 'URBAN FOCUS AREA'

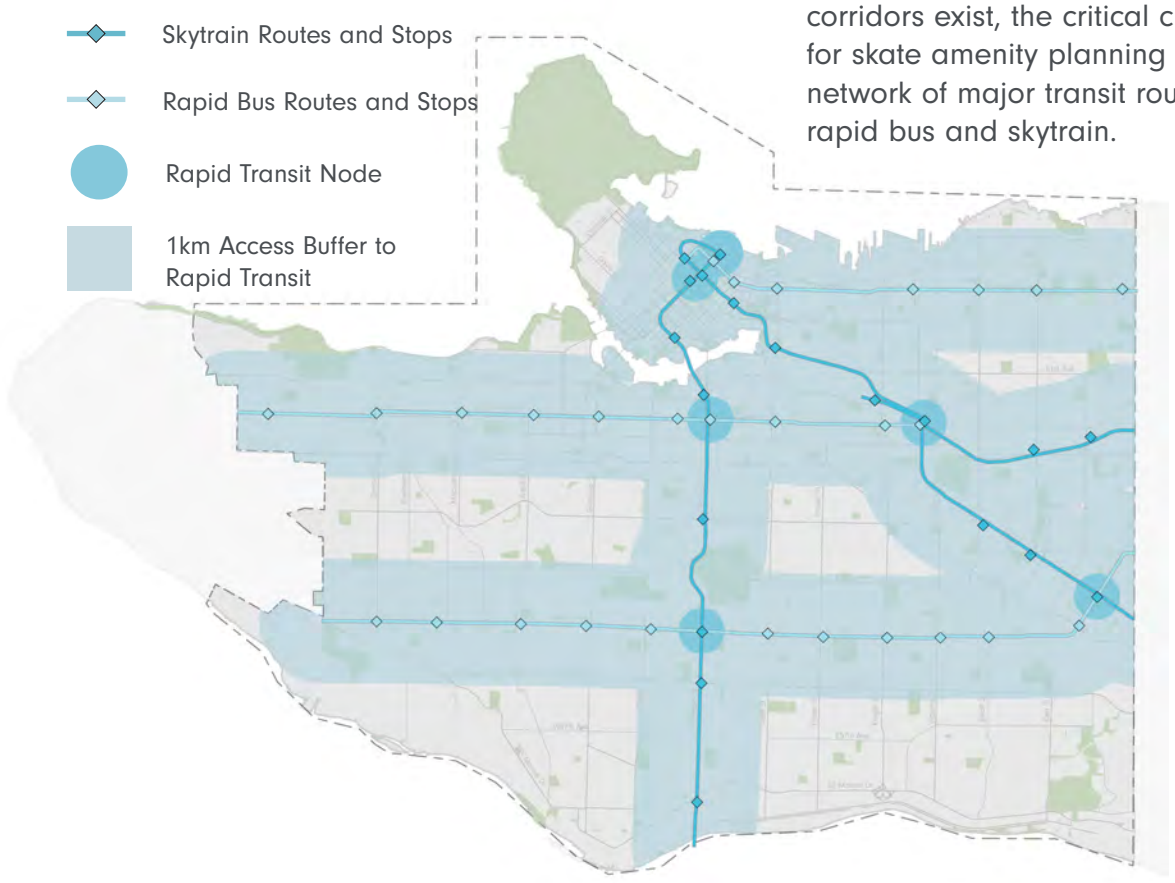
There are a variety of key characteristics that help determine the need for skate amenities across the city. For this reason, a combination of community characteristics were considered as a complimentary evaluation model for a variety of planning objectives related to skate amenities. These data sets include transportation, population density and growth, and a service gap analysis, and each of them play a role in how they influence the success of a skate amenity in properly servicing the community.

### TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIVITY

In the second public engagement survey, 49% of respondents listed skating as a way to connect to local transit and 40% of respondents were willing to skate over 3km as a means of transportation. In areas where a suitable location for a skatepark is not immediately accessible by rapid transit, active transportation and greenway options with skate-friendly improvements can act as a skateable link to the nearest rapid transit stop.

Planning for the city's public and active transportation networks to act as the primary modes of transportation to skateparks ensures the most equitable, affordable, and sustainable access to these city-wide assets. For this reason, access to transit is a critical criteria for locating skate amenities - particularly larger 'network hub' skateparks.

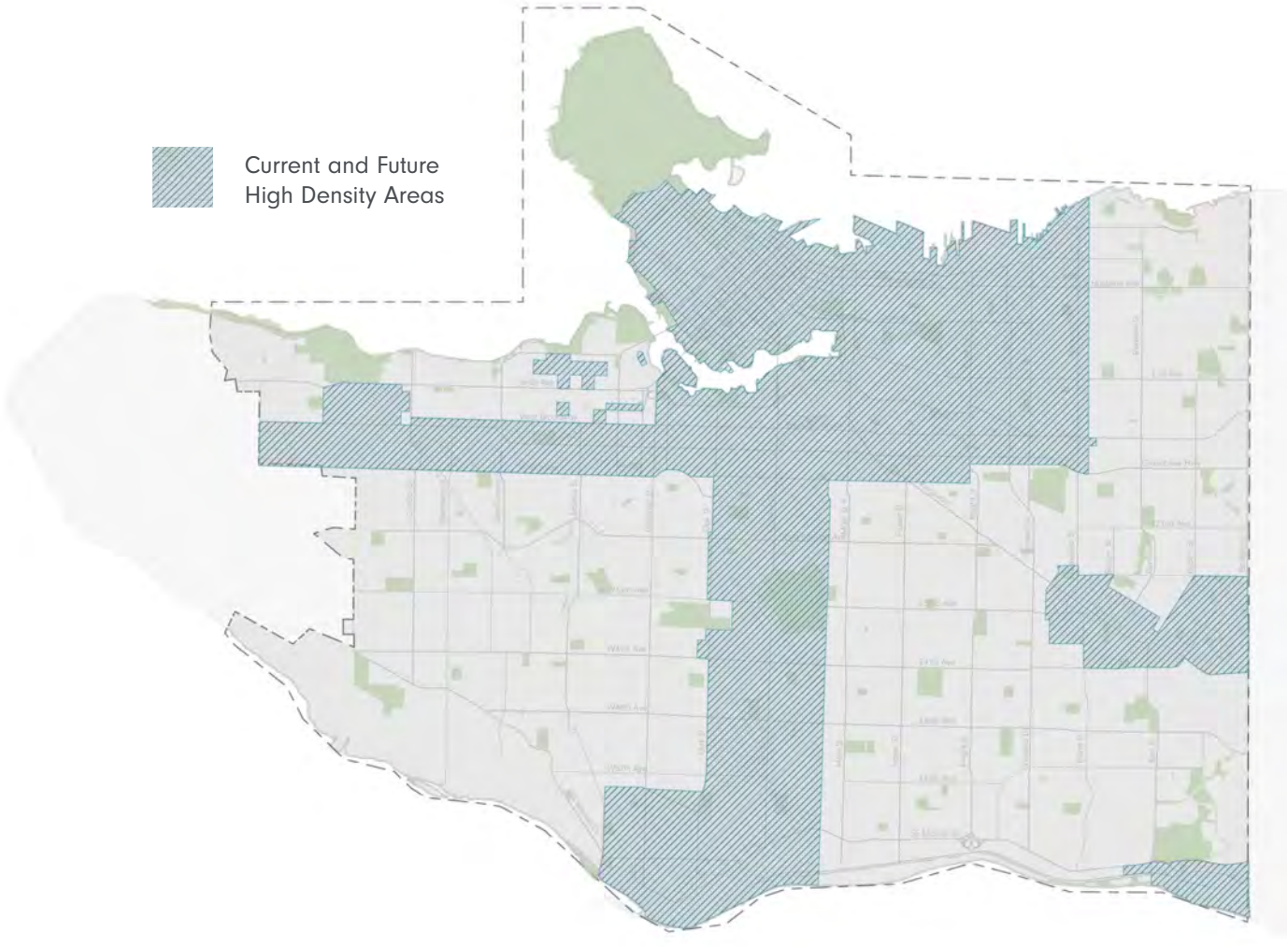
The map below highlights a 1km buffer zone from major transit routes through the city. Although a greater sub-network of transit corridors exist, the critical criteria considered for skate amenity planning focused on the network of major transit routes serviced by rapid bus and skytrain.



## POPULATION DENSITY AND FUTURE GROWTH

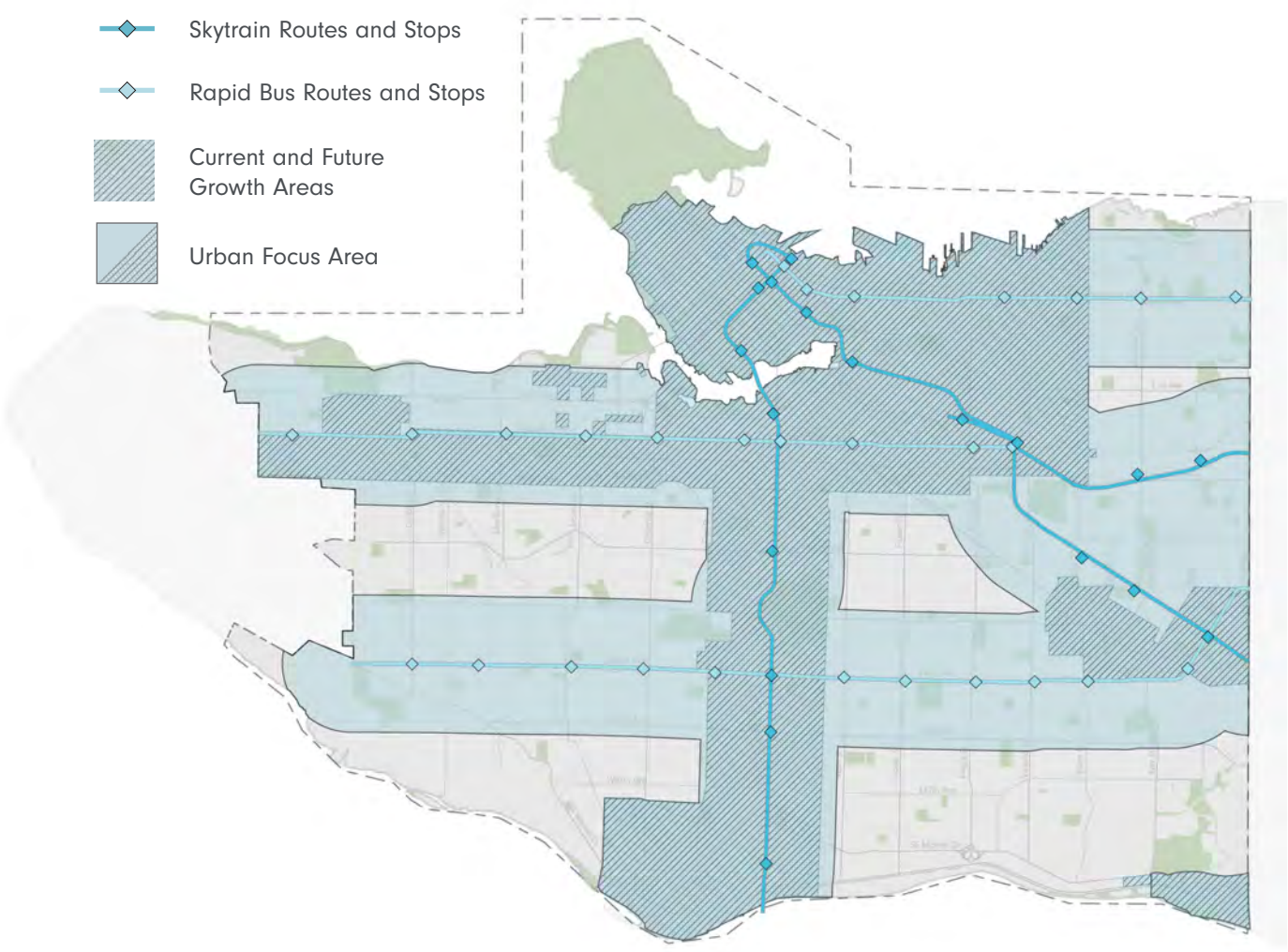
The City of Vancouver is growing, and changes are needed across the city to meet shifting needs of residents. Large-scale neighbourhood redevelopment projects create a high demand for community amenities including skate features. In addition - new densification projects can displace known skate spots in currently under-utilized spaces - further complicating the deficit of available skate terrain.

Higher density and future growth areas will continue to have high populations resulting in increased demand for and use of skate amenities. In lower density areas where future population growth is not expected to the same degree, smaller scale opportunities (spots and dots) can improve accessibility for residents, particularly children who cannot travel far distances by transit or vehicle to get to skate amenities.



## COMPOSITE MAP - URBAN FOCUS AREA

A composite map of areas with easily accessible rapid transit and areas with current and future growth areas creates the 'Urban Focus Area' of the CitySkate Strategy. The overlap of these spaces recognizes the natural co-location of growth areas and major transportation arterials that commonly occurs. Combining these two critical pieces of data results in clearly prioritized areas that can be used in conjunction with low park provision, demand for low barrier recreation, and an existing skate park gap analysis to inform recommendations.



## 4.4 DETERMINING SERVICE GAPS

### LOW PROVISION OR ACCESS TO PARK SPACE

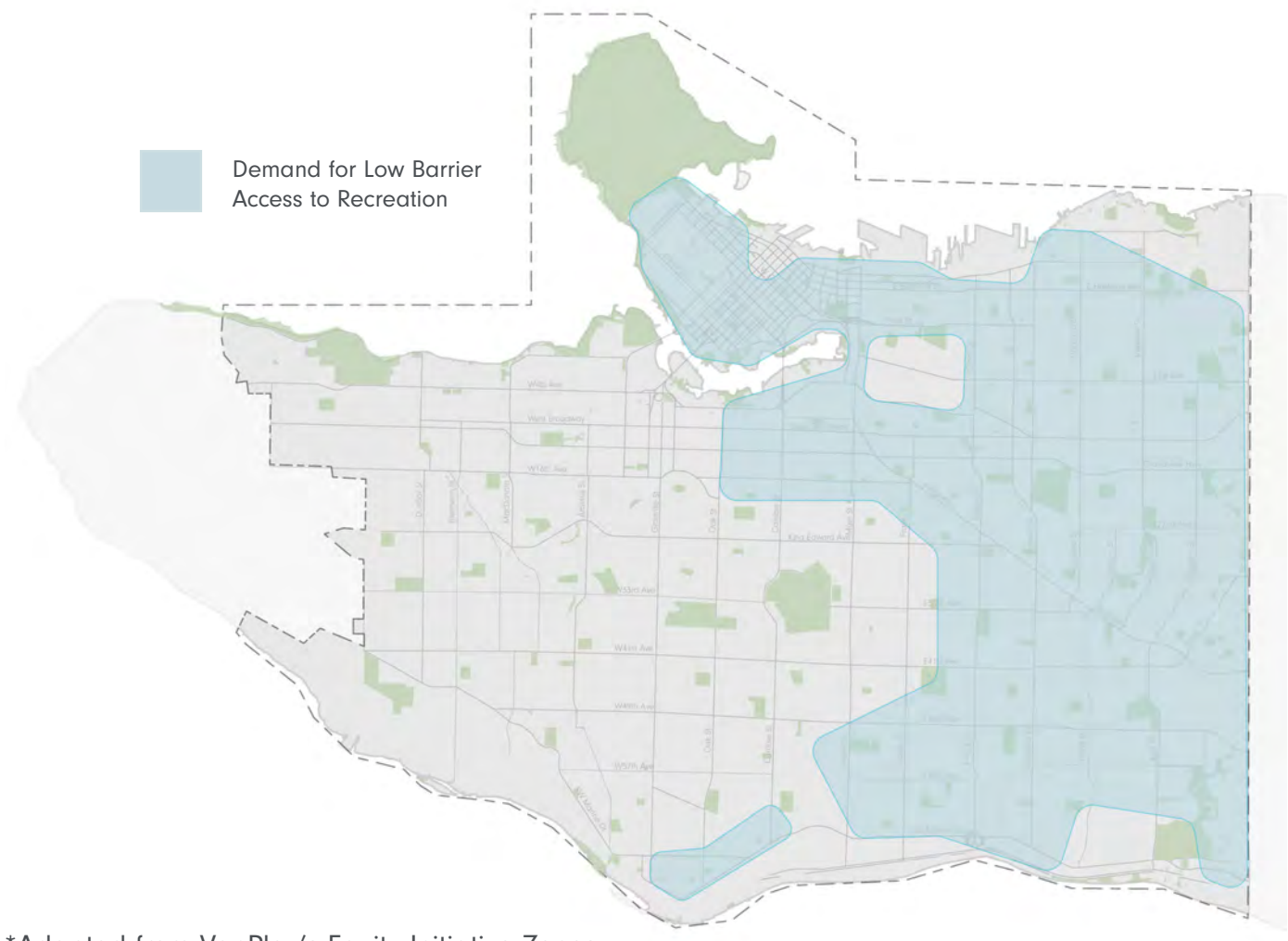
The 'Park Access Gaps' concept was introduced in VanPlay's 'Bold Moves' equity initiative and was determined by considering the distance to parks and the density of population within a 10-minute walk of each park. Areas with less than .55 park hectares per 1,000 people and/or no park access within a 10-minute walk are considered to have a low provision or access to parks. The highlighted area on the map below shows areas with low amounts of park space per person. Improving access to amenities in this area will help improve equity of park access for all skatepark users.




*Adapted from VanPlay's Equity Initiative Zones

## DEMAND FOR LOW BARRIER ACCESS TO RECREATION

The 'Demand for Low-Barrier Recreation' was introduced in Vanplay and was determined by surveying residents that had applied for discounted access to Park Board programming at pools, rinks and participating fitness centres and community centres. People in low barrier zones were three times more likely to apply for the Park Board's discounted Leisure Access Program. The highlighted area on the map below shows areas with a high demand for recreation with reduced barriers. Improving access to low barrier amenities in this area will help improve equity of recreation.




*Adapted from VanPlay's Equity Initiative Zones

## LOCAL GAPS IN EXISTING SKATE AMENITIES

The city's existing skate amenities are disproportionately focused in the northeast of Vancouver. Significant gaps exist in the south and west of the city. Locating new skate amenities in current network gaps that are high density or in planned growth areas will serve a greater number of people and are likely to be most successful.

Gap areas that have lower densities or projected lower future growth can still benefit from the addition of skate amenities, or the upgrade of existing infrastructure.

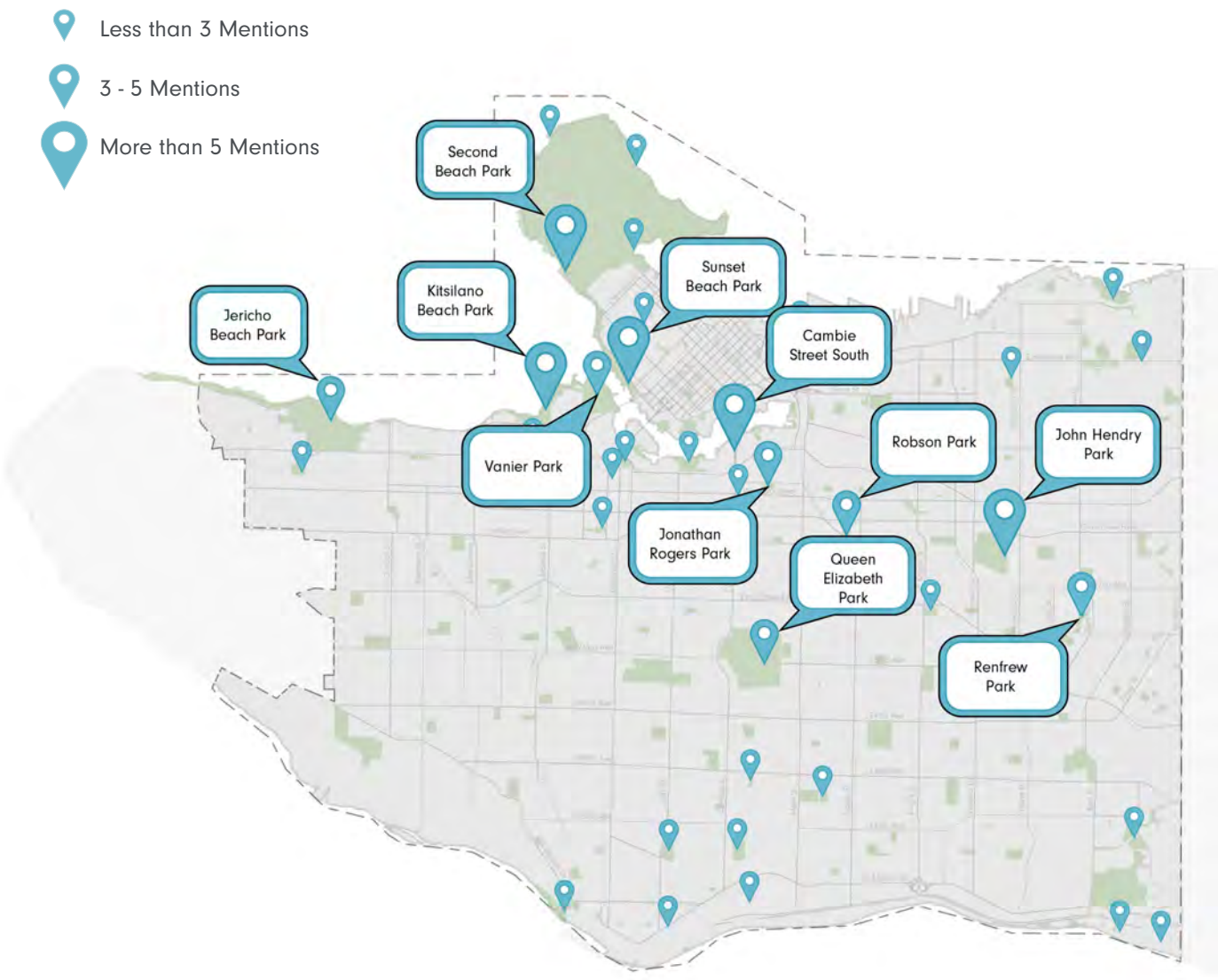
The diagram below shows existing skate amenity locations as 'points' with a 1 km walkshed. The blue areas are more than 1 km from a skate amenity.



## 4.5 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT - "WHERE I WANT TO SKATE"

During the engagement process the user group was asked in Survey 1 and at the Sunset Beach Pop-up event to identify 'Where I want to skate". The map below identifies all locations mentioned and shows three scales of bubbles based on the number of mentions by respondents. A small bubble is up to 2 mentions, a medium bubble 3-5 mentions and large bubble is more than 5 mentions.

There is most notable interest in two distinct areas. Firstly the beaches zone from Jericho and Kitsilano all the way around to Sunset and Second Beach. Secondly, at Broadway/City Hall and John Hendry Park. A number of other locations around the city received mention.

