

VALLEY PARK SKATE PARK

MULTI-WHEELED FACILITY CONCEPTUAL PLAN

Fall 2018 Community Consultation Summary

CONTACT

Wes Kindree
Landscape Architectural Services
wes.kindree@hamilton.ca

KEY STAKEHOLDER DESIGN WORKSHOP, OCTOBER 25, 2018

A new skate park is coming to Valley Park in Hamilton! The project proposes the development of a “community scale” concrete facility that will cater to a variety of wheeled sports. Through the outcomes of the Skateboard Park Study (2017) and further site-specific review, Valley Park has been strategically selected as the best suited site to develop the city’s first community skate park, accommodating a variety of wheeled uses. Valley Park will be the first of three potential new parks that will provide more spaces to keep Hamilton residents healthy and active. The riders and other community members are asked to contribute positively to the design of the skate park, ensuring it becomes a well-used community asset for generations to come.

Dillon Consulting Limited (Dillon) was retained by the City of Hamilton to create a Multi-Wheeled Facility Conceptual Plan for the Valley Park Skate Park in partnership with New Line Skateparks Inc (NLS). Dillon is working with the City of Hamilton to solicit initial public input on the potential design of the skate park at this early phase of the project.

Local riders, neighbours, parents and others attended a design workshop, held at the Valley Park Recreation Centre from 4:00 to 8:00 PM. The workshop was a drop-in style open house with workshop activities, along with informal discussion with the City, Dillon and NLS. Approximately 50 individuals, varying in age, came through the workshop at various points throughout the evening.



WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES



Base Plans and Analysis Panels
Information regarding design considerations, site opportunities and constraints was displayed along with aerial base maps of the project site. Attendees were welcomed to post thoughts and comments on sticky notes.



Dotmocracy
Visitors were asked to place sticker dots on their favourite skate park features. There were two sized dots; big and small. For each feature, a weighted average of the number of dots was taken to determine support for the feature.



3D Site Modelling
Workshop participants were invited to design their ideal skate park using plasticine atop a 3D contour model of the site.



Feedback Form
Paper base maps were provided to allow attendees to sketch the skate park they would like to see.



Online Survey
Computers were set up for attendees to fill out an Online Survey

WHAT WE HEARD AT THE WORKSHOP

The following key themes emerged during conversations and hands-on workshop activities.

Bowls/ Transition Terrain

The dotmocracy exercise had three major categories of features: bowl/transition terrains, street/ plaza terrains, and obstacle/hybrid terrains. A weighted average of the resulting dots revealed a clear preference for **large bowls** and **transition terrains**. The feature with the highest weighted average was the “**Organic Flow**” element that consists of a smoothly undulating surface. Other popular bowl features included **Pool Style Bowl** features, **Deep/Vert Bowl** features, and **Mini-ramp** features. This preference for terrain features was reinforced in the feedback forms.

An experienced skateboarder drew by hand an “Organic Flow” zone that utilized the site’s elevation change, and a large, open deep/vert bowl that included a pool block in his site design.

Other Terrain Features

Other terrain features that received a high weighted average included **Gaps**, **Fun-box** features, and **Custom Skateable Art** features. The preference for art features coincides with what was seen through the 3D modelling activity that included many such features. Furthermore, the 3D modelling and feedback form exercises revealed ideas for inclusion of a bike path and a looped track for scooters, and forms from a group of four BMX riders revealed terrain preferences towards larger obstacles, including many **curved vertical walls**, **hips**, **manual pads**, **jersey barriers**, and **inquire bridges**. Some comments encouraged the progression of skate features by including features of varied heights and challenge levels.

Site Amenities

Key amenity needs that arose from the analysis panels and 3D modelling exercise included a **sitting area** for parents and children, a **water fountain**, a **bike lockup** area, **shade**, and welcome **signage**.

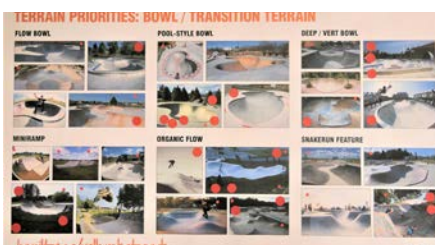
The need for a water fountain was emphasized by several people.

Snake Run

The concept of a **skate run** as a way to leverage the slope of the site when entering the park emerged through many workshop activities. It received a medium weighted average in the dotmocracy exercise. It was also included in two of the 3D models in the form of ramps entering the site as well as in a feedback form. Finally, one participant orally mentioned the skate run in Peck Park, San Pedro, to be an impressive feature due to the momentum it generates.

Kids/ Beginner Programming

A number of younger children and their parents joined the workshop. As a result, all workshop activities revealed a need for beginner spaces and programming where new skaters would be able to practice their skills. This includes **skill development camps** and workshops for beginners, **flat surfaces** or linear skating tracks for younger and novice riders, and **separated skate zones** for children and adults.

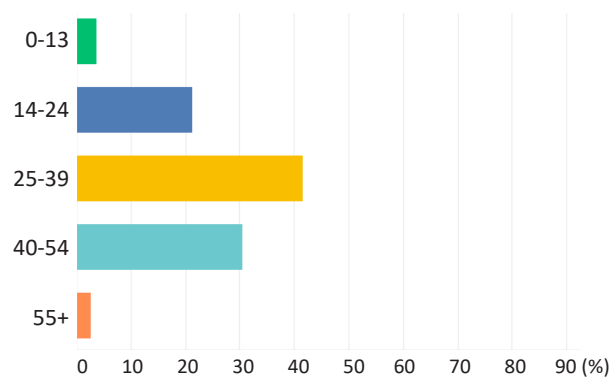


ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