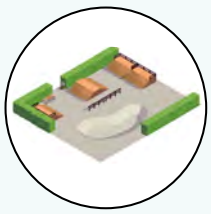


## 4.6 PRIORITIZING AREAS FOR NEW SKATEPARKS

Vancouver is home to over 230 parks that make up approximately 11% of the City's total landmass[24]. Finding suitable locations and creating new skate amenities in parks will form the foundation of the CitySkate network. This is supported by data gathered during the engagement phases of the project, with 88% of survey two respondents strongly supporting incorporating skate amenities into existing and new parks.

Larger scale network hubs and neighbourhood scale skateparks will act as the core of the skate network, providing destination locations for riders from all over the city.

### SKATE AMENITY TYPOLOGIES



NEIGHBOURHOOD SKATEPARK
600m$^2$ - 1,200m$^2$



NETWORK HUB SKATEPARK
Larger than 1,200m$^2$

24. Retrieved from the City of Vancouver's "Parks, Gardens and Beaches" website viewable at: https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/parks-gardens-and-beaches.aspx

### WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN LOCATING NEW SKATEPARKS?

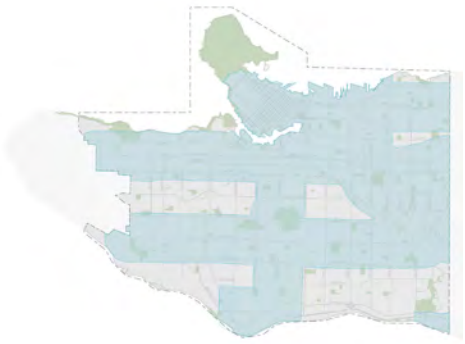
To determine where to locate key skateparks and how to prioritize their implementation a number of factors were taken into consideration. Since these parks are intended to serve the entire city they will be located within the 'Urban Focus Area' developed through a combination of the rapid transit network and current and future population density. The service gaps have also been considered in two ways. Firstly local gaps in the existing skate amenity infrastructure, which are areas beyond the 1km walkshed of existing skateparks, and secondly consideration was given to areas identified by VanPlay to have a greater demand for low barrier access to recreation. Finally, we consider public feedback gathered through survey and open house input about 'Where I want to skate'.

The Urban Focus Area outlines the extents of potential new parks and the three other factors establish priority. The highest priority areas meet all criteria, whereas the second priority meet less criteria. The greatest priority is in the South East and West End of the City. The second priority areas essentially follow the Urban Focus boundary with omissions near existing skate amenities.

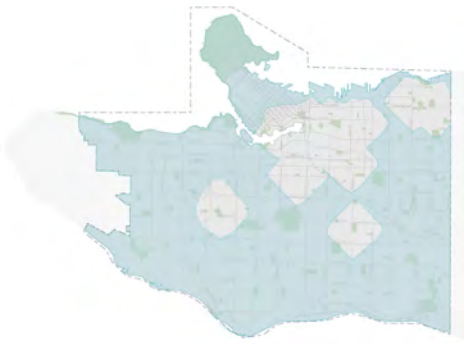
It is notable that a number of significant urban areas do not have skate amenities. These include: West End, West Broadway corridor, Cambie Corridor, Kingsway East, and the River District. Of these zones the West End, and Kingsway East are prioritized by the service gap criteria.

## PRIORITY AREAS FOR NEW SKATEPARKS MAP

LAYER 1
Urban Focus Areas (High Density Areas + Proximity to Transit)



LAYER 2
Gaps in Existing Skate Amenities



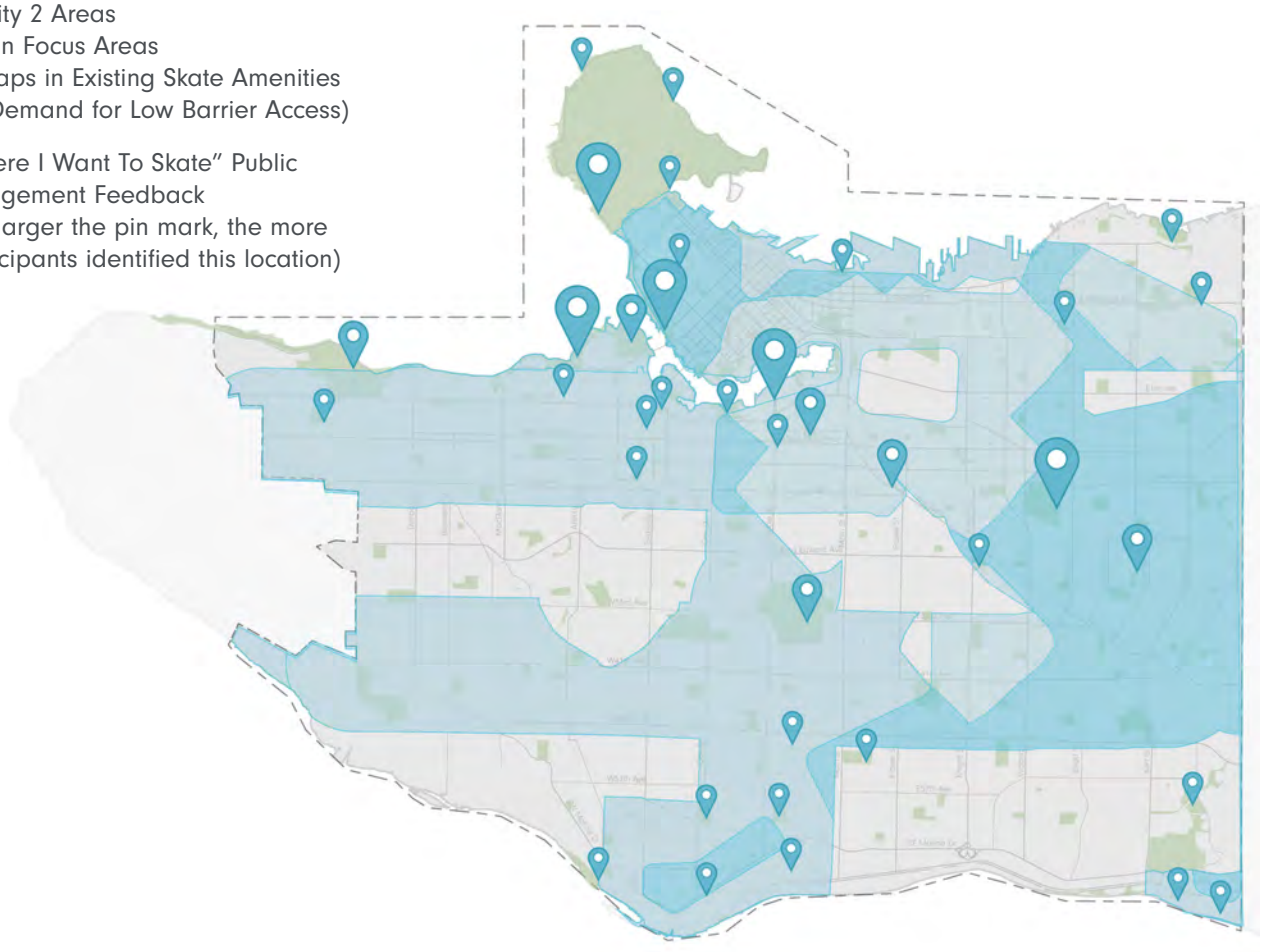
LAYER 3
Demand for Low Barrier Access to Recreation



Priority 1 Areas
Urban Focus Area
+ Gaps in Existing Skate Amenities
+ Demand for Low Barrier Access

Priority 2 Areas
Urban Focus Areas
+ (Gaps in Existing Skate Amenities
OR Demand for Low Barrier Access)

"Where I Want To Skate" Public Engagement Feedback
(the larger the pin mark, the more participants identified this location)

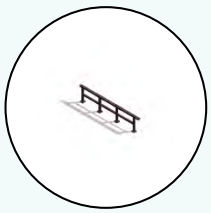


## 4.7 PRIORITIZING AREAS FOR NEW SKATE SPOTS AND DOTS IN PARKS

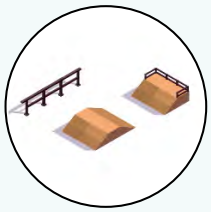
### WHY SKATE SPOTS AND DOTS IN PARKS?

While larger skateparks (neighbourhood scale, and network hub scale) serve the greater city, skate spots and dots will improve network connectivity and amenity distribution around Vancouver. Spots and dots are important elements in the overall CitySkate Strategy, and should be considered in both 'Urban Focus' zones, as well as less densely populated areas of the city.

### SKATE AMENITY TYPOLOGIES



SKATE DOT
Less than 150m$^2$



SKATE SPOT
150m$^2$ - 600m$^2$

### WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN LOCATING SKATE SPOTS AND DOTS IN PARKS?

As the network is built-out, decision-makers should consider compatible spaces where opportunities arise. When renewing existing parks or undertaking new park designs, skate amenities can be included as one of the program items for public input through the design process. Since the Park Board is redeveloping parks in each capital plan and funding may not be available for skate amenities in each new project, using the analysis in the CitySkate Strategy can help guide decisions around which projects should be prioritized over others.

To determine priority locations the following data maps are used. The local gaps in skate amenities map is combined with the demand for low barrier access to amenities map. In addition, engagement feedback regarding "where I want to skate" is layered on top to help prioritize further and synthesize the planning and user group data. The Southeast and West End of the city are in greatest need, while much of the city is secondary, with the exception of already served areas in the walksheds surrounding Quilchena and Kensington skate amenities.

## PRIORITY AREAS FOR SKATE SPOTS AND DOTS IN PARKS

LAYER 1
Gaps in Existing Skate Amenities



LAYER 2
Demand for Low Barrier Access to Recreation



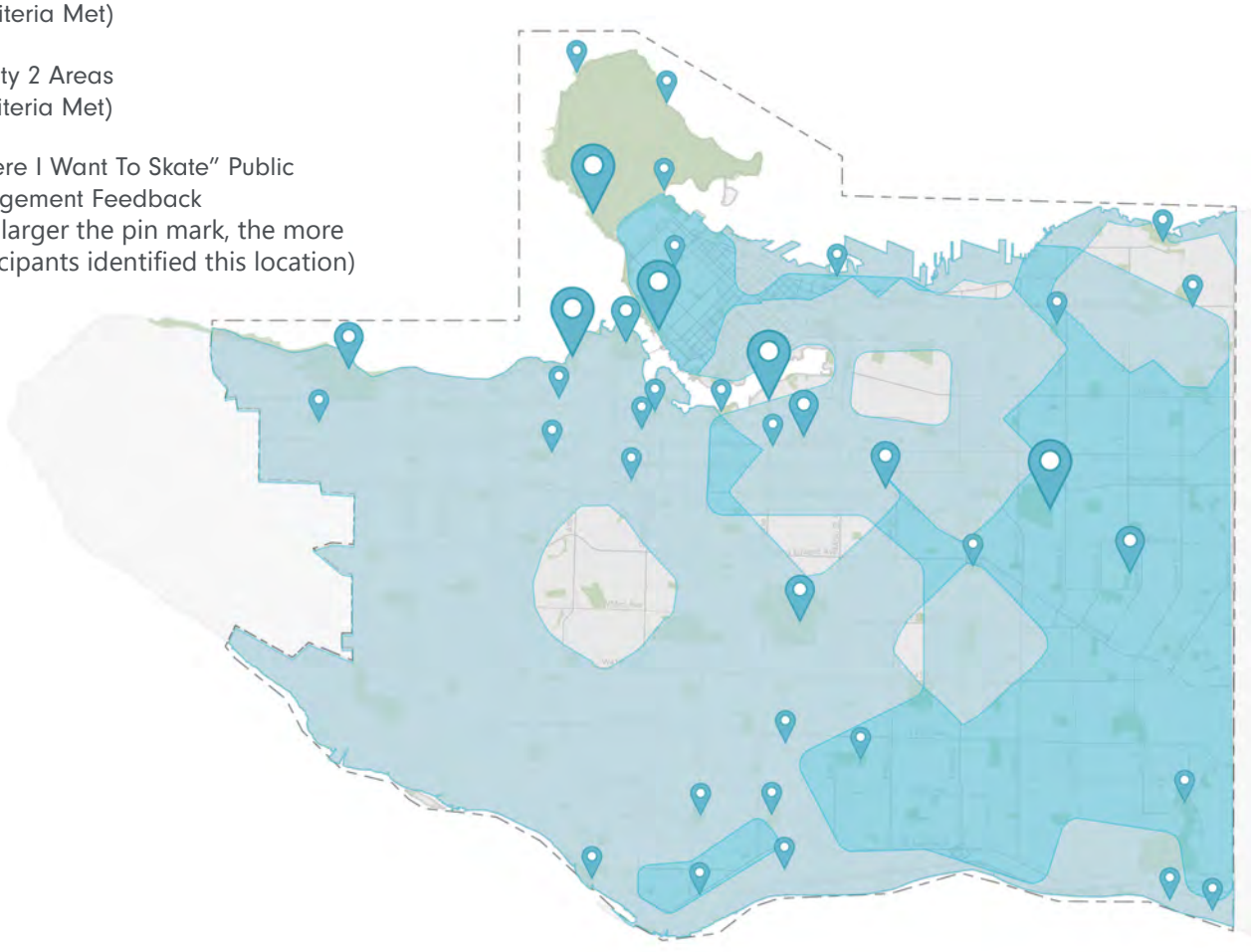
LAYER 3
"Where I Want to Skate" Public Engagement Feedback



Priority 1 Areas
(2 Criteria Met)

Priority 2 Areas
(1 Criteria Met)

"Where I Want To Skate" Public Engagement Feedback
(The larger the pin mark, the more participants identified this location)



## 4.8 SKATEABLE CITY SPACES
## INTEGRATING SKATE SPOTS AND DOTS OUTSIDE OF PARKS

### WHAT ARE SKATEABLE CITY SPACES?

While locating skate amenities in parks forms the foundation for the skate amenity network, the CitySkate public engagement feedback identified an ardent desire for skate spaces outside of parks and in the public realm (89% of respondents). This section responds to this feedback by highlighting opportunities for integrating skate amenities outside of park land.

### WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SKATEABLE CITY SPACES?

Skateboarding can help activate public spaces in successful and creative ways with good planning. Exploring opportunities to incorporate skate features in street right-of-ways and public lands could help integrate skating into the city and bolster the skate amenity network. The Park Board and City of Vancouver departments should explore the creation of a "Toolkit" for establishing site suitability and design options to help City staff make informed decisions for locating new skate spots and dots outside of parks.

Private institutional lands also present an opportunity for creating skate spaces. Schools and community centres are especially well suited to host skate amenities as they draw many youth on a daily basis and are publicly accessible buildings offering washrooms, drinking fountains, and supervision.

New private building developments in Vancouver offer opportunities to integrate skate amenities in the design of the privately owned public space edges. This may include skateable public art, fortified skate-friendly site furnishings and designated urban sports areas where features are purpose built for skating and deterrents are not installed. The skate community will benefit from any institutional or private development that includes skate amenities.

### WHAT IS IMPORTANT IN LOCATING SKATEABLE CITY SPACES?

Three criteria are considered for prioritizing areas for Skateable City Spaces:

**Current and Future High Density Areas** This shows the more heavily used urban areas.

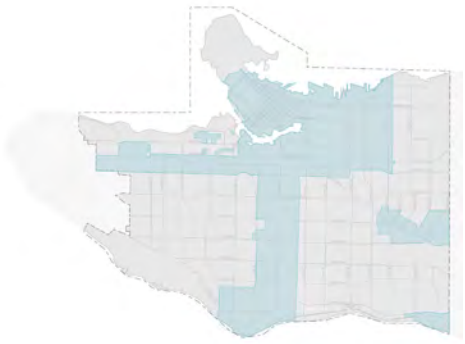
**Gaps in Access to Parks**
This shows the parts of the city with less access to parkland. Creating amenities outside of parks will help offset this local park deficit.

**Public Engagement "Where I Want to Skate"**
This mapping shows the locations that engagement participants "want to skate".

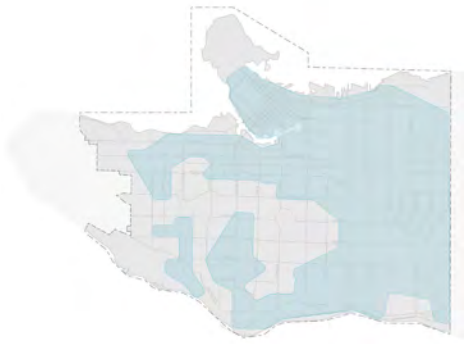
The resulting composite map highlights two levels of priority for implementation. The highest priority area achieves at least two of the above criteria. The second priority achieves at least one of the criteria. When considering priority areas, co-locating skate amenities near community centres, schools and along greenways provide additional access to services, improved viability, and aligns with engagement feedback. This analysis highlights preliminary prioritization and further refinement with collaborating departments will be necessary for finalizing locations.

## PRIORITY AREAS FOR SKATEABLE CITY SPACES

Layer 1
Current and Future High Density Areas

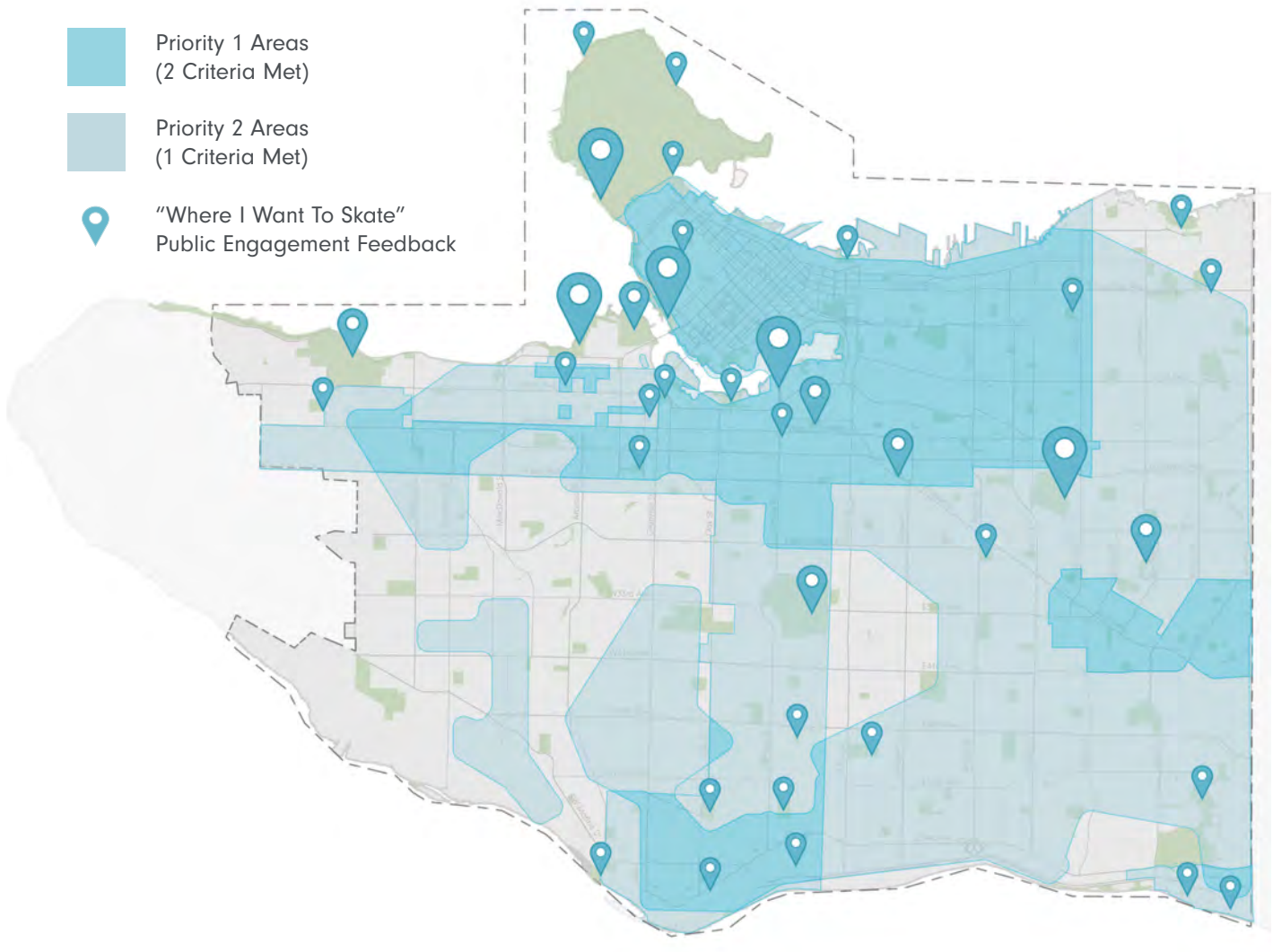


Layer 2
Low Access to Park Space and Demand for Low Barrier Recreation



### ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are a wide range of site-specific qualities that impact how suitable a site may be for integrating a skate amenity. For more information on creating skateable city spaces, see the 'CitySkate Toolkit'.



## 4.9 UPGRADES

### WHAT ARE UPGRADES?

Well-constructed skate amenities last a long time but require ongoing maintenance to ensure they continue to be accessible and safe to use. Heavy use accelerates wear and tear with chipped ledges, damaged features and spalling or degraded surfaces considerably reducing the useability of the amenity. Scheduled and periodic renovations are needed to address the regular wear and tear of a skate amenity to ensure it continues to serve the community.

Half of the existing skate amenities in Vancouver are less than 600 square metres and are classified as skate spots or dots. Expanding key existing skate amenities takes advantage of familiar and established sites while creating more skateable terrain and building stronger anchors for the city-wide skate amenity network. As with any skate amenity project, community stakeholders should be thoroughly consulted throughout the replacement process to ensure historic or significant features are maintained in new designs.




Figure 32. Each skatepark within Vancouver's current network was inventoried and evaluated (See appendix for individual site information and scorecards).

### WHAT IS MOST IMPORTANT WHEN CONSIDERING UPGRADES?

To help prioritize which existing parks will be renewed the following criteria are considered:

**Age** – If the park is over 15 years of age it will likely require some minor updates to surfaces and features. If it is over 20 years of age it will likely require more significant replacements.

**Condition –** The condition as determined by a skatepark expert is number one factor determining safety. See the "Skatepark Scorecards" in the Appendix for discussion about the skatepark facility assessments.

**Intensity of Use** – This is determined through feedback in Survey 1 which asked the user group "Where I Skate". This feedback was augmented through site observations and pop-up events.

**Network Ranking** – This relates to the size, location and accessibility within the broader skate network. Skateparks that are larger or within a kilometre of a major transit exchange gain higher importance as accessible city-wide facilities. This factor also reflects feedback gathered from stakeholder groups and through the public engagement process as to which skate amenities are in greatest need of upgrade.

The result of this analysis is that China Creek and Hastings Park are in greatest need for upgrades.

## PRIORITIZATION OF EXISTING SKATE AMENITY UPGRADES

| SKATE AMENITY | AGE | CONDITION | INTENSITY OF USE | NETWORK RANKING | PRIORITY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| China Creek | Old | Moderate | High | High | High |
| Hastings* | Old | Moderate | High | High | High |
| Downtown Plaza** | Medium | Moderate | High | High | Medium - High |
| Leeside DIY | Medium | Moderate | Medium | Medium | Medium - High |
| Strathcona | Medium | Poor | Low | Moderate | Medium |
| Quilchena | New | Good | High | High | Medium |
| Coopers' | Medium | Moderate | Low | Low | Medium |
| Kensington | New | Good | Medium | Moderate | Low - Medium |
| Mt. Pleasant | New | Good | High | Low | Low - Medium |
| Adanac - Vernon Plaza | New | Moderate | Low | Low | Low |

*Subject to approval by the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE)
**Downtown Plaza subject to development of North East False Creek (NEFC)



## 4.10 SKATEBOARDING AND GREENWAYS ANALYSIS

### THE IMPORTANCE OF GREENWAYS TO SKATEBOARDING

Skateboarding as transportation was a key takeaway from the public engagement process with 78% of survey two participants using skating as a mode of transportation. Accessing skate amenities by sustainable and affordable modes of transportation is not only a reality for many users, it is also aligned with City of Vancouver policy including the Transportation 2040 plan, Climate Action Plan, and supports the guiding principle of equity by continuing to provide low-barrier access to skate amenities without requiring private vehicle ownership.

### WHAT MAKES A GREENWAY "SKATE FRIENDLY?"

In the second phase of public engagement, 76% of participants cited rough ground as a main challenge for skating as transportation, with 38% and 34% of participants citing too many vehicles and other road users and not enough space to feel safe, respectively. Site-specific characteristics play a critical role in the ability for skateboards and other small-wheeled activities to be viable forms of active transportation.

The primary concerns among users are:

1. Ensure smooth, clean, and consistent surfacing
2. Maximize the width of useable hardscape for passing, slowing, and stopping
3. Reduce and/or slow down vehicular traffic where applicable

The City's greenways network provide an opportunity for skateboarders and other small wheeled sports to connect to various amenities across the city. As these routes are upgraded, surface conditions are improved and vehicle volumes on greenways are reduced, the accessibility for small-wheeled riders will also be improved. Safely locating skate spots and dots adjacent multi-use pathways (MUPs) where appropriate can introduce an element of play and increase user engagement along active transportation routes. The City's Engineering and Active Transportation departments support exploring opportunities to include skate amenities along active transportation corridors and will continue collaboration with the Park Board to locate spots and dots as opportunities arise.

The greenways across the city that connect existing skate amenities can and likely already do play a role in enabling users to get to their skate friendly destinations. Criteria that have emerged in early conversations to encourage skating and small-wheeled modes of transportation on greenways include urban focus areas (density and proximity to transit), slope, and proximity. These criteria can be further considered by City of Vancouver and Park Board staff in the future.

1. Urban Focus Area

Earlier in Chapter 4, an analysis defined the urban focus areas, reflecting areas of the city that are higher in density, and proximity to transit, which both imply an increased demand on existing greenways. This emphasizes those greenways that are likely more heavily used and important to a skateable network.

2. Major Greenway Slope Mapping

Through the public engagement phase, "hills are too steep and/or too long" was identified as one of the top barriers to skateboarding as transportation in the city. Skateboarding and small-wheeled sports are challenged by steeper slopes and Vancouver's topography varies in elevation. Based on this, a mapping analysis was done to determine the slopes of major greenways across the city. The slope analysis map represents slopes with four colours of green, yellow, orange and red (green being low or more level, and red being high or steep). Some routes have very low slope, such as False Creek and the Arbutus Corridor. Moderate slopes affect north-south routes like the Ontario Greenway, and east-west routes like 37th Avenue Greenway.

3. Proximity & Alignment with Existing Skate Amenities

All ages and abilities (AAA) greenways typically have separated routes and/or traffic calming measures as they are implemented, which provide a safer and more enjoyable travel experience for skateboard and small wheeled sport users. This map reflects the segments of existing greenways that link the existing skate amenities in the most direct route possible while also having separated routes and/or traffic calming measures already in place.



Figure 33. Skaters cruise along a downtown bike lane. While not ideal, skaters will use what space is available to explore the city. Photo: Budgeron Bach

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GREENWAYS AND SKATEBOARDING

This mapping analysis demonstrates the primary greenways within the 'Urban Focus Area' as well as greenways connecting skate amenities to create a city-wide network with links to major transit facilities and waterfront locations. According to this analysis, the Arbutus Greenway connects Quilchena Skatepark to the future Broadway Skytrain, and continues over to Coopers' Park and the Downtown Plaza via the Seaside Greenway. In addition, the proposed greenway routes of Midtown Way (as well as the Adanac bikeway), connect several existing skate amenities to each other and to major transit routes and neighbourhoods. Although not a designated greenway, the Adanac bikeway is an important active transportation link in the skate amenity network and is included in this analysis. These greenway routes are extremely important and show high potential for increased use by skateboarders, are important to the existing skate amenity network, and play a role in supporting more sustainable modes of transportation.



Figure 34. A skater pushes down a separated greenway. Photo: Maksim Oncharenok

SLOPE ANALYSIS



Figure 35. Existing Greenway Slope Analysis + Proposed Greenways

< 3% 3 - 5% 5 - 7% > 7%

URBAN FOCUS AREAS + EXISTING SKATE AMENITIES

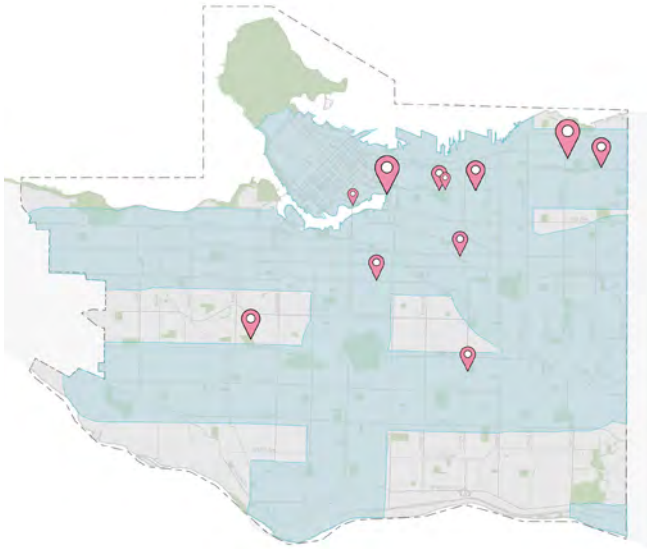


Figure 36. Urban Focus Areas + Proximity & Alignment with Existing Skate Amenities

Existing Skate Amenities

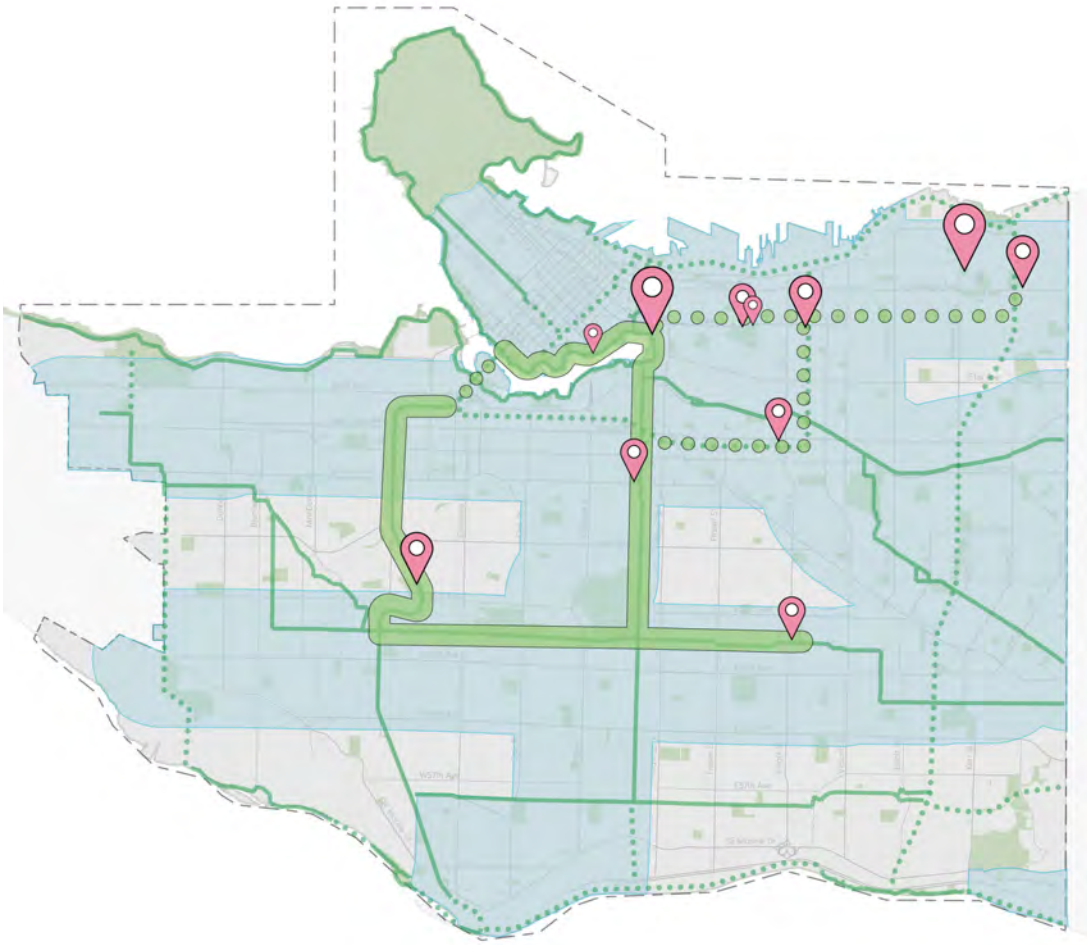
Urban Focus Area

Existing Connecting Greenways

Future Connecting Greenways + Adanac Bikeway

Existing Greenways

Proposed Greenways



*Future updates to the Greenways Plan are anticipated. For greenway names, see Chapter 5.4.

## 4.11 PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMMING

Skate-related programming and partnerships can optimize opportunities for skateboarding, by supporting lessons and events and enriching the skate community. The Park Board is fostering the relationship with Community Centre Associates which can help realize shared visions and common goals for delivering recreation to the community.

### YEAR-ROUND SKATE OPPORTUNITIES

Lack of year-round opportunities for skating was a top concern among survey participants. It was noted that the lack of covered and indoor facilities leads to limited options during the rainy months, which impacted their ability to use uncovered spaces in wet weather. It is also well documented that Vancouverites who want to train and compete at elite or professional levels must leave the city to find year-round skating opportunities. Without creating or finding indoor or rain-sheltered skate amenities, the Park Board will not be meeting the needs of the skate community.

### SKATE HOSTS

A skate host is a Park Board employee who oversees the safe use of a skate park, helps keep it clean, and provides assistance and support to skateboarders during set times during the week. This is a popular program and one that youth requested more of during the CitySkate engagement process. The program also supports the Park Board's efforts to increase equity and inclusion through recreation programs.

### LESSONS, CAMPS, AND LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Skate-related lessons and camps provide youth and beginners with the confidence and security of learning the sport in a safe and welcoming environment. Introductory lessons and drop-ins help reduce barriers to skateboarding such as fear of injury, while also teaching new skills and providing opportunity to gain experience with the sport. Programs also provide occasions for like-minded youth to meet skate friends. During the CitySkate engagement process, participants noted that without programs or drop-ins, they only meet each other at occasional skateboard events or contests which don't meet the needs for long term community building. A common theme from women, young girls and people in the LGBTQ+ community was that skate programs provided them with a safe place where they felt accepted when there were few other outlets for them to be active and social.

### DIY SPACES

Building a strong skate community is about involvement and empowerment. Skateboarders naturally interact with and change spaces to create opportunities to challenge themselves and progress in the activity. The Do-It-Yourself (DIY) culture may have started out of necessity, but it is an important act of creativity and discovery. Supporting DIY opportunities will contribute to these benefits and have a benefitial impact on the skate community. DIY skate amenities may be on vacant spaces or incorporated as an area within new skateparks.




Figure 37. People gather to skate the "green ramp" at a pop-up event at Sunset Beach




Figure 38. A group of friends hangs out at the local DIY skate space. Photo: Olia Danilevich

## 4.12 DETERMINING REQUIRED SPACE

Skateboarding is different than many other sports and present a unique challenge in determining how much space is required to support the skate community. Unlike sports such as basketball and tennis, skateboarding and other small-wheel sports are not always confined to a designated area for participation.

Participation is therefore much more complex to determine and requires a multi-pronged approach to estimating spatial needs for the user group. Nevertheless, determining the area required to meet the needs of Vancouver's skate community is important in selecting, prioritizing and distributing sites across the city.

Two methods of estimation are used to determine the current and future gap in skate amenity space. The first estimation for spatial needs is drawn from VanPlay and the second is based on population data, participation rates, and projected growth over the next 20 years.

Utilizing both methods provides validation on strategic quantification of spatial needs and is important for confidently planning future facility development around the city. It should be noted that both estimations include the assumption that as much functionally covered skateable space will be provided as feasibly possible.

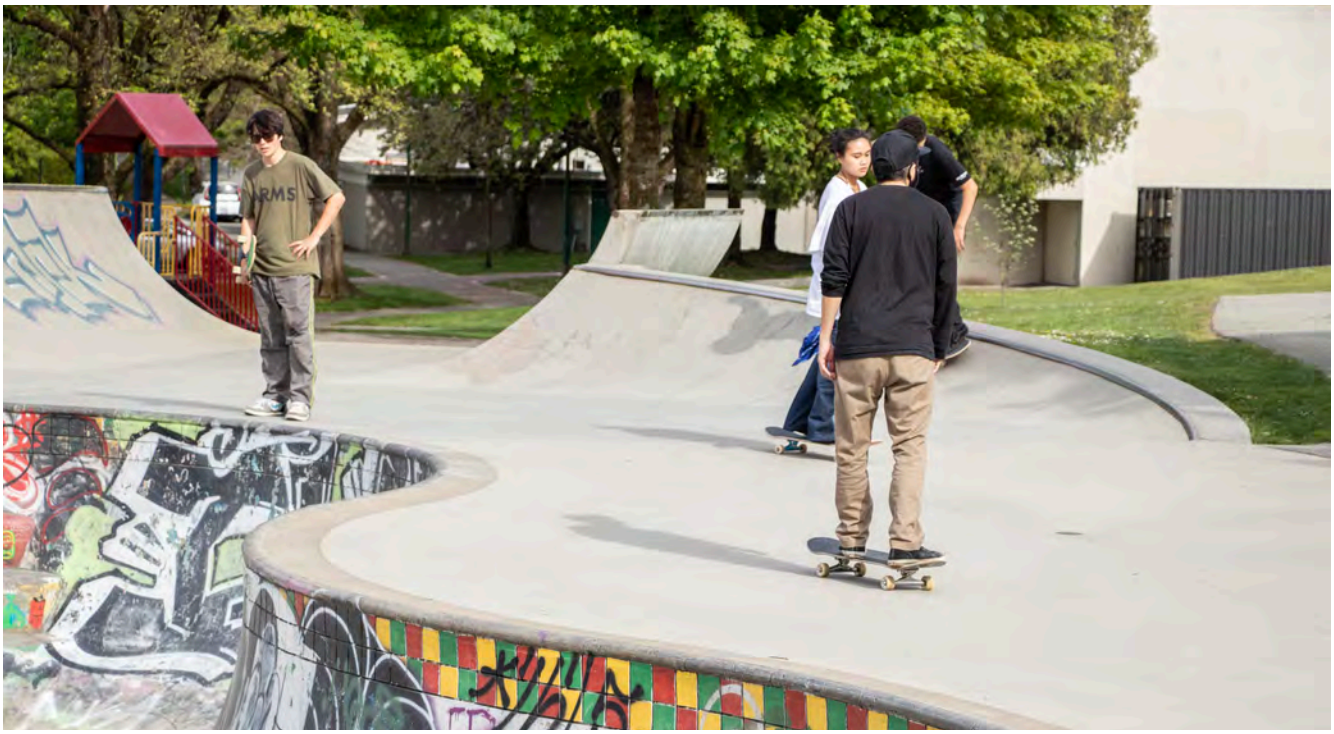


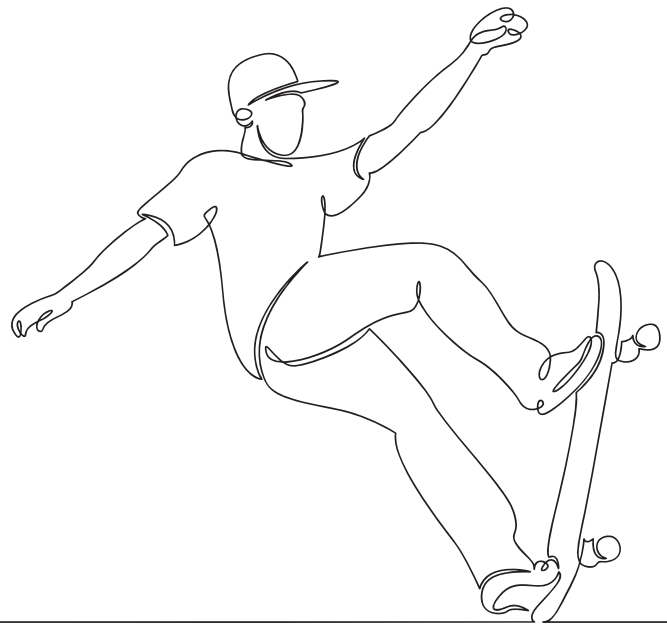
Figure 39. Skaters Enjoying Kensington Skatepark

## VANPLAY SKATE AMENITY SPACE ESTIMATE

Adopted in 2018-2019 by the Vancouver Park Board, the VanPlay Master Plan sets the over-arching framework to guide all Park Board activity connecting people to active living and community. In an inventory analysis, VanPlay identified a deficiency in the supply of skate spaces as well as their distribution across the city. The document notes that "smaller parks are currently not meeting the needs of local users as they are often overcrowded and not big enough to have multiple skateboarders skating simultaneously[16]." The identified need for more skateable terrain and lack of distribution across the city is consistent with the public feedback gathered during the CitySkate public engagement process and are key priorities for the CitySkate Strategy recommendations[17].

VanPlay also highlights the lack of covered skate spaces in Vancouver and the limitations that poses to skateboarding year-round in Vancouver's wet climate. This sentiment was reinforced throughout the CitySkate public engagement process.

In a preliminary survey of existing skateboard infrastructure, VanPlay recommended the construction of one skatepark and two smaller skate dots (or spots) per capital cycle (4-year period). Beginning in the next capital plan, this would equate to between 9,760 $m^2$ and 15,800 $m^2$ of new skateable terrain by 2040[19].



16. VanPlay Inventory & Analysis – Skate Park Analysis, July 2018
17. CitySkate (2021) Engagement Summary Reports 1 & 2
19. Based on 5 capital cycles, from 2019 to 2042

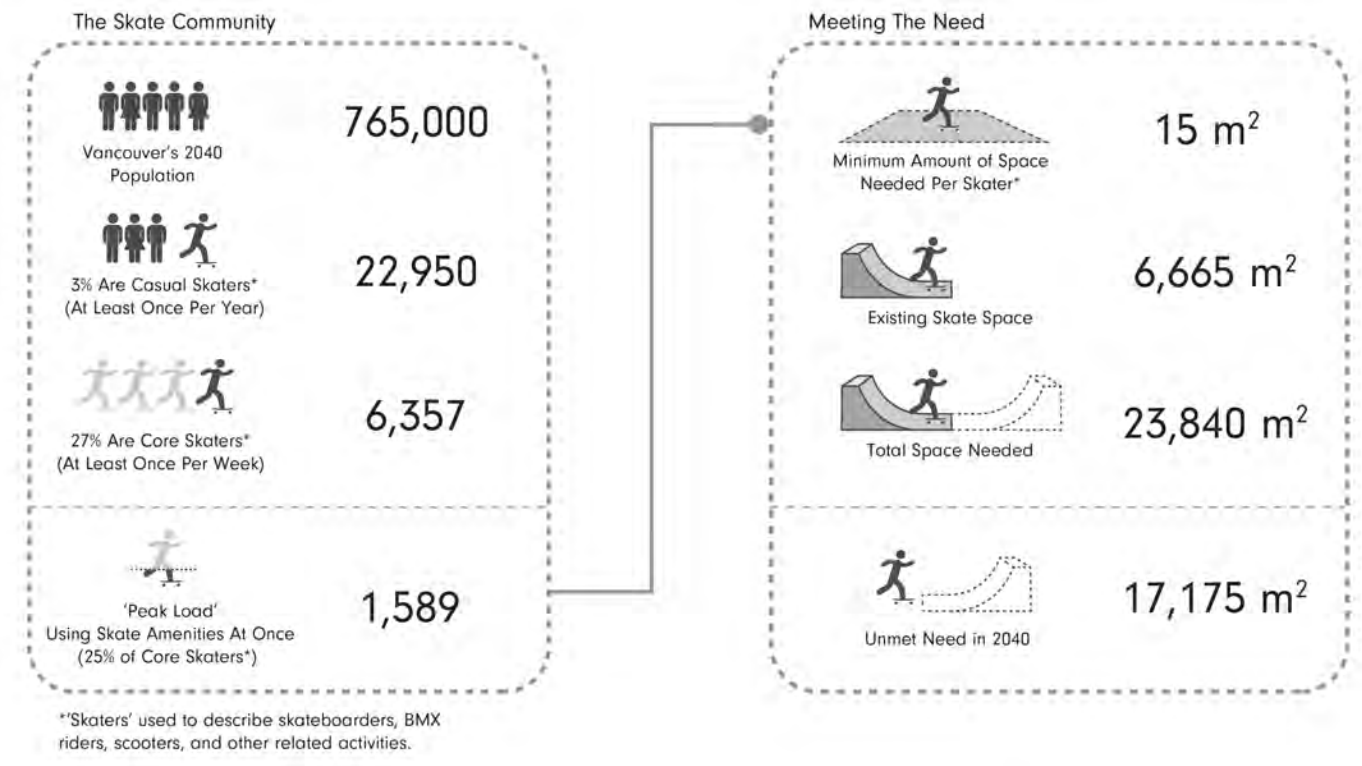
## POPULATION, PARTICIPATION AND GROWTH ANALYSIS

Analyzing population data, participation rate and growth projections is another useful approach in understanding how much skateable space is needed to adequately meet the needs of Vancouver's skate community. In 2020, the City of Vancouver was home to an estimated 675,000 people. By 2040, the City of Vancouver's population is projected to grow 13% to over 765,000 people[20].

Developed by the Skatepark Project in the United States, the "Skatepark Adoption Model" (SAM) is a well-established method for determining the amount of skate amenity space needed to serve a population. The SAM estimates that 3% of the overall population participate in skateboarding based on census data. Assuming this projection includes participation in skate-related sports like inline skating, scootering and BMX riding among others, there will be an estimated 22,951 riders in Vancouver by 2040.

A recent survey conducted by Statistics Canada noted 27.7% of British Columbians reported regularly participating in some form of sports[21]. Using this statistic as a measure of "core skaters" the CitySkate Strategy conservatively projects that at peak demand only 25% of the core group are skating at one time. This extrapolation predicts that approximately 1,589 riders are estimated to be using Vancouver's skate amenities at one time in 2040.

Another conservative estimate of spatial needs involves the practical consideration that skateboarding is a very social activity that typically includes friends gathering together at a given skate spot to "session" an obstacle or engage in casual skateboarding. The SAM model discusses



the reality that up to 10 or more skaters can utilize a space at one time - with only a single skateboarder actually performing a trick on a given obstacle at any given moment. For this reason, the diagram of spatial needs below (Figure 40), shows a group of skateboarders watching the action, yet occupying amenity space around the "trick space". Taking the social reality of skateboarding into consideration, a reasonable space for execution of a trick requires 150m$^2$. When that number is divided by a projected user group of 10 individuals occupying the skate amenity space at one time - we result in 15m$^2$ of space required per skater.

It is estimated that 23,840m$^2$ of skate amenity space will be needed to meet the base demands of skateboarding and related activities in Vancouver by 2042. Vancouver currently has approximately 6,665m$^2$ of existing skate amenity space resulting in an unmet need of approximately 17,175m$^2$ by the year 2042.

| Estimated Cost By Skate Amenity Based on $650 / m$^2$ | | |
|---|---|---|
| Type | Size | Construction Cost* |
| Skate Dot | < 150m$^2$ | Up to $100k |
| Skate Spot | 150m$^2$ - 600m$^2$ | $100k - $400k |
| Neighbourhood Skatepark | 600m$^2$ - 1,200m$^2$ | $400k - $800k |
| Network Hub Skatepark | > 1,200m$^2$ | $800k - $1.6m |

*Estimates based on costs in 2022 dollars. Does not include costs for consulting services, development related off-site improvements, site servicing, additional site amenities and contingencies

20. Metro Vancouver 2040: Shaping Our Future - Appendix A. (2010).
21. 'Regularly' means at least 2 or 3 times a month in a season for a certain period of the year. Retrieved from Statistics Canada. "Regular participation in sports by sex and other demographic characteristics"
22. Skatepark capacity suggested by the Public Skatepark Guide (2021)

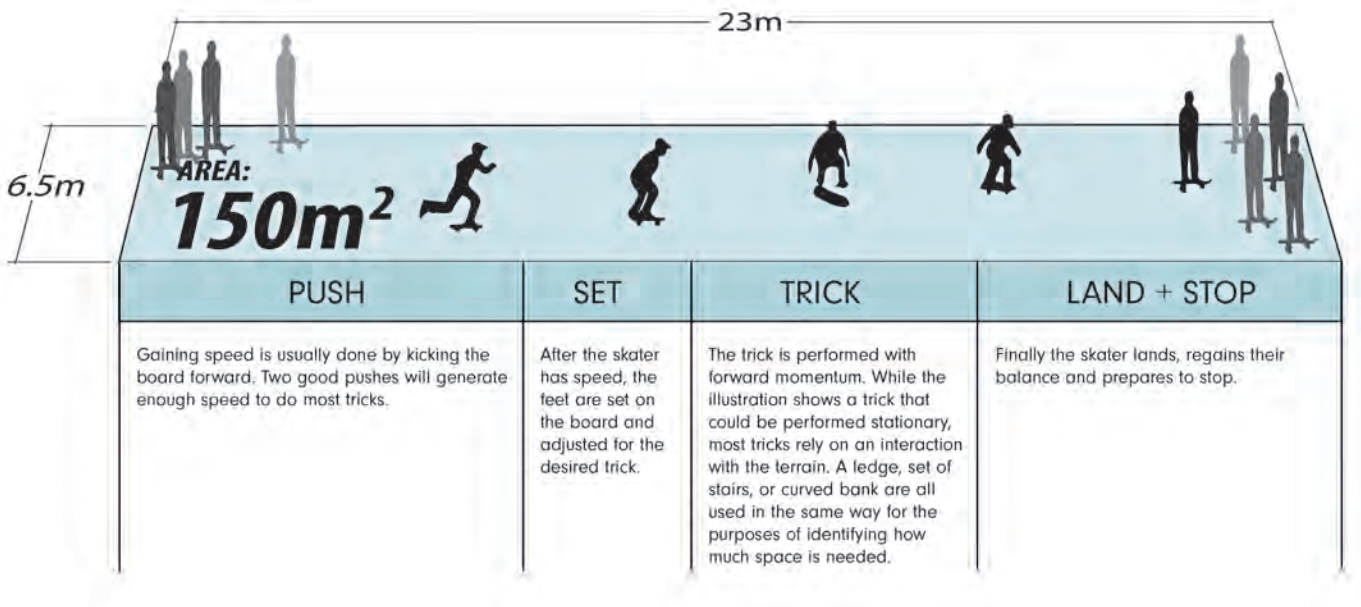
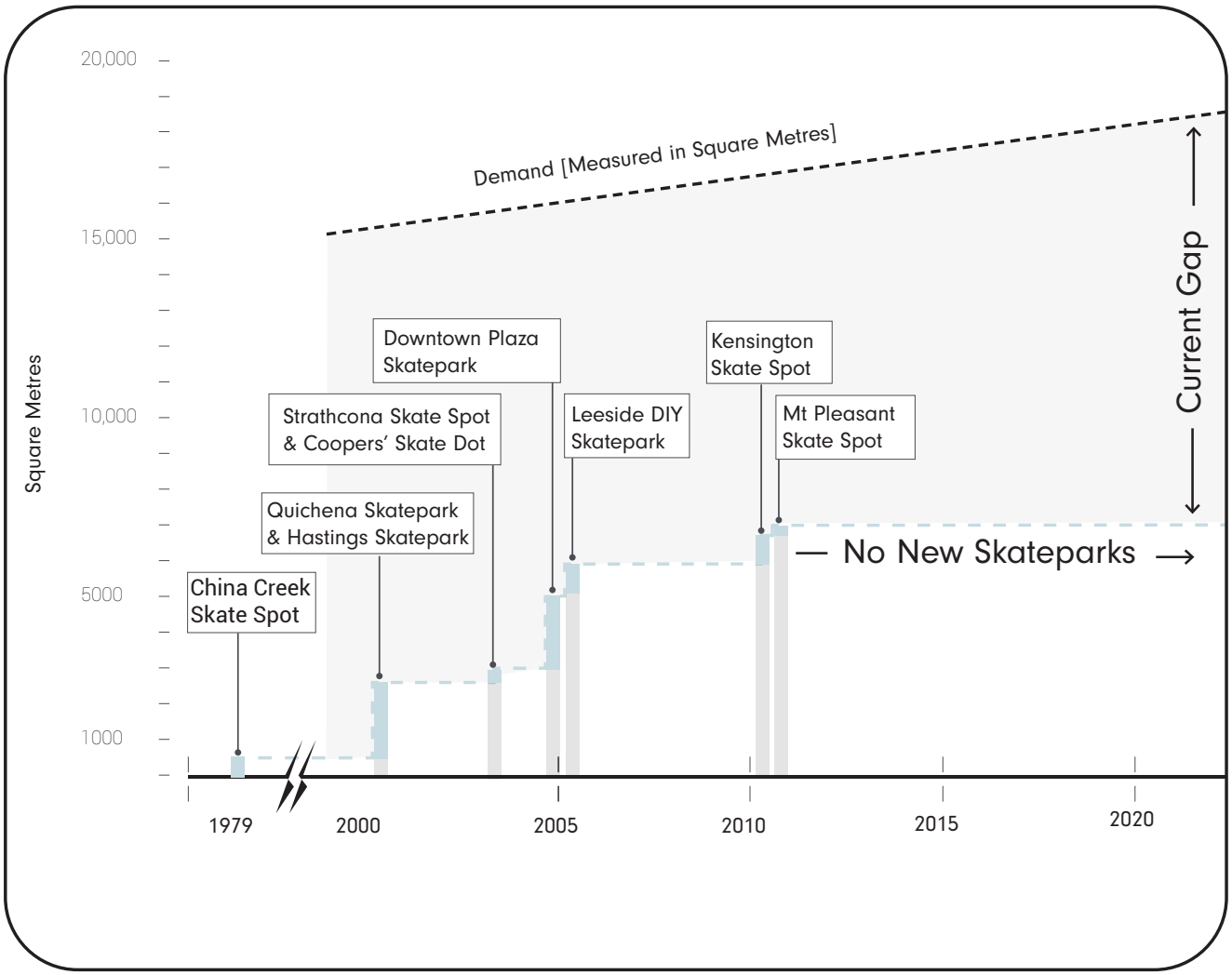



Figure 40. Diagram Explaining How Much Space is Needed Per Skate Amenity User. Adapted from the Skateboard Adoption Model.

## CATCHING UP

The lack of investment in skate amenities over the past decade combined with the continued growth of the skate community and participants in related activities has contributed to the gap between current skate amenity space and required space.

Developing new skate amenities in the city will help the city catch up to the growing demand for skate spaces and close the service gap that exists today.




VANS
OFF THE WALL



# CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS



# 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

## 5.1 THE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

The CitySkate Strategy sets out a recommended rollout of future skate amenities in Vancouver over the next 20 years. The Strategy is organized around a framework that was developed through the public engagement process, stakeholder consultations, and urban planning and mapping analysis. The framework consists of 4 guiding principles, a vision and mission statement, and 7 goals that inform and guide the implementation recommendations.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The guiding principles are the foundation of the CitySkate Strategy and describe how skateboarding in Vancouver ought to be. Each principle is embedded within the implementation of this plan and guides the development of all skate amenities across the city. Skateboarding in Vancouver is equitable, inclusive, quality and collaborative.

**Equitable**
Easy to participate for those who need it most.

**Inclusive**
Welcoming for people of all backgrounds.

**Quality**
Safe, accessible, and durable.

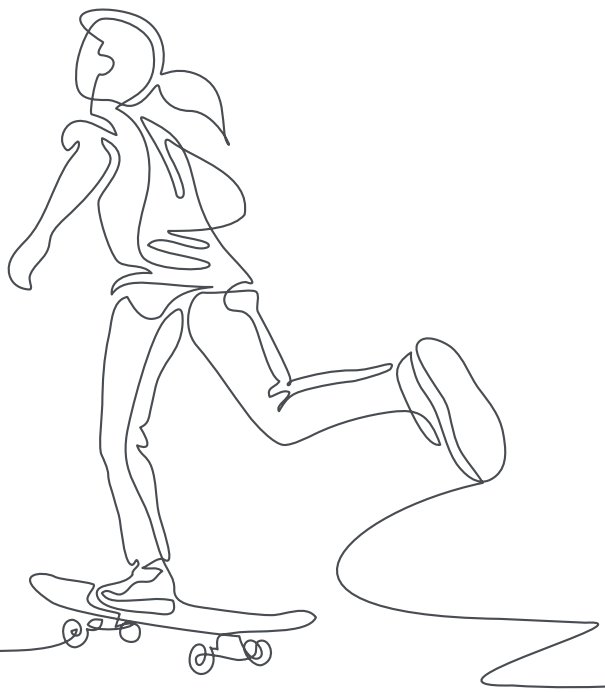
**Collaborative**
Brings benefits to everyone involved.

### VISION AND MISSION

The vision and mission guide the intention of the CitySkate Strategy, setting out what the Strategy intends to accomplish and how we can get there.

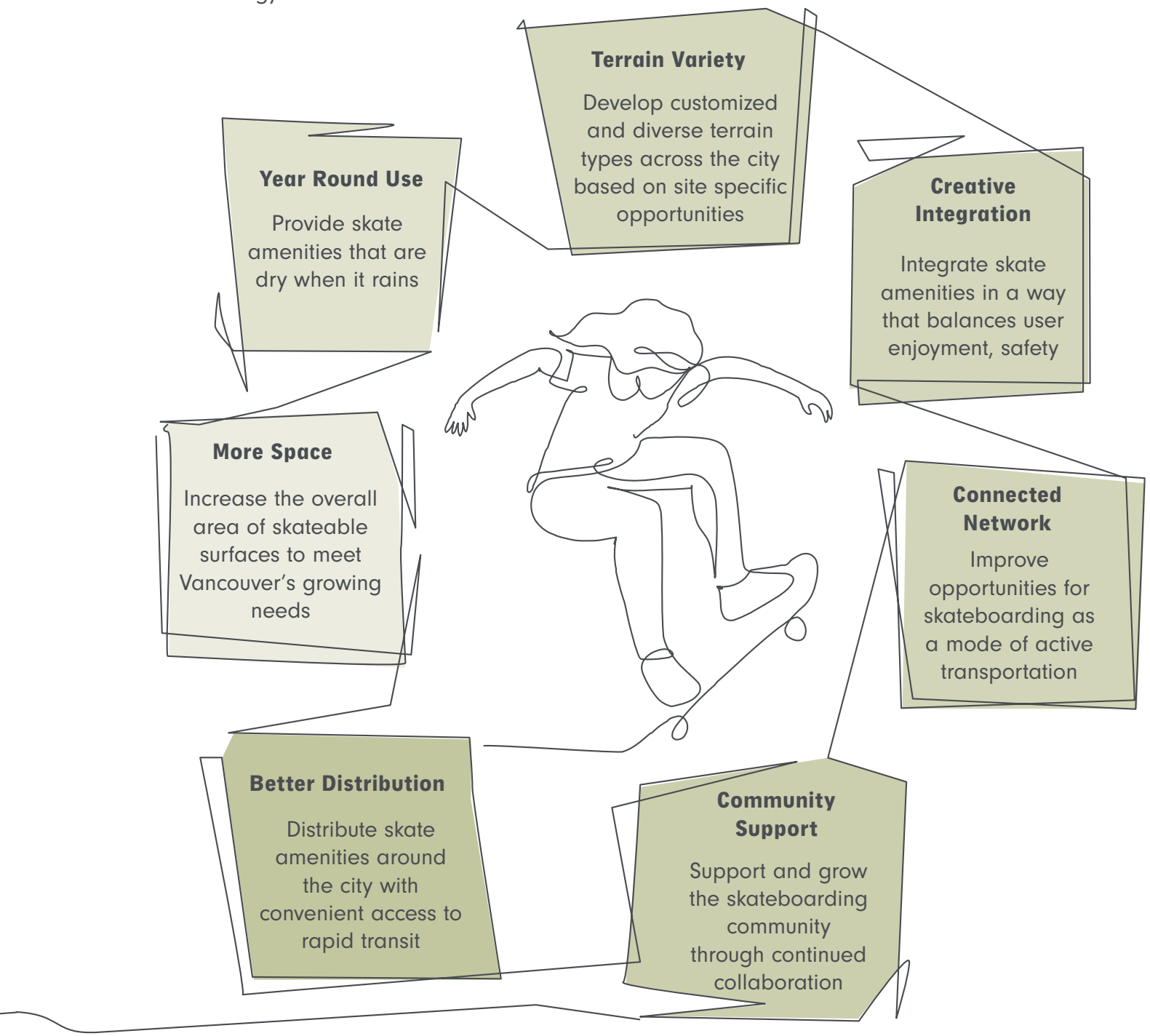
**Vision**
In the year 2042, Vancouver is home to a well-connected network of approachable and welcoming skate amenities that serve a thriving and diverse skate community.

**Mission**
To support and expand the skateboarding community through provision of amenities that meet demand, by enhancing user safety and promoting acceptance of skateboarding within recreation culture, and the inclusion of a diverse user group with a variety of backgrounds and skill levels.



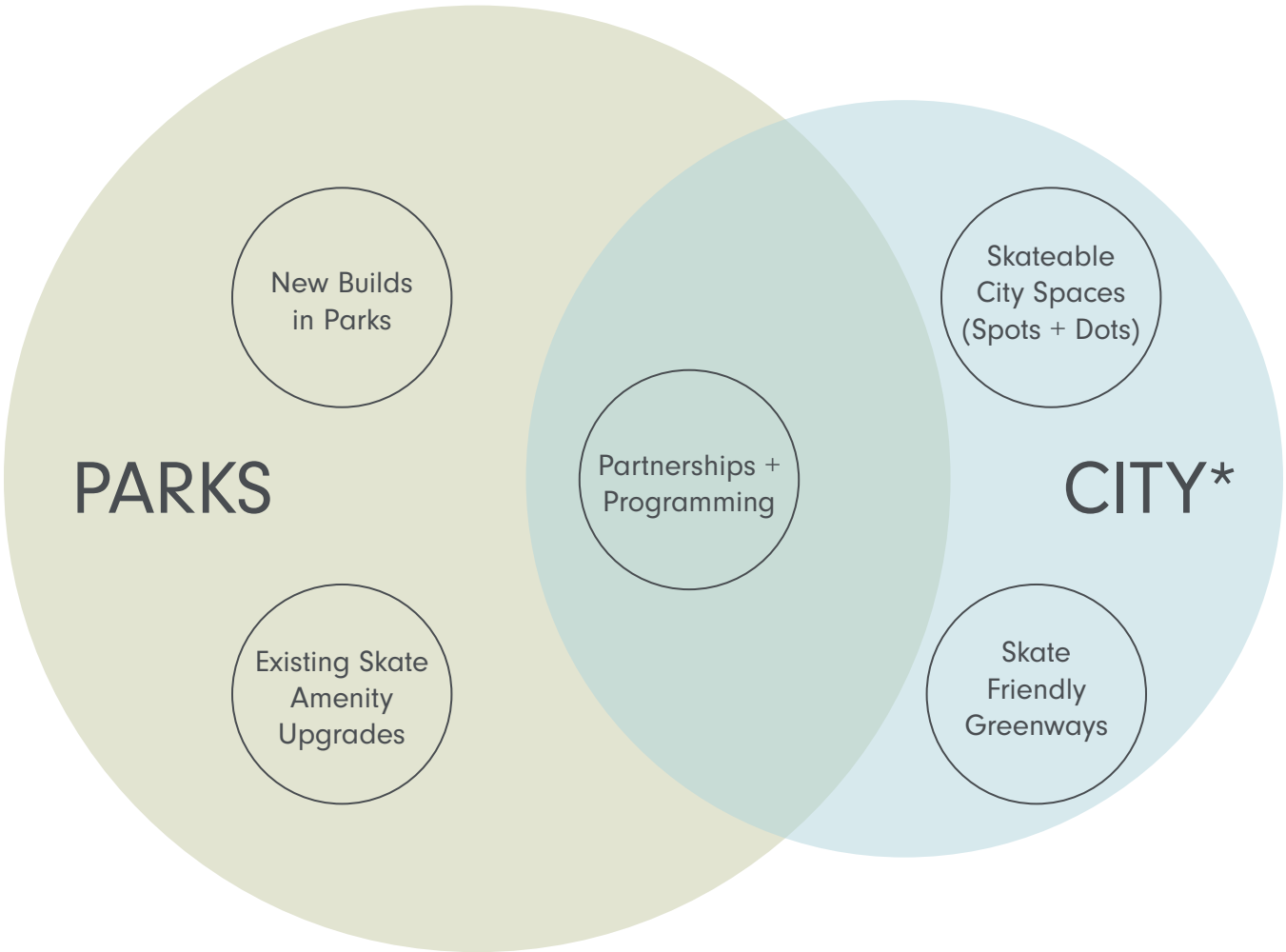
## GOALS

Through public and stakeholder engagement and analysis of the current conditions of skateboarding in Vancouver, the following 7 key goals were identified for the Strategy:



## IMPLEMENTATION AREAS

There are five Implementation Areas that will see this plan fulfilled. New Builds in Parks, Existing Skate Amenity Upgrades, Greenways, Skateable City Spaces, and Partnerships & Programming. The diagram below outlines the jurisdiction that these Implementation Areas fall under and speaks to how collaboration is key to delivering skate amenities across the city and meeting the demand. The recommendations for each Implementation Area are summarized in the table to the right. The following chapter provides greater detail for each Implementation Area, supported by mapping and diagrams.




*City refers to spaces outside of Park jurisdiction

| IMPLEMENTATION AREA | KEY ACTIONS |
|---|---|
| New Builds in Parks | 1. Construct four new "network hub" and three new "neighbourhood" scale skate parks to act as the foundation of the skate amenity network. |
| | 2. Construct 10 new skate "spots" and "dots" in parks throughout the city as opportunities arise. |
| Existing Skate Amenity Upgrades | 1. Upgrade six existing skate amenities with modern construction standards to ensure safe and interesting spaces that meet future demand. |
| | 2. Provide high level oversight on the condition and maintenance needs of skateparks. |
| Skateable City Spaces | 1. Work with the City of Vancouver to explore opportunities for new or temporary or permanent spots and dots in the public realm. |
| | 2. Collaborate with the Vancouver School Board to explore the creation of skate amenities as part of renovations in education settings and related amenity spaces. |
| | 3. On private lands, encourage private developers to provide skate-able features or spaces as part of the provision of public amenities where appropriate and where there is compatibility with the associated development and uses. |
| Skate Friendly Greenways | 1. Look for opportunities to collaborate with the City of Vancouver's Engineering department on the integration of skate spots and dots when upgrading existing or implementing new greenways in the city. |
| | 2. Explore with the City of Vancouver's Engineering department on ways to improve the greenway connections between different skate amenities and rapid transit stops in support of small wheeled sports accessibility. |
| | 3. Consider small-wheeled access to the overall greenway network to support skateboarding as a pivotal mode of sustainable transportation. |
| Partnerships and Programming | 1. Park Board to seek access to year-round, rain sheltered skate amenities. |
| | 2. Designate existing and new spaces that promote a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) atmosphere. |
| | 3. Expand the Skate Hosts program for each neighbourhood or network hub scale skatepark. |
| | 4. Coordinate skate programming and events internally and/or through partnerships with user groups. |

## 5.2 NEW BUILDS IN PARKS

The foundation of the skate network will rely on the Network Hub and Neighbourhood parks. These will be located to optimize accessibility and access to site amenities. The prioritization of roll-out is based on the Urban Focus Area and service gaps.

Spots and dots in parks offer localized opportunities and will be prioritized based on skatepark gaps and VanPlay equity initiatives (see mapping in Section 4.3).

**Key Action 1**
Construct four new "network hub" and three new "neighbourhood" scale skate parks to act as the foundation of the skate amenity network.

**Key Action 2**
Construct 10 new skate "spots" and "dots" in parks throughout the city as opportunities arise.

| New Builds in Parks | | |
|---|---|---|
| Key Action 1 - Construct Skate Spots and Dots | | Timeframe |
| 1.1 | Construct a new "network hub" scale skatepark in the Slocan/ Renfrew districts. | Phase 1 |
| 1.2 | Construct a new "neighbourhood" skatepark in the Kitsilano district. | Phase 1 |
| 1.3 | Construct a "network hub" scale skatepark in the Broadway district. | Phase 2 |
| 1.4 | Construct a "network hub" scale skatepark in the Waterfront Parks district. | Phase 2 |
| 1.5 | Construct a "network hub" scale skatepark in the Cambie Corridor district. | Phase 3 |
| 1.6 | Construct a "neighbourhood" scale skatepark in Vancouver's south district (Marine Gateway or East Fraser Land districts). | Phase 4 |
| 1.7 | Construct a "neighbourhood" scale skatepark in a suitable location. | Phase 5 |
| Key Action 2 - Construct Skate Spots and Dots | | Timeframe |
| 2.1 | Request for Proposals for new park designs to include skate amenities for consideration in park programming. This may include dedicated skate spaces, skate friendly furnishings, skateable art, among other skate-oriented features. | Ongoing |
| 2.2 | Promote and incorporate alternative site furnishing details that differ from the typical skate deterrent approach and that increase durability and allow for skateboard and small-wheel use. | Ongoing |
| 2.3 | Build at least 2 spots or dots per capital plan. | Phases 1 - 5 |

**Catchments**

The network hub skateparks will provide city-wide access, and therefore each one will have a large catchment. A 30-min rapid transit trip is the goal of the catchment zones shown on the diagrams above the plan.



Figure 41. Slocan / Renfrew District Network Hub Catchment Area



Figure 42. Waterfront District Network Hub Catchment Area



Figure 43. Cambie Corridor District Network Hub Catchment Area



Figure 44. Broadway District Network Hub Catchment Area

## Recommended Areas for New Builds In Parks



## SELECTING SUITABLE SITES

When considering a site for a skate amenity in a park, there are key considerations to determine site suitability. The two over-arching areas are 1. Urban Planning criteria and, 2. Site Specific criteria.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

### Compatibility

The first consideration is compatibility with surrounding land uses. Residential land uses are the most sensitive to noise generating activities and therefore distance of offset is an important consideration.

### Access

The site should be accessible by active transportation and transit. Larger parks should also have adequate options for access by car and include parking options.

## SITE SPECIFIC

### Site Suitability

This covers a range of concerns from safety to site impact and buildability. The selected site should not have a significant effect on landscape elements, such as mature trees. The site should be highly visible from public roads, pathways and/or adjacent buildings. The ground must be stable enough to construct a skate amenity. Finally, the site conditions and access shouldn't adversely impact construction costs.

### Landscape Integration

Consideration must be given to how stormwater management may be affected by new skate amenities. Buffer to prevailing winds may be necessary to ensure a hospitable space. If noise is a concern, topography or other forms of barriers and screens may be used to buffer or shield noise.

## SUPPORTING AMENITIES

Supporting amenities are important for creating a hospitable environment for park users. The below table highlights important amenities based on skate space size.

| Feature | Dot | Spot | Neighbourhood | Network Hub |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Trash Receptacles | X | X | X | X |
| Integrated or Stand Alone Benches | | | X | X |
| Drinking Fountains | | X | X | X |
| Shade Structure/Trees | | X | X | X |
| Picnic Table Area | | | X | X |
| Washrooms in proximity | | | | X |
| On-Site Washrooms | | | | X |
| On-Street Parking | | | | X |
| Off-Street Parking | | | | X |
| Food Provisions in Vicinity | | | | X |
| Lighting | | | | X |

Figure 45. Recommended supporting site features for various skate amenity sizes

| Site Selection Criteria | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Scale | Category | Criteria | Description | Dot | Spot | Neighbourhood | Network Hub |
| | | | | Consideration Level | | | |
| Neighbourhood Planning | Compatibility | Residential Setback | Enough space between homes and skate amenities to mitigate against noise impacts | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Adjacent Park Uses | Opportunity to co-locate with other recreation facilities and amenities | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Land Use Around Parks | Compatibility with commercial, industrial, and institutional land uses around the park | Minor | Minor | Medium | Major |
| | Access | Greenways | Reasonably accessible by a AAA greenway | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Public Transit | Reasonably accessible by public transit | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Pedestrian Focused | A location with high walkability potential | Medium | Major | Major | Medium |
| Site Specific | Site Suitability | Buildability | Locations that allows an ease of construction | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Visibility | Location allows for more eyes on the amenity space to improve safety and avoid nuisance | Medium | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Existing Landscape | Able to work around high value vegetation, slope and hydrology | Minor | Minor | Major | Major |
| | Landscape Integration | Stormwater Integration | Opportunities to accommodate and support site stormwater management goals | Minor | Minor | Medium | Major |
| | | Noise Reduction | Using existing landform or landscape features to help with noise mitigation | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |
| | | Wind Buffer | Using existing landform or landscape features to help with excessive wind across the site | Minor | Medium | Major | Major |

Figure 46. Criteria matrix for selecting skate amenity sites in parks

## 5.3 SKATEABLE CITY SPACES - INTEGRATING SKATE SPOTS AND DOTS

There are opportunities for the City, institutional organizations and private landowners to contribute to the skateable city spaces aspect of the Strategy. Throughout the city co-locating skate spots and dots with a range of land uses including near parks and greenways, schools, community centres, commercial areas and transit stops align with findings from the engagement phases and meets current Park Board policy through VanPlay. An important consideration is how amenities are managed on an ongoing basis. Stewardship opportunities with the community need to be central to the planning of spots and dots. The map on the next page identifies preliminary areas for the City to explore creating urban skate opportunities in street-right-of-ways or other public land.



Figure 47. Young kids hang out with their skateboards. Photo: Max Fischer

**Key Action 1**
Work with other civic institutions to explore opportunities for new, temporary or permanent spots and dots in the public realm.

1.1 Continue to meet with the Skate Plan Oversight Team (SPOT) to explore locations for temporary or permanent spots and dots.

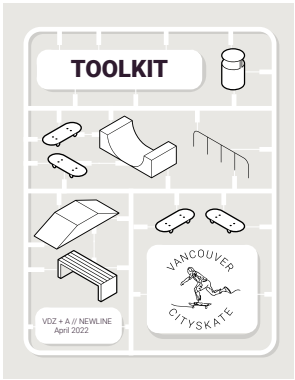
1.2 Collaborate and work cross-directionally with the SPOT team to complete the CitySkate Toolkit - A guide to help integrate skate amenities into the city fabric.

**Key Action 2**
Collaborate with the Vancouver School Board to explore the creation of skate amenities as part of renovations in education settings and related amenity spaces.

**Key Action 3**
On private lands, encourage private developers to provide skateable features or spaces as part of the provision of public amenities where appropriate and where there is compatibility with the associated development and uses.

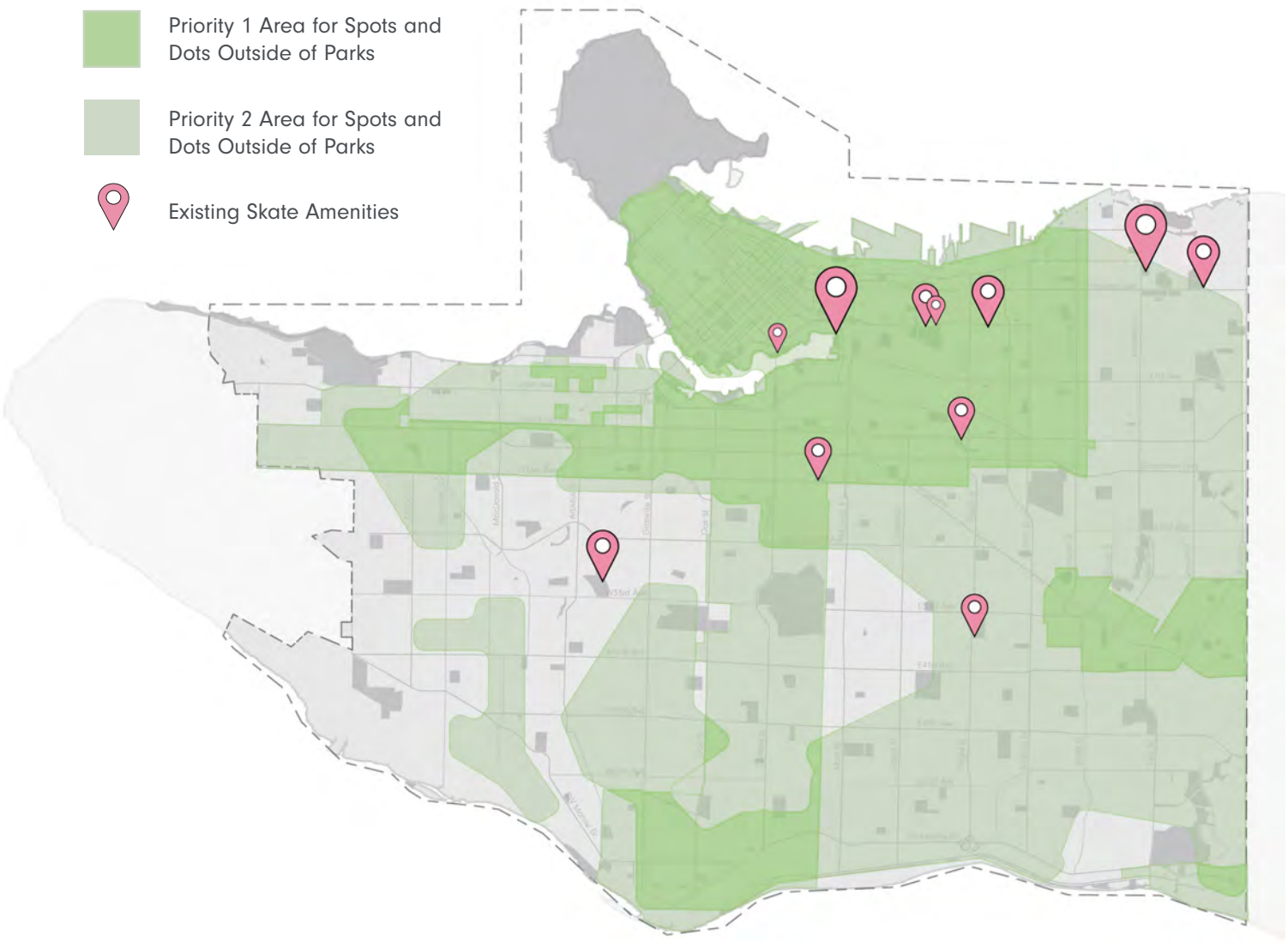
## RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR INTEGRATING SKATEABLE CITY SPACES INTO THE PUBLIC REALM OUTSIDE OF PARKS

The CitySkate Toolkit provides insights into considerations for small skate spaces (in progress).




## BENEFICIAL PLACES TO CO-LOCATE WITHIN OR BEYOND PRIORITY ZONES

- PARKS
- GREENWAYS
- COMMUNITY CENTRES
- SCHOOLS
- NEAR TRANSIT
- COMMERCIAL AREAS



## 5.4 SKATE FRIENDLY GREENWAYS

A skate friendly city-wide greenway network will help encourage active transportation, while linking existing and future skate amenities, neighbourhoods and urban nodes.

**Key Action 1**
Look for opportunities to collaborate with the City of Vancouver's Engineering department on the integration of skate spots and dots when upgrading existing or implementing new greenways in the city.

**Key Action 2**
Explore with the City of Vancouver's Engineering department ways to improve the greenway connections between different skate amenities and rapid transit stops in support of small wheeled sports accessibility.

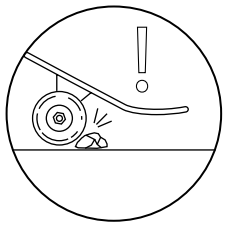
**Key Action 3**
Consider small-wheeled access to the overall greenway network to support skateboarding as a pivotal mode of sustainable transportation.



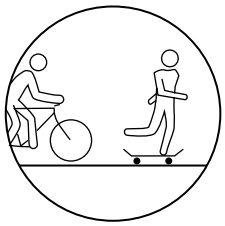
Figure 48. A skater pushes along a separated greenway. Photo: Maksim Goncharenok

## SKATE FRIENDLY GREENWAY IMPROVEMENTS

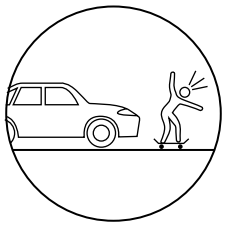
The following four key considerations make a greenway more 'skate friendly' and can help with future improvements to support an overall skate-able network. These considerations can apply to greenways in both parks and city lands and support the overall accessibility for those with mobility needs.



Smooth Surface



Increased Width



Traffic Calming



Integrate Spots and Dots

## EXISTING/ FUTURE SKATE AMENITIES AND THE GREENWAY NETWORK

Existing Greenways + Adanac Bikeway that Connect Existing and Future Skate Amenities

Future Greenways Connecting Existing and Future Skate Amenities

Additional Connections to Existing and Future Skate Amenities

Recommended Area for Network Hub Skatepark

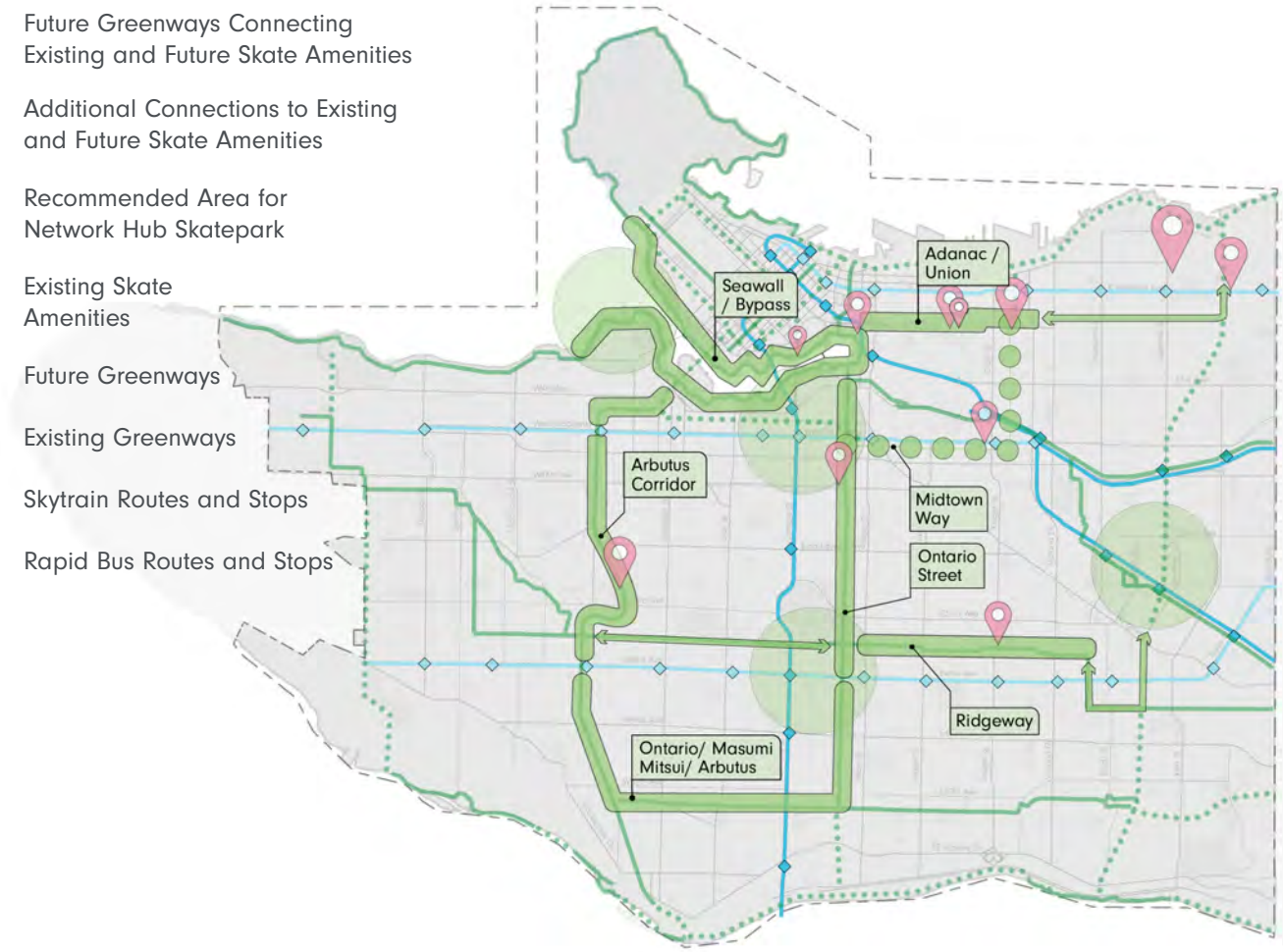
Existing Skate Amenities

Future Greenways

Existing Greenways

Skytrain Routes and Stops

Rapid Bus Routes and Stops



## 5.5 EXISTING SKATE AMENITY UPGRADES

While skate amenities require minimal upkeep in comparison to other recreational assets, it is necessary to maintain them in good condition so they continue to support the skate community with safe places to skate. The recommended rollout of skate amenity upgrades will ensure continuity of this network for decades to come.

**Key Action 1**
Upgrade six existing skate amenities with modern construction standards to ensure safe and interesting spaces that meet future demand.

**Key Action 2**
Provide high level oversight on the condition and maintenance needs of skateparks.

| Upgrades | | |
|---|---|---|
| Key Action 1 - Upgrade With Modern Construction Standards | | Timeframe |
| 1.1 | Upgrade China Creek Skate Spot (including preservation of the heritage bowls). | Phase 1 |
| 1.2 | Upgrade Leeside DIY – Support community led renovations in the spirit of DIY. | Phase 1 |
| 1.3 | Upgrade Hastings Skate Park (subject to approval by the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) as the operator). | Phase 2 |
| 1.4 | Coopers' Skate Dot (renovate features and improve surfacing). | Phase 2 |
| 1.5 | Strathcona Skate Spot (replace). | Phase 3 |
| 1.6 | Kensington Skate Spot (replace). | Phase 3 |
| 1.7 | Downtown Skate Plaza (subject to North East False Creek (NEFC) Development Plans). | Phase 5 |
| Key Action 2 - Oversight On The Condition And Maintenance Needs | | Timeframe |
| 2.1 | Regular annual inspection of existing skate parks to review condition and maintenance issues. | Ongoing |
| 2.2 | Collaborate with Park Operations to develop protocols for maintenance including graffiti management. | Phase 1 |

## Prioritized Skate Amenity Upgrades



## 5.6 PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMMING

Over the past 10 years, the development of skate amenities has not kept up with the demand and growth of the skate community and the relationship to the skate community calls for improvement. The CitySkate Strategy was developed in part to help build and grow the relationship with the skate community. The Park Board has a relationship to continue to build with Vancouver's skate community. Building partnerships and programs works towards a common vision and shared goals. Only through ongoing support and communication will trust and respect continue to progress.

In Vancouver there is a fundamental barrier to skateboarding, namely the rainy climate. The Park Board should continue to seek solutions to providing year-round skate amenities through indoor opportunities.

One community building aspect of skateboarding includes modifying and making skate spaces together. Designating spaces that promote a DIY atmosphere can help cultivate a sense of community among user groups.

Finally, overseeing safe skate spaces, and supporting events and lessons will help foster happy and healthy new riders in Vancouver's skateparks.

The Park Board will collaborate with Community Centre Associations and other partners to work on the following four actions:

**Key Action 1**
Park Board to seek access to year-round, rain sheltered skate amenities.

**Key Action 2**
Designate existing and new spaces that promote a DIY (Do-It-Yourself) atmosphere.

**Key Action 3**
Expand the Skate Hosts program for each neighbourhood or network hub scale. skatepark

**Key Action 4**
Coordinate skate programming and events internally and/or through partnerships with user groups.



Figure 49. Family friendly celebration of skateboarding at the All Aboard Event

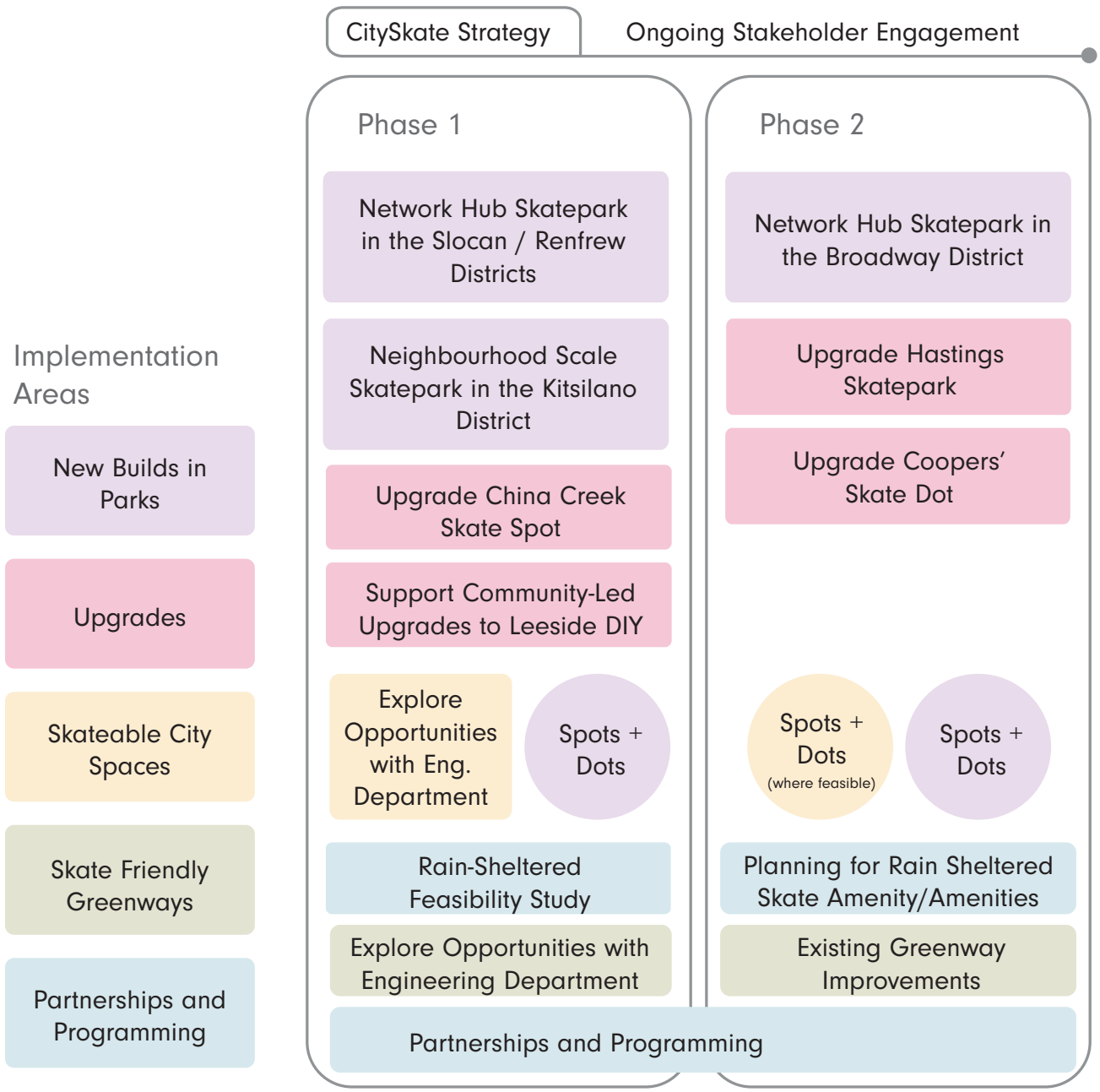
| Programming and Partnerships | | |
|---|---|---|
| Key Action 1 - Year-Round, Rain Sheltered Skate Amenities | | Timeframe |
| 1.1 | Collaborate with Community Centre Associations (CCA's) on flexible indoor programming opportunities in existing community centre facilities. | Ongoing |
| 1.2 | Develop a Feasibility Study for a Small-Wheeled Sports Shared Indoor / Covered Facility. | Phase 1 |
| 1.3 | Planning for a Small-Wheeled Sports Shared Indoor/ Covered Facility. | Phase 2 |
| 1.4 | Development of a Small-Wheeled Sports Shared Indoor/ Covered Facility. | Phase 3 |
| Key Action 2 - Promote A DIY (Do-It-Yourself) Atmosphere | | Timeframe |
| 2.1 | Determine the limit of liability for DIY spaces. | Phase 1 |
| 2.2 | Support the skate community in the development of sanctioned DIY skate amenities. | Phase 2 |
| Key Action 3 - Expand the Skate Hosts Program | | Timeframe |
| 3.1 | Explore opportunities for summer student employment as seasonal skate hosts at skateparks. | Phase 1 |
| 3.2 | Explore opportunities to partner with champions within local user groups to act as skate hosts at skateparks. | Ongoing |
| Key Action 4 - Coordinate Skate Programming And Events | | Timeframe |
| 4.1 | Support skate-related events in the city through funding or other resources. | Ongoing |
| 4.2 | Support local user groups to create skate-related programming in the city. | Ongoing |



Figure 50. Example of programming hosted by Skate Like a Girl

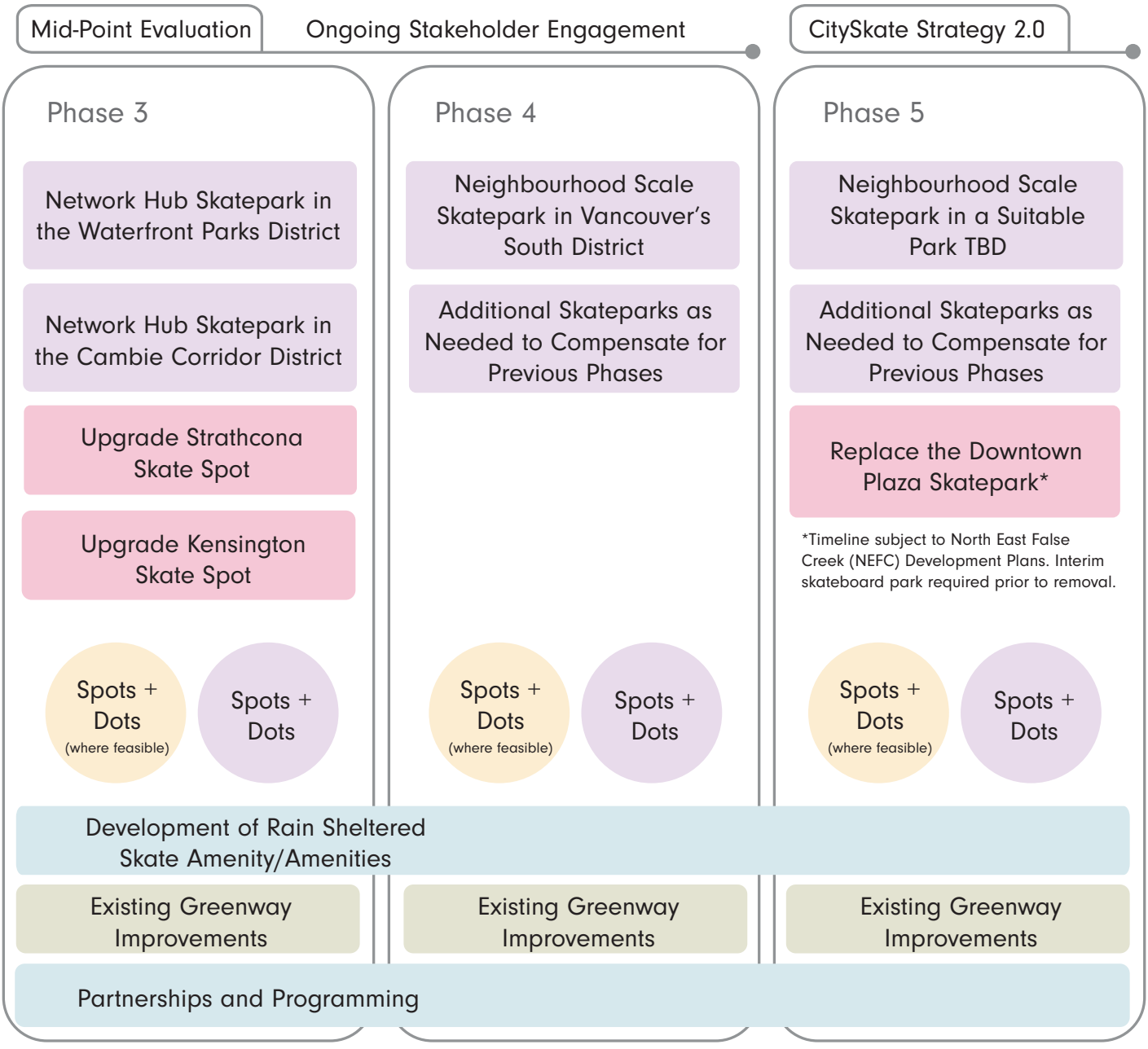
## 5.7 IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

This section outlines a phased timeline for achieving the goals over the next 20 years. In order to provide the flexibility to adjust to a changing urban landscape and capitalize on new opportunities that may arise in the future, the locations recommended in later phases are less specific than those in the beginning phases. All plans for implementation are subject to the Capital Planning process which is decided upon at each phase by the Park Board and City of Vancouver.



The implementation of skate spots and dots particularly outside of park land are not labelled as they will be highly site specific and are likely to rely on opportunities arising with collaborating departments, organizations, and partners.

Across all phases of implementation, the CitySkate Strategy recommends that meaningful public engagement and consultation is undertaken with local and impacted communities, stakeholders and user groups for consideration of locations, design, size and other relevant factors in establishing new skate amenities.



## 5.8 CATCHING UP

This section briefly recaps the history of skate amenity development and how the CitySkate Strategy will help attain future goals.

Vancouver's skate amenity development can be considered in three parts:

1. Skate Amenity Development from 1979 to 2011.
2. Absence of Skate Amenity Development from 2011-2022.
3. CitySkate Strategy Adoption from 2022 onwards.

Most skate amenities were developed in a 10 year period of 2001-2011. After this time there was a lull which saw the gap between supply and demand for skate space widen. The most important aspect of the Catch-up Model diagram below are the phased green bars which acknowledges the adoption of the CitySkate Strategy and represents new skate park development progressing consistently towards the Strategy goals to 2042.

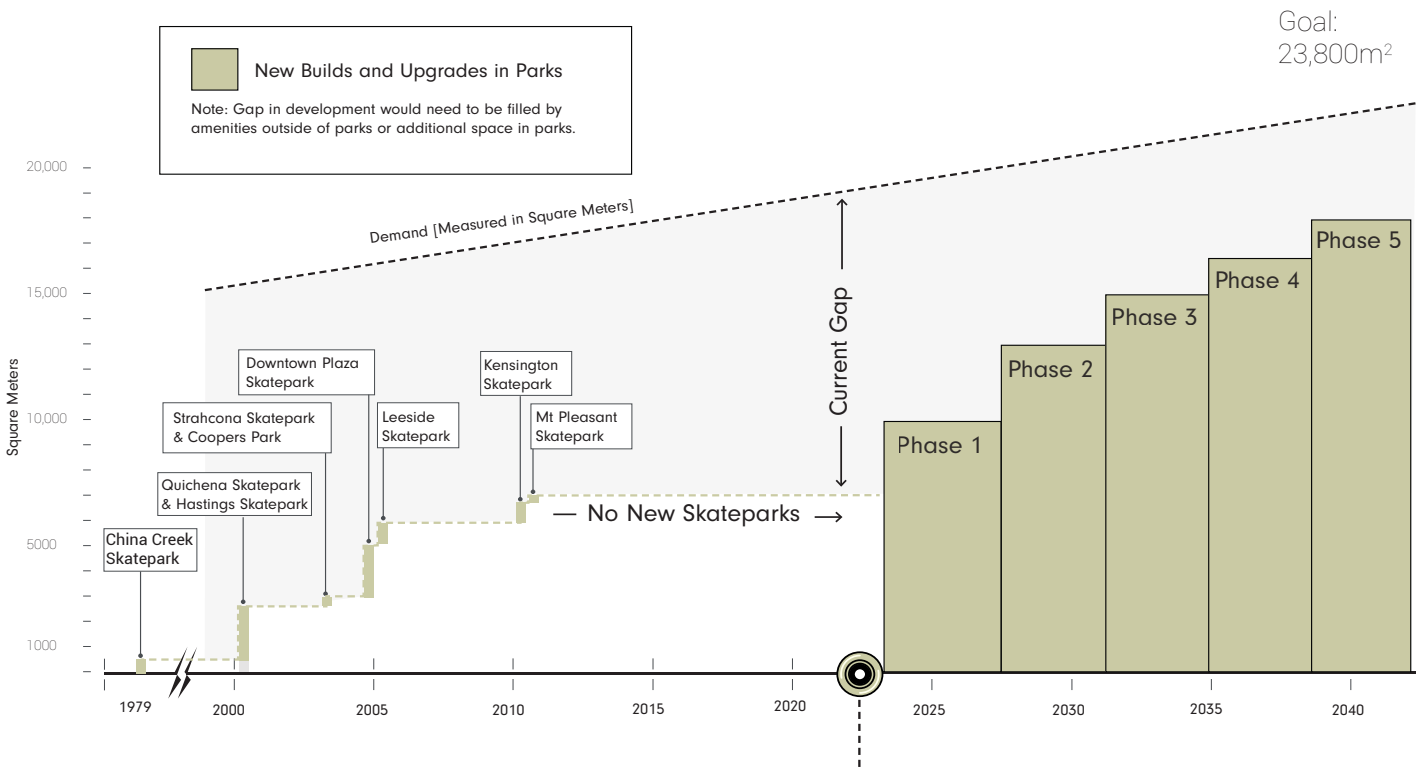
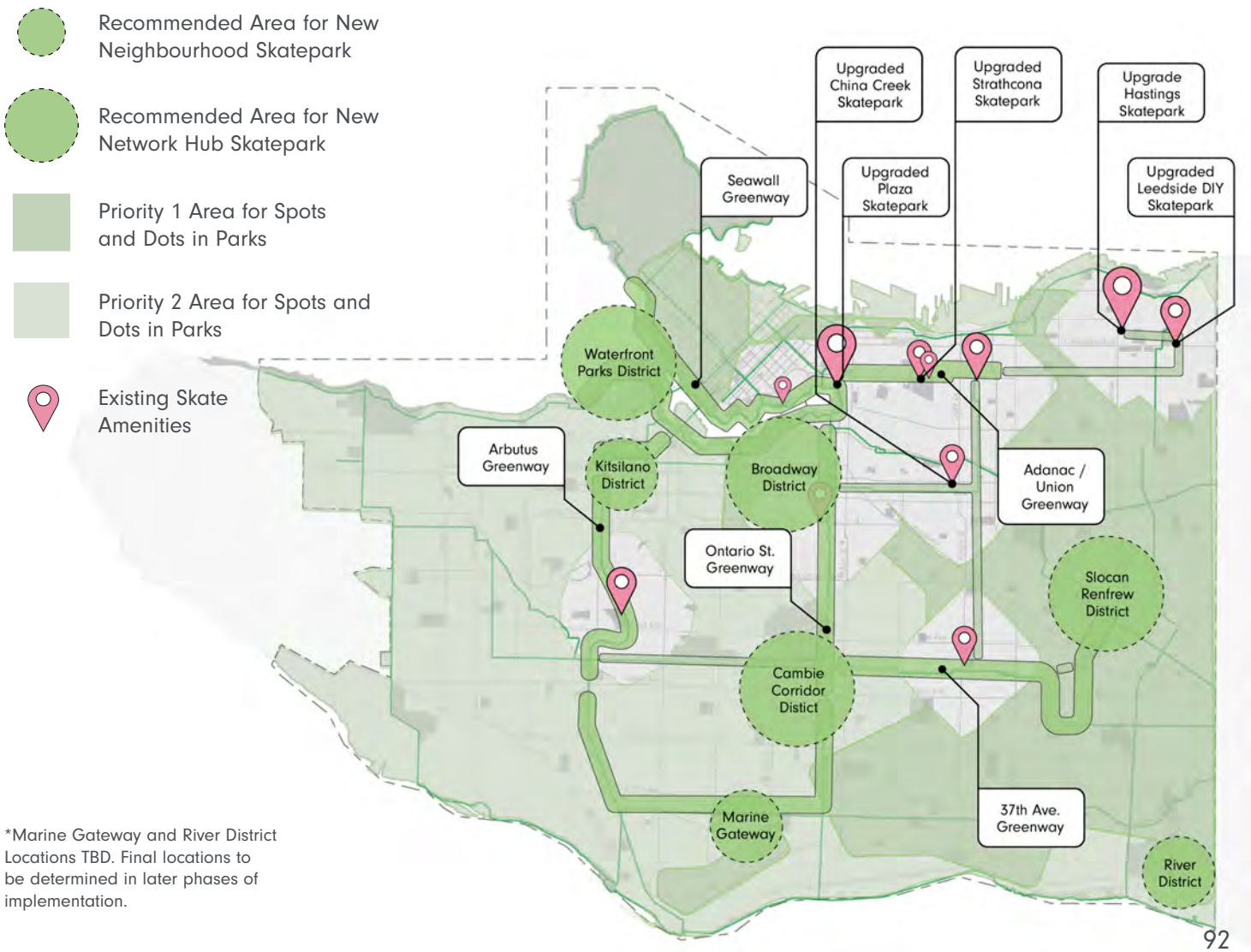



Figure 51. Catch-up model

## 5.9 THE 20 YEAR VISION

At the conclusion of CitySkate's implementation, Vancouver's skate amenity network will include:

- Four new "network hub" scale skateparks.
- Three new "neighbourhood" scale skateparks.
- Ten skate spots / dots in parks.
- Over 11,000 $m^2$ of new skate amenity space in Parks for a total of 18,000 $m^2$ in Parks.
- Rain sheltered skate amenities for year-round participation.
- Multiple sanctioned DIY skate amenities.
- Ongoing maintenance and care program ensuring safe and high-quality spaces.
- Park Board supported skate events and programming.




*Marine Gateway and River District Locations TBD. Final locations to be determined in later phases of implementation.

# APPENDICES




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# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# BRITANNIA COURTS DIY

## CONTEXT MAP






## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** DIY SINCE 2015
**SIZE:** 12,000 FT²
**TERRAIN:** 70% STREET, 30% TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 8-10 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE STREET & TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** YES
**SHELTER:** NO

## OVERVIEW::

Over the past several years the Britannia Courts have emerged as one of the most popular and beloved skateparks in the city. Formerly an underused pair of tennis courts, skateboarders began using the space and importing their own homemade terrain. While not a formalized skatepark supported by the City, the adjacent Britannia Community Centre has embraced the presence of skateboarders and encouraged their used of the courts. Local skateboarders feel a great sense of ownership of the space and plan to continue to improve it for as long as possible.

## STATE OF FEATURES

MODERATE REPAIR & RENOVATIONS NEEDED

UNDER CONSTANT MAINTENANCE AND RENOVATION THROUGH COMMUNITY LED EFFORTS - WOOD FEATURES DETERIORATE QUICKLY IN RAIN

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Pedestrian Infrastructure
Parking Lot

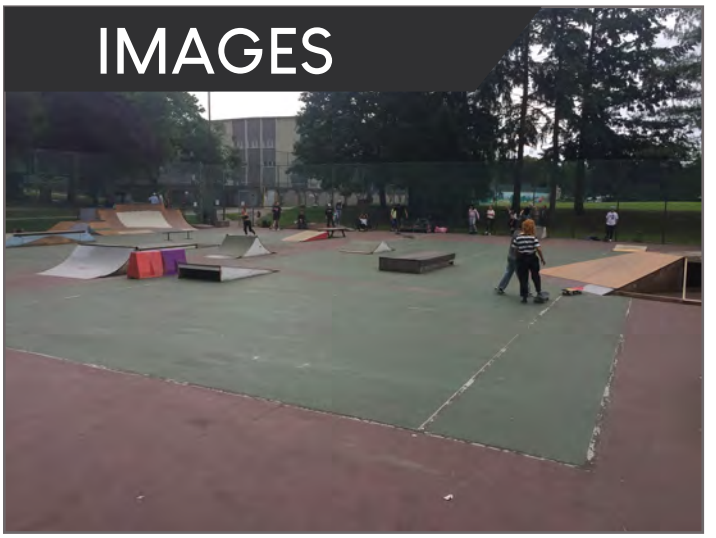
## SAFETY & VISIBILITY:

Residential Setback
"Eyes on The Street"

## AMENITIES:

Garbage
Washroom
Community Centre
Green Space

# IMAGES





## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

While it may appear informal and in disrepair, Britannia is considered one of the best skateparks in the city and is beloved by the community. It offers a unique opportunity for users to take ownership of the space, and make changes and improvements as they use it. Many features are in disrepair, due to the persistent rain's effect on the wooden ramps.

Many local users are fearful of city involvement in the space and would rather be left alone to manage it themselves. The space could be improved through financial contributions to VSBC to maintain the park.

Constructing a roof over Britannia Courts would be the best possible outcome for users, giving them a dry space and protecting wooden ramps.

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# CHINA CREEK SKATE SPOT

## CONTEXT MAP







## OVERVIEW:

China Creek Skatepark, Vancouver's first skatepark and a catalyst for modern skateboarding in Vancouver, is still a popular spot with locals despite its 40 year age. While concrete has been patched and resurfaced periodically over the years, it is essentially the same as when it was built in 1979. The park consists of just two concrete bowls, surrounded by a band of asphalt. While the bowls are still very much rideable, their designs are not up to the standard of modern transition terrain, and do not provide the same opportunities for learning. Performing any tricks in these bowls is a feat in itself, as they are challenging to ride even for advanced participants.

## STATE OF FEATURES:

MODERATE REPAIR & RENOVATIONS NEEDED

## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 1979, VANCOUVER'S FIRST SKATEPARK
**SIZE:** 5,600 FT²
**TERRAIN:** 100% TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 2-4 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** NONE
**SHELTER:** NONE

## ACCESSIBILITY:

- Bicycle Infrastructure
- Public Transit – Bus
- Pedestrian Infrastructure
- Vehicle Infrastructure

## SAFETY & VISIBILITY:

- Residential Setback
- Vegetative Buffer
- Staffed Public Buildings
- "Eyes on The Street"

## AMENITIES:

- Food Options
- Lighting
- Drinking Fountain
- WC Washroom
- Staffed Public Buildings
- Green Space
- Garbage

# IMAGES



# OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

China Creek Skatepark is an historic landscape, key in the development of the sport of skateboarding, and the bowls need to be preserved for their historical significance. The overall space, however, is not conducive to all levels of riding, and can become an intimdating or dangerous space. Opportunities for expansion are present and outlined on the following page, which could transform this space into an accessible and well rounded all-wheel space while also preserving its history.



# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# CHINA CREEK SKATE SPOT

## EXISTING






**Photos from Google user, not taken during site visit.*

## ENVIRONMENT:

The China Creek Skatepark is surrounded by open park space including playgrounds, community gardens, grass, shade and seating, situated in a residential neighborhood adjacent to the busy East Broadway corridor. The overall environment is very family friendly, but the rough and crusty old bowls do not provide a well rounded riding experience for all skill levels and do not attract a diverse group of users.

When visited on a sunny Thursday evening in spring, China Creek Skatepark was attended by approximately 20 adults who were thoroughly enjoying the space, but creating an unapproachable space for many. Music was played, most were consuming alcohol and smoking, men were taking turns urinating in the corner of the community centre.

Due to the lack of approachable, modern terrain and skateable surfaces, this park does not attract a diverse range of users. The environment of this space could be improved to a degree by replacing the asphalt with concrete, and adding beginner level features at the perimeter.

## TERRAIN:

While the quality of the concrete bowls is not of a modern standard, they are still very much enjoyed by the community and with routine maintenance have a long lifespan ahead of them.

The primary maintenance issue for this skatepark is the joint beween the concrete bowls and adjacent asphalt surface. Due to the lack of reinforcement and connection between concrete and asphalt, this joint will present an ongoing maintenance issue and hazard to riders as it separates due to settling and freeze/thaw effect. This issue could be permanently solved by replacing asphalt surfaces with reinforced concrete.

# OPPORTUNITIES



China Creek Skatepark has room to expand by approximately 3,500 square feet to provide a more well-rounded riding experience for all users while preserving and protecting the historic bowls. Because of the established presence of skateboarding in this park, and the opportunity to make a more welcoming environment, China Creek should be a high priority for the type of skatepark renovation and expansion work done at Quilchena Park.

## Recommended Terrain Improvements:

- Replace asphalt decks with reinforced concrete
- Add beginner to intermediate ledges and manual pads
- Add beginner to intermediate organic transitions, 500-900mm tall

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# COOPERS' SKATE DOT

## CONTEXT MAP






## OVERVIEW:

Beneath the north side of the Cambie Bridge, Coopers' Park contains a covered basketball court with surronding paving that became a popular place for skateboarding after construction. The city formalized the space as a skateboard park and added two prefabricated steel benches for skateboarding. While the terrain is minimal, it is a well-used space that demonstrates the potential for successful integration of small scale skate spots in public spaces.

## STATE OF FEATURES:

MODERATE REPAIR & RENOVATIONS NEEDED

## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2003
**SIZE:** 1,500 FT$^2$
**TERRAIN:** 100% STREET
**CAPACITY:** 3-4 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED STREET
**LIGHTS:** YES, PEDESTRIAN LEVEL
**SHELTER:** YES, FULLY DRY & COVERED

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Pedestrian Infrastructure
Vehicle Infrastructure

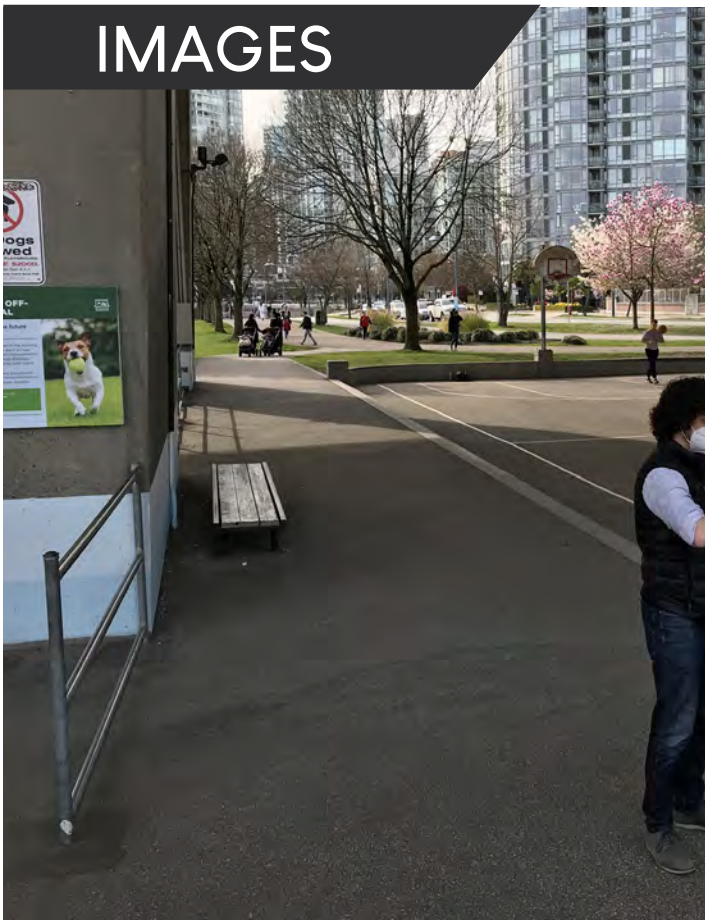
## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
Vegetative Buffer
"Eyes on The Street"

## AMENITIES

Drinking Fountain
Food Options
Lighting
Green Space
Garbage
Shelter

## IMAGES



## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

The skate spot at Coopers' Park is the best example of an integrated skate spot in public space, with minimal conflict between skateboarders and other users due to appropriate spacing, buffer zones and alternate pedestrian routes. With the need for a proper covered skatepark as a top priority for skatepark users in Vancouver, Coopers' Park presents an excellent opportunity for expansion and improvement to better meet the needs of the community.



# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# COOPERS' SKATE DOT

## EXISTING





## ENVIRONMENT:

Coopers' Park is one of the most popular parks on the downtown side of False Creek, and offers a variety of amenities and scenic views of the city. The most important environmental factor for this space is the covering of the Cambie Bridge, which keeps the space fully dry year round.

There is great visibility through the site, and constant pedestrian and bicycle traffic along the seawall. Pedestrian and ambient light allow this space to function 24 hours a day.

The basketball court is in regular use and is generally used by casual players shooting hoops that coexist fairly peacefully with adjacent skateboarders. When the court is not in use, skateboarders will ride in and out of it over the concrete ring wall. There are unused grass and paver areas immediately adjacent to the two asphalt strips used for skateboarding. The space contains no banks or ramps to catch skateboarders, allow them to turn around, or propel them towards a feature.

## TERRAIN:

Coopers' Park became a popular place for skateboarding primarily due to a single existing handrail on an accessible ramp into the basketball court. This handrail does not have skate stoppers added to it, and it became one of the most famous features for skateboarding in the city.

An asphalt basketball court is sunken approximately 50cm and surrounded by a low concrete wall. Additional asphalt paving wraps around the elevated area above the court, where the two prefabricated steel and composite lumber skate benches were installed. The condition of the ledge features is declining, but the asphalt paving is still fairly smooth due to the protection of the bridge.

# OPPORTUNITIES



Coopers' Park presents a unique opportunity to create a sheltered skatepark space for very little cost compared to other options. The unused grass and paver area on the north and west side of the court could be redeveloped into rideable terrain with additional small-scale street and transition elements. The south side offers a longer line that could fit additional ledge features, and has space to include small transitional turnaround elements.

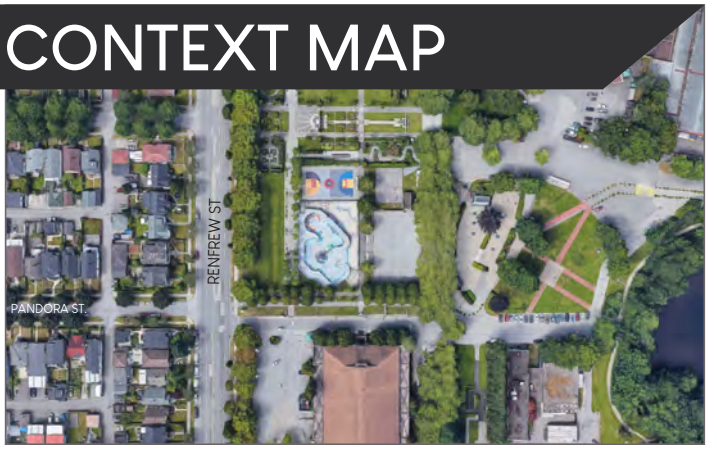
Improving this space could go a long way to creating a permanent covered space for skatepark users, but capacity would still be very limited by the small footprint. However, if the basketball court itself could be converted into a skatepark, this could allow for an exceptional covered plaza space in the heart of the city on the seawall.

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# HASTINGS SKATEPARK

## CONTEXT MAP






## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2001
**SIZE:** 14,000 FT²
**TERRAIN:** 90% TRANSITION, 10% STREET
**CAPACITY:** 3-4 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** NO
**SHELTER:** NO

## OVERVIEW:

Hastings Skatepark is one of two projects in Vancouver that revolutionized skateboarding in Canada at the beginning of th new milennium. This skatepark consists primarily of a single expansive bowl of varying depths for intermediate to advanced transition riders, with a smaller secondary space with more transition and a few aggressive street elements. Hastings is arguably the best bowl in Canada and legendary around the world, but at 20 years old has significant maintenance issues and lacks modern construction details and techniques.

## STATE OF FEATURES

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AS NEEDED

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Vehicle Parking
Pedestrian Infrastructure

## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
Vegetative Buffer
Staffed Public Buildings
Poor Visibility from Street

## AMENITIES

Drinking Fountain
Washroom
Community Centre
Green Space
Garbage

## IMAGES




## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Hastings skatepark is an iconic location in Canadian skateboard history and is coveted in the local skate community. The park however has worn significantly since its construction and would benefit from a renovation. Opportunities to improve the park include resurfacing the bowl, addressing maintenance issues, redesigning the adjacent street course and improving overall access, visibility and safety.

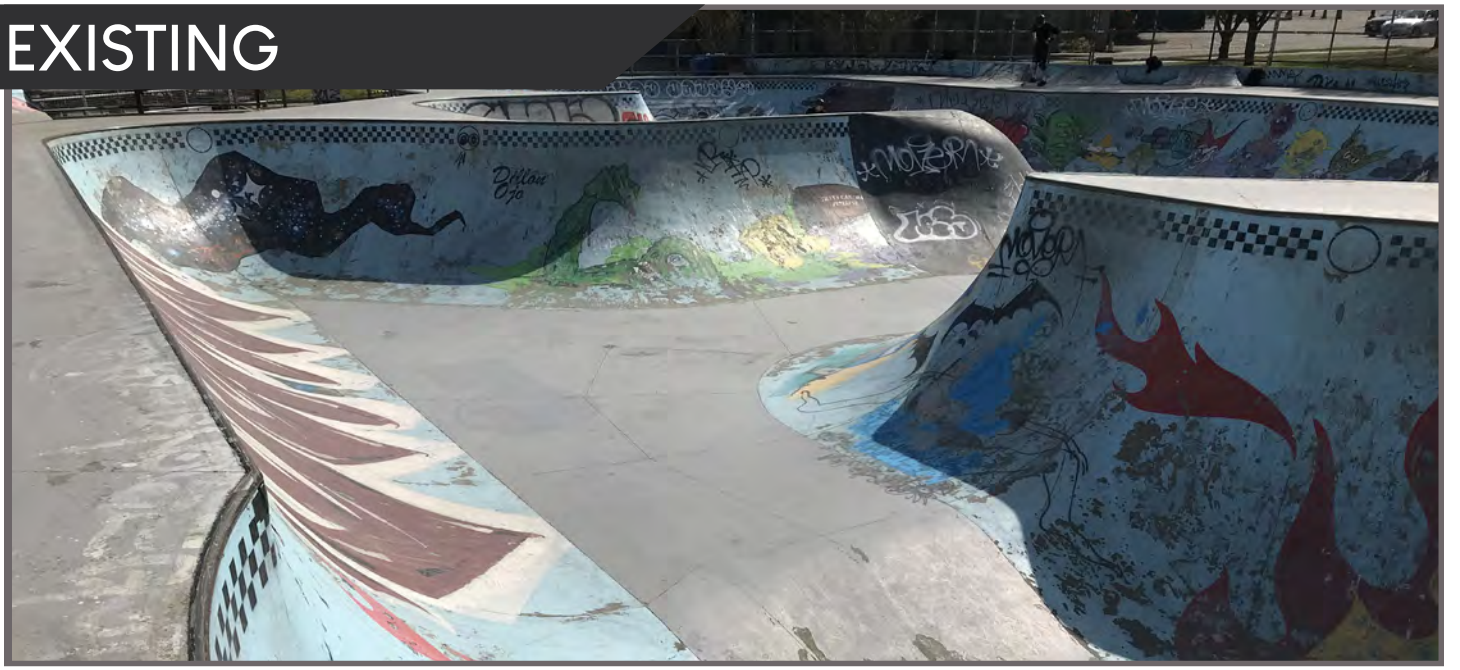


# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# HASTINGS SKATEPARK

## EXISTING



## TERRAIN:

Hastings Skatepark is entirely centered around the main bowl, with a secondary 'street course' hiding behind and below the bowl. The deck of the bowl is a consistent height contained by a fence, with a large drop off of the back into the street course.

The bowl itself offers nearly every intermediate and advanced transition opportunity, going from 4' to 6' to 8' and then 10' deep. One rider can dominate the entire bowl linking every hip and pocket, but it is possible to have multiple simultaneous riders staying in different sections of the bowl.

The street course behind and below the bowl still contains several large transitions, plus high-speed advanced ledges and a rail. The surface is rough, and the area is prone to collecting litter and debris, creating a somewhat dangerous and hidden corner of the park.

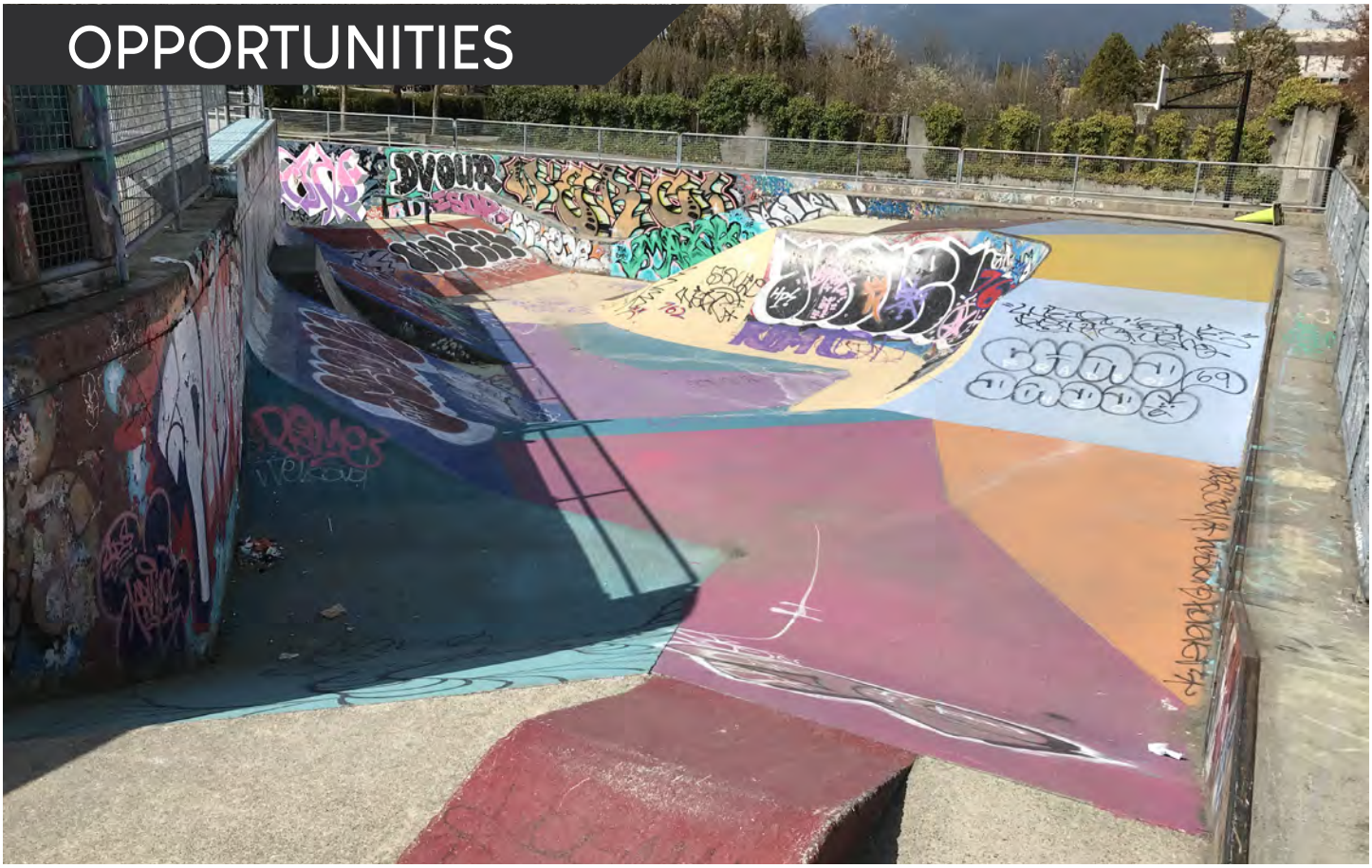
## ENVIRONMENT:

Hastings Skatepark is positioned at the west edge of Vancouver's PNE, with many adjacent recreational opportunities and spaces available. The bowl was the former host of the Vans Park Series, the premier transition competition in skateboarding, until it moved to Montreal in 2018 when that city constructed a modern standard and highly improved competition bowl.

The deck of the bowl offers ample seating and gathering space, a barbeque installed by a rider, some shade, and excellent views to the north shore mountains. The area is generally clean and safe, but the hidden street course below the bowl presents an issue with litter and a lack of passive visibility.

Reinforced chainlink wraps the perimeter of the skatepark and limits access to the park to a stairset and turnstile presents accessibility concerns and issues for BMX riders.

# OPPORTUNITIES



Hastings Skatepark is perhaps the most beloved in the city of Vancouver, and was at a time one of the best bowls in the world.  While the design is still extremely functional and popular, the quality of the surface has been in decline for many years, presenting safety and rideability concerns. The street course below the bowl does contain certain iconic features like the wall ride, but is in worse condition than the bowl and is used the least.

The main bowl requires a significant amount of repair to have a safe, smooth, modern-finish ride surface, which could be accomplished through polishing, patching and sealing.  Issues with construction would still be present though, and the city could consider re-pouring the transitions with new concrete to offer a much improved ride experience and meet a modern starndard of construction quality.

The somewhat neglected street course offers opportunities for renovation, but more interestingly could be filled in with brand new organic transition or street plaza terrain, while preserving the iconic wall ride.

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# KENSINGTON SKATE SPOT

## CONTEXT MAP






## OVERVIEW:

Built in 2010, Kensington Skatepark is centered around an advanced pool-style bowl with steep transitions and concrete coping. Ample shade from the surround trees and a beautiful view of the city make it an appealing place to spend a sunny day. Additional terrain includes a terracing amphitheater style ledge area, a cantilevered mini-ramp with no standing deck, a jump gap, fiat rail, and bank ramp stylized to look like a vinyl record. While this is the most modern pool-style bowl in the city the park is now 11 years old and the additional features are dated. A lack of seating has led locals to construct their own benches out of used skateboards.

## STATE OF FEATURES

MINIMAL TO NO REPAIR NEEDED

## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2010
**SIZE:** 6000 FT$^2$
**TERRAIN:** 75% TRANSITION, 25% STREET
**CAPACITY:** 2-3 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED TRANSITION & STREET
**LIGHTS:** NONE
**SHELTER:** NONE

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Vehicle Parking
Pedestrian Infrastructure

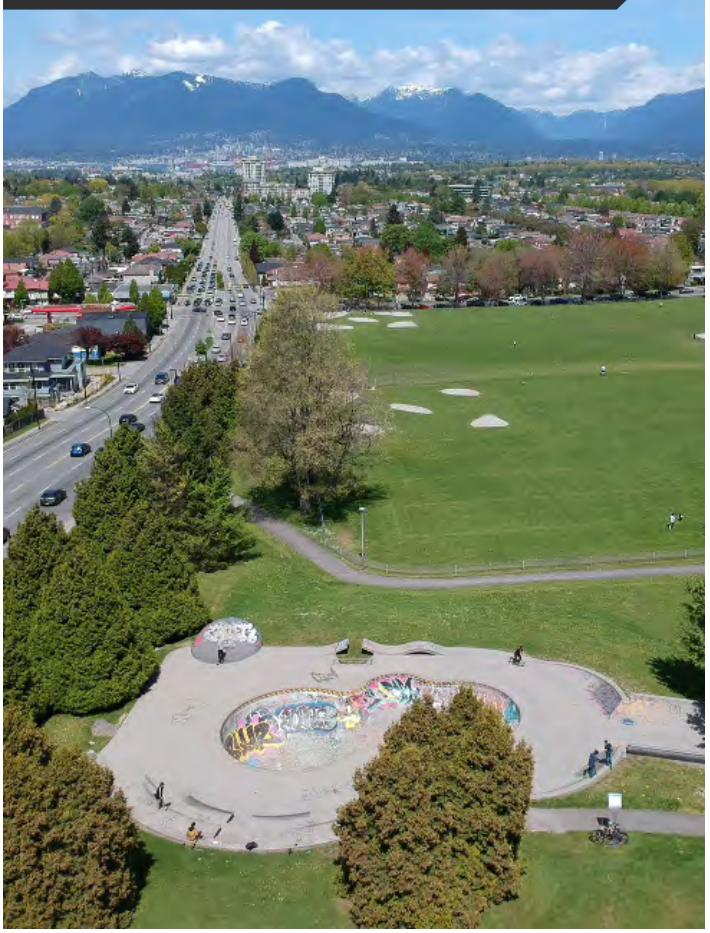
## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
Vegetative Buffer
Staffed Public Buildings

## AMENITIES

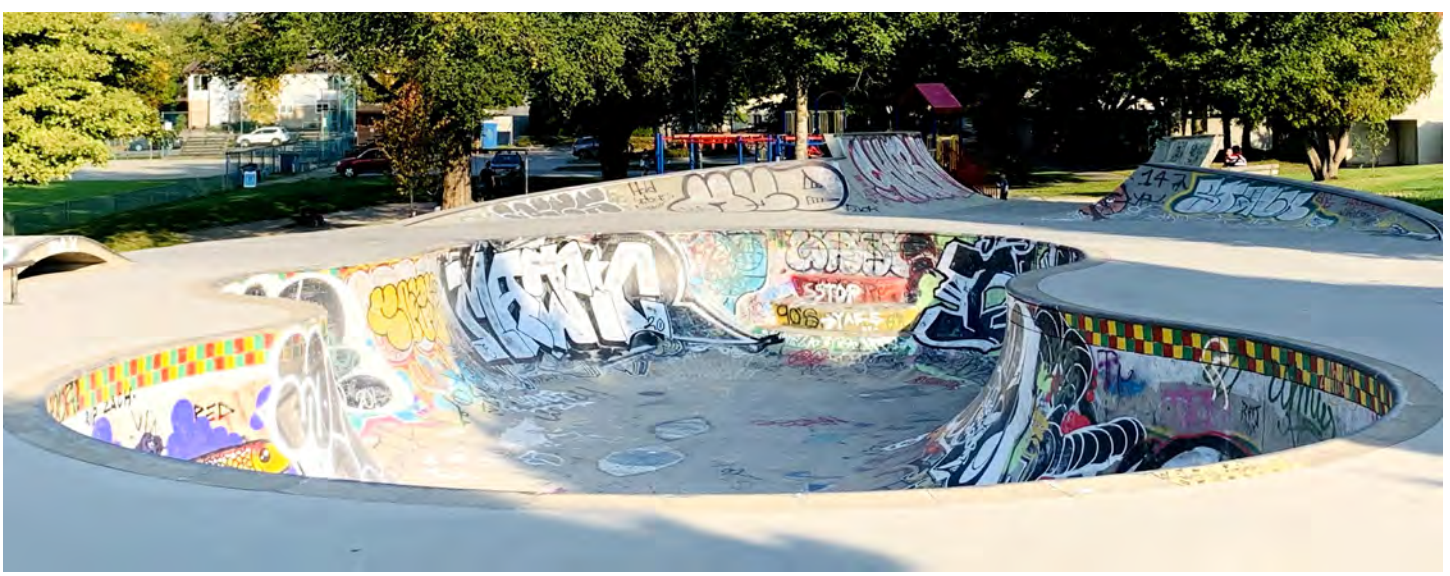
Drinking Fountain
Washroom
Community Centre
Green Space
Garbage

# IMAGES



## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Kensington skatepark is a well used space within the Vancouver skatepark network, with a strong local user group and a unique pool bowl that is one of a kind in the city. The location further south in the city is beneficial to the underserved South Vancouver community, and the position in the park makes it a lovely public space. The features around the bowl though are not the most functional, and the park does have room to add new small-scale rideable terrain as well as additional amenities like improved seating.



# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# KENSINGTON SKATE SPOT

## EXISTING



## TERRAIN:

The pool bowl is aggresive and designed for advanced riders, so a local scene has emerged around pool style riding. It features depths from approximately 5 to 9 feet, with concrete pool coping and a replica pool filter intake box and stairs for added challenge.

The mini half pipe ramp is a replica of a famous skate spot in Montreal, and has no deck on top making it more intimidating to ride than a traditional mini ramp. The top of the terracing ledges makes for a great place to sit and overlook the park, but the curve, gaps, drops and banks make them a challenge to ride. The features on the north side are all functional, but don't include many of the essential terrain types most users would like to ride.

## ENVIRONMENT:

Kensington Skatepark is Vancouver's furthest-south skatepark, with no skateparks at all from 37th to 64th Avenues, making it the closest skatepark for about one third of the City of Vancouver. Situated on a hillside adjacent to a community center, Kensington Park offers many park amenities and open space in addition to views of downtown Vancouver and the north shore. Shade from existing trees offers plenty of room to stay cool on a sunny day, although there are no formalized seating opportunities around the park.

Directly adjacent to the park, Knight Street provides an effective noise buffer to the residential neighbourhood to the west. The Ridgeway bike route to the south and several bus routes along Knight Street and E 33rd Ave provide opportunities for alternative transportation to and from the park.

# OPPORTUNITIES



Kensington Skatepark does offer some opportunities for expansion, which could help better meet the needs of the community and provide revitalized interest and use of the park. Construction access for expansion could be challenging, but the addition of a few well placed smaller features could greatly improve the function of the space. One possibility to consider could be cutting and removing the top 1' of the mini ramp and adding a deck with new coping. This would make the feature much less intimidating to ride and provide one of the most popular terrain types lacking in the city.

The addition of formalized seating areas with comfortable backrests is a highly requested desire from local users and parents.

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# LEESIDE DIY SKATEPARK

## CONTEXT MAP






## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2005 Onward
**SIZE:** 7,200 FT$^2$
**TERRAIN:** 100% TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 2-4 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** INTERMEDIATE TO ADVANCED TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** YES
**SHELTER:** YES

## OVERVIEW:

Leeside Skatepark is a community-built covered skatepark sanctioned by the City of Vancouver, inside a pedestrian tunnel under the Cassiar Connector. As the only covered transition area for riding in the city it provides a great benefit to the community during the rainy months of the year. The park has evolved and improved continuously for more than a decade, but it remains a fairly advanced and challenging space, especially for new riders. One half of the park has professionaly poured advanced level transitions in excellent condition, while the other half is smaller but much rougher and more dangerous to ride.

## STATE OF FEATURES

ROUTINE MAINTENANCE AS NEEDED

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Pedestrian Infrastructure
Parking Lot

## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
Shelter

## AMENITIES

Garbage
Drinking Fountain
Washroom
Community Centre
Lighting

## IMAGES

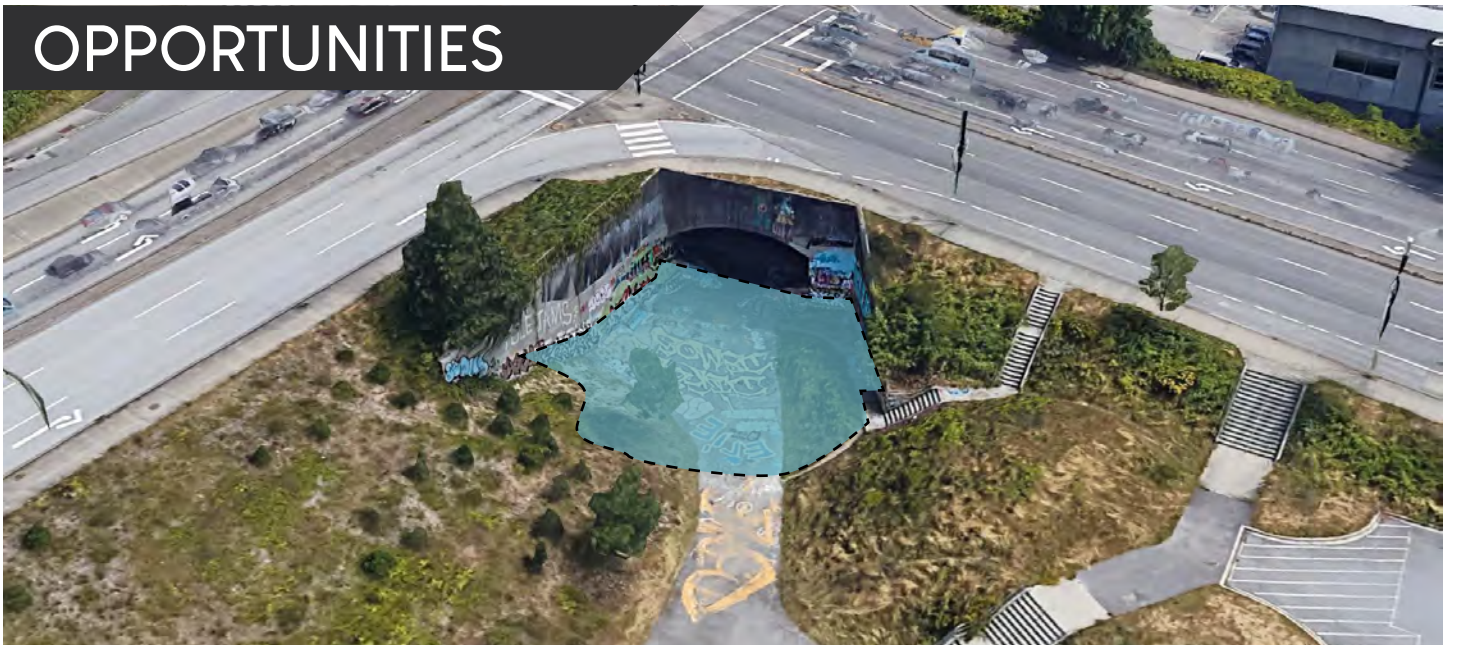




## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Leeside DIY skatepark is a world-renowned covered transition space, but the older half of the park contains dangerous cracks and textures unsafe for riding. A small investment in repairs and renovations would greatly improve safety and rideability, while improvements to the entry such as additional features, seating and landscaping would provide the community with a much more enjoyable experience.

## OPPORTUNITIES



# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# MT. PLEASANT SKATE SPOT

## CONTEXT MAP






## OVERVIEW:

Mt. Pleasant Skatepark is a small neighborhood-level skatepark, sometimes referred to a skate spot. The space consists of compact banks and transitions around central street features for beginner to intermediate style riding - while advanced riding is always possible, the scale of the space makes it more challenging. Due to opposition from adjacent neighbors, a large fence was erected to screen the park, a rubber sound wall installed, and gates and transecting chains are locked at 9pm to prevent after hours riding. Mt. Pleasant is home to the most dense concrentration of skatepark users in the city, and while this park is well used, it does not meet the needs of the increasing community.

## STATE OF FEATURES

MINIMAL TO NO REPAIR NEEDED

## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2011
**SIZE:** 3,000 FT$^2$
**TERRAIN:** 75% STREET, 25 TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 1-2 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE STREET & TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** NO
**SHELTER:** NONE

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Pedestrian Infrastructure
Street Parking

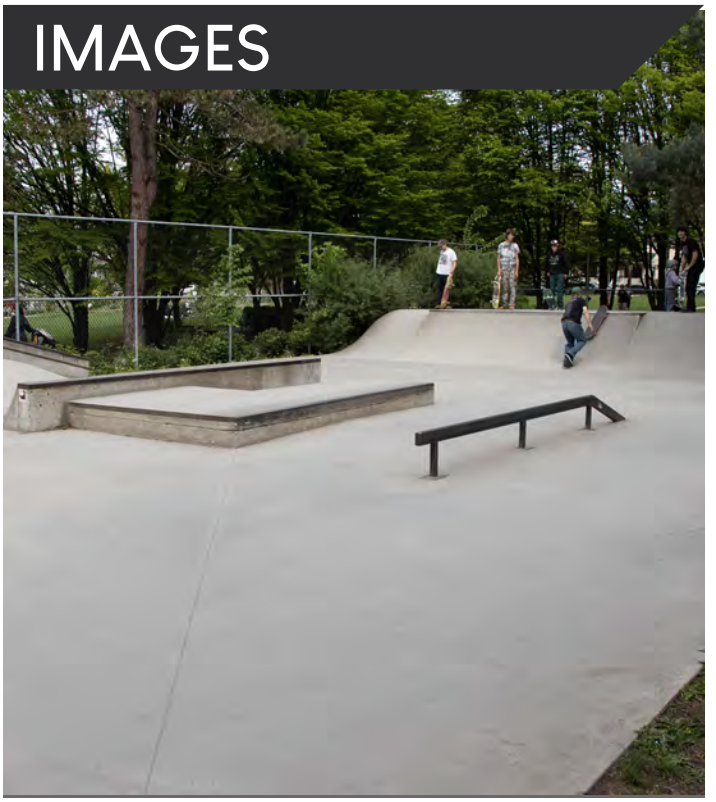
## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
Vegetative Buffer
"Eyes on The Street"

## AMENITIES

Drinking Fountain
Green Space
Garbage

# IMAGES



## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Mt. Pleasant is a small yet well-rounded beginner to intermediate space with modern terrain, though some design details are dated.  Due to park program and siting, Mt. Pleasant  does not have potential for expansion, but opportunity for improving social spaces patricularly along the East edge.

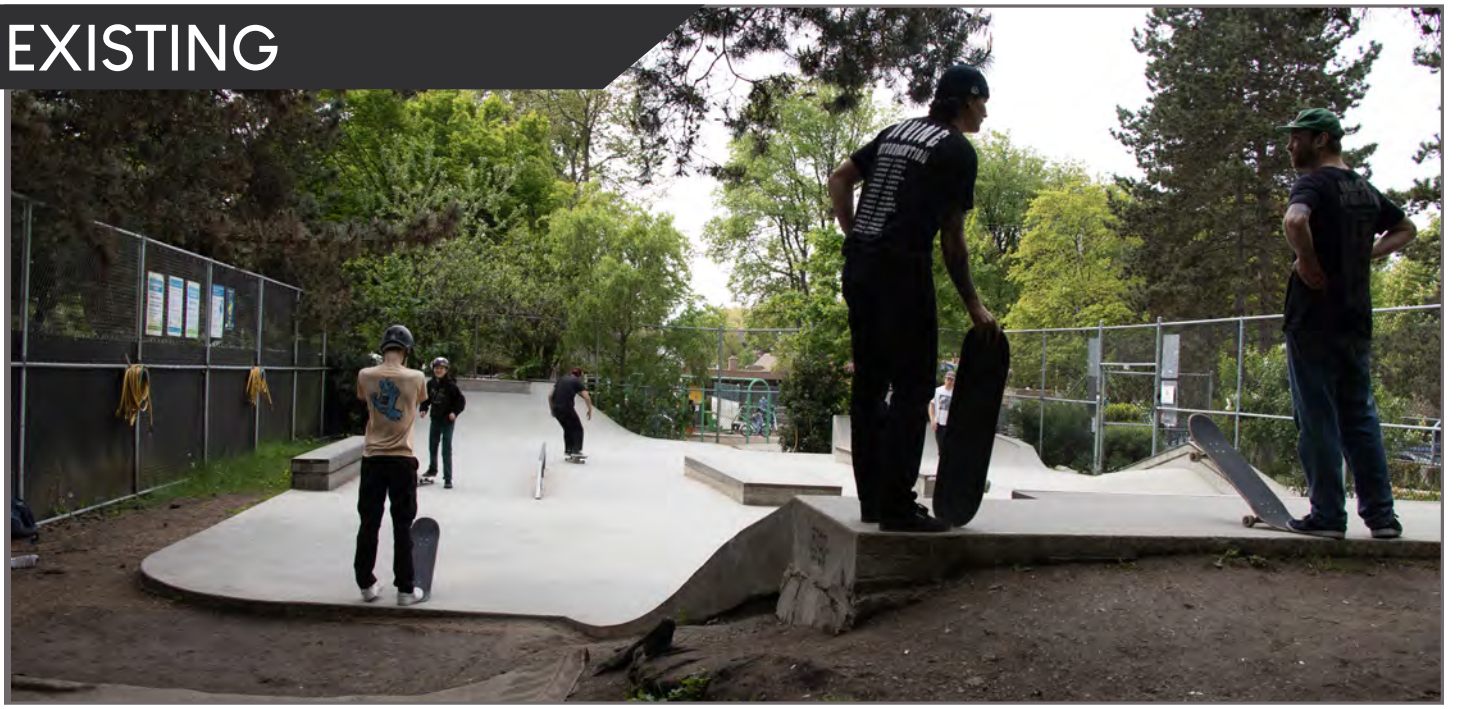


# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# MT. PLEASANT SKATE SPOT

## EXISTING



## ENVIRONMENT:

Mt. Pleasant Park is one of the most popular public spaces in the community with vibrant activity year-round. Many park amenities are present and it is a safe place for families and riders of all styles and skill levels. The skatepark itself though is somewhat cut off from the park, screened by a tall fence and locked at night to prevent access. There is an excellent shaded seating area and gathering space inside the gate, but the bench and landscaping is in poor condition. Local users have added a geotextile fabric over the dirt area at the end of the street line to prevent their boards from entering a potentially muddy or dirty area.

## TERRAIN:

Mt. Pleasant Skatepark is a rectangular space about the size of a basketball court, with a central complex feature and circular fiow around it. The park is street-oriented but contains two different height quarter pipes, plus some of the essential street terrain including a fiat ledge, rail, and manual pad. The features work well, but the spacing in between them is extremely compact making for a more challenging riding experience that gets very crowded quickly.

While the skatepark contains some of the most recently constructed terrain in the city, it wouldn't meet what is now considered a modern standard of design and construction quality. Certain features like the mini quarter pipe, A-Frame and fiat rail could be improved or replaced, and there is room for a small but potentially highly valuable and functional expansion to the park.

# OPPORTUNITIES



Mt. Pleasant Skatepark is fenced off close to the edge of concrete on three sides, but on the east side at the main entrance gate there is a generous shaded grass area with seating. An earth berm descends from the back of the 3' tall quarter pipe, with deteriorating heavily trafficked landscaping.

One key skate amenity missing from the community is a beginner level mini half pipe, referred to as a mini ramp. This space presents a perfect opportunity to add a mini ramp connected to the existing deck, which would increase the capacity of the space and better serve the community for a relatively low cost of construction. In addition, a concrete path connecting the existing park to the corner gate would greatly improve the function of the fiat ground street line, creating room for 1-2 additional features and the opportunity to create a better seating area. The protection of existing mature trees need to be taken into consideration with potential improvements.

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# DOWNTOWN PLAZA

## CONTEXT MAP






## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2011
**SIZE:** 3,000 FT²
**TERRAIN:** 75% STREET, 25 TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 1-2 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE STREET & TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** NO
**SHELTER:** NONE

## OVERVIEW:

Nearly 20 years ago Vancouver revolutionized the world of skateparks when the first urban skate plaza, consisting entirely of realistic street terrain like stairs, rails and granite ledges, was opened under the Dunsmuir and Georgia viaducts. While still in heavy use, the quality of the park has fallen well behind the modern standard in the two decades since. For the past several years, the future of new skateparks in Vancouver has been inextricably linked to the impending demolition of the Plaza, with funding in limbo as the potentially imminent demolition of the viaducts is uncertain. This has led to cancelled projects like Plaza 1.5 and the left skateboarding community unsure if the city will invest in modern terrain so badly needed.

## STATE OF FEATURES

MODERATE REPAIR AND RENOVATION NEEDED

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit – Bus
Public Transit – SkyTrain
Pedestrian Infrastructure
Street Parking

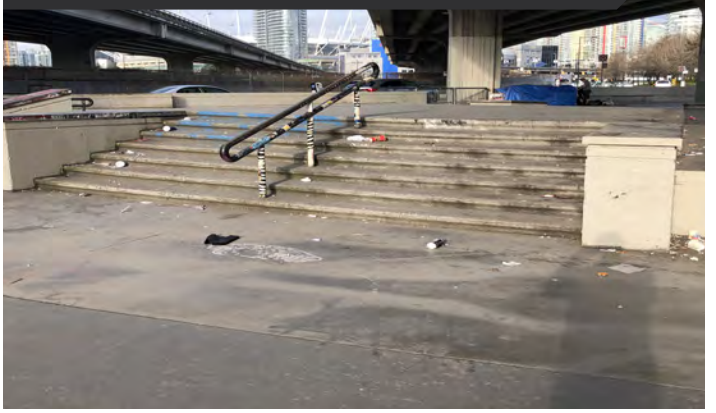
## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
"Eyes on The Street"

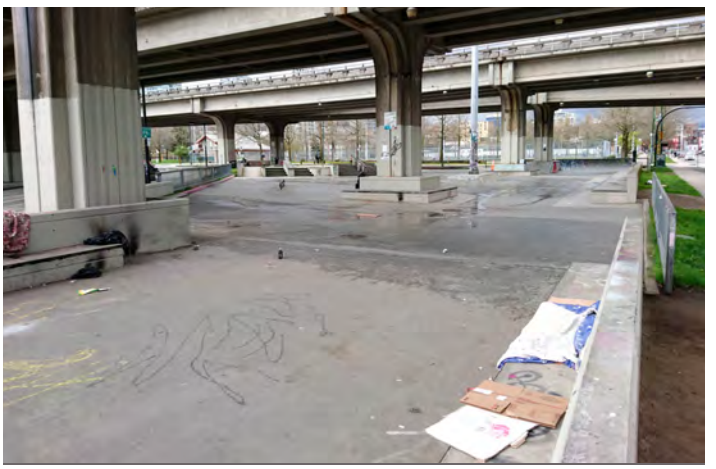
## AMENITIES

Food Options
Lighting
Garbage

## IMAGES







## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Vancouver was an innovator in the early 2000's creating the world's first true skate plaza. While the space is somewhat in disrepair and in need of significant renovations and upgrades, it is hoped the space will be demolished and replaced to the modern standard as False Creek is redeveloped.

# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# QUILCHENA SKATEPARK

## CONTEXT MAP






## OVERVIEW:

Quilchena Skatepark is a centrally located, neighbourhood level skatepark with a variety of terrain types. As the only skatepark on Vancouver's West Side, it serves users from Kitsilano down to South Vancouver. Built in 2001, it was the first in the new generation of 21st Century skateparks in the city. While the original design and construction techniques were not up to a modern standard, a renovation in 2017 greatly improved the skateability and added new features to make this one of the best skateparks in Vancouver.

## STATE OF FEATURES

MINIMAL TO NO REPAIR NEEDED

## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2001
**RENOVATED & EXPANDED:** 2017
**SIZE:** 6,780 FT²
**TERRAIN:** 75% STREET, 25% TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 3-5 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE TRANSITION, BEGINNER TO ADVANCED STREET
**LIGHTS:** NONE

## ACCESSIBILITY:

- Bicycle Infrastructure
- Public Transit
- Vehicle Infrastructure
- Pedestrian Infrastructure

## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

- Residential Setback
- Vegetative Buffer
- Staffed Public Buildings
- "Eyes on The Street"

## AMENITIES

- Lighting
- Drinking Fountain
- Washroom
- Staffed Public Buildings
- Green Space
- Shelter
- Garbage

## IMAGES





## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Since renovation,Quilchena Skatepark has served as a quality neighborhood skatepark popular with a wide range of ages and ability levels. No major repairs are needed, though additional amenities, particularly lighting and seating or tables, would be appreciated by active skatepark users.

## OPPORTUNITIES



# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY - FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# STRATHCONA SKATE SPOT

## CONTEXT MAP






## OVERVIEW:

Strathcona Skatepark is one of Vancouver's earliest skateparks, and while the overall design of the space still functions well, the park was built with sub-standard construction techniques that result in a space that does not function nearly as well as it could. Instead of concrete fiat work, the park contains concrete ramp features with asphalt paving in between. It's a popular space for events like Go Skateboarding Day due its central location and generous surrounding park space and amenities, and has the potential to become a great modern skatepark if thoroughly renovated and re-poured.

## STATE OF FEATURES

SIGNIFICANT RENOVATION OR REPLACEMENT REQUIRED

## THE DETAILS:

**BUILT:** 2003
**SIZE:** 5,200 FT²
**TERRAIN:** 90% STREET, 10% TRANSITION
**CAPACITY:** 3-5 SIMULTANEOUS RIDERS
**SKILL LEVELS:** BEGINNER TO INTERMEDIATE STREET, ADVANCED TRANSITION
**LIGHTS:** NO
**SHELTER:** NEARBY COVERED PICNIC AREA

## ACCESSIBILITY:

Bicycle Infrastructure
Public Transit - Bus
Pedestrian Infrastructure
Street Parking

## SAFETY & VISIBILITY

Residential Setback
Vegetative Buffer
"Eyes on The Street"

## AMENITIES

Drinking Fountain
Green Space
Garbage
WC
Washroom

## IMAGES



## OPPORTUNITIES & CONCLUSION:

Strathcona Skatepark was well planned and designed for a park in 2003 but was unfortunately built with asphalt instead of concrete, leading to a very poor ride surface, and as a result most riders look to other parks to meet their needs and rarely use this space. The potential for renovation and expansion, however, is substantial, and could provide an opportunity to greatly increase the availability of modern skatepark terrain for a lower cost if updated.



# SKATEPARK SCORECARD

VANCOUVER SKATE AMENITIES STRATEGY – FACILITY ASSESSMENTS

# STRATHCONA SKATE SPOT

## EXISTING



## ENVIRONMENT:

Strathcona Park provides a generous green space and a variety of park amenities that make it a great place to spend time, anlthough it is underutilized due to the poor quality of the skatepark. Picnic tables, barbecue spaces, a basketball court, washrooms and lots of grass and shade allow users to spend a day there and organize meet-ups of larger groups. The location of the park within the city puts it close to a dense concentration of skatepark users, although it is often overlooked in favor of other parks in the city.

Strathcona has the most room for expansion of any park in the city, and has the potential to become a great community-level skatepark that would be very well used by the community.

## TERRAIN:

Strathcona skate spot contains a decent variety of intermediate level street elements, primarily a banked hip, two ledges and a rail. This skatepark has been supplemented with features donated by the community, including the two curbs and the advanced transition barrier feature.

While the existing concrete features are still rideable, their condition is poor, but the bigger issue is the asphalt paving in between features. The experience of riding this park is rough, lumpy, and has somewhat dangerous cracks and joints between the asphalt and concrete. The park has room to accommodate a large crowd, but because there are few functional features and little division between spaces it is still challenging for multiple riders to use it simultaneously.

# OPPORTUNITIES



The areas highlighted in blue represent possible areas for expansion, although opportunities are not limited to these as Strathcona is a large park with lots of room for redevelopment.

If any work is done here, the first priority would likely be to pour new concrete features and fiats on top of the existing park footprint, preserving greenspace and replacing terrain that won't ever be well used unless replaced. Additional expansion could be considered though, with ample room for both transition and street terrain. The field to the north of the park would allow for the space to roughly double in size without any significant effect on the rest of Strathcona Park's function and use.

While closer expanding northward would bring skateboarding closer to the adjacent residential homes, Venables is well traveled road, providing a continuous ambient noise, and if the skatepark is expanded, earthworks could be undertaken to provide a sound barrier to buffer against noise of park use.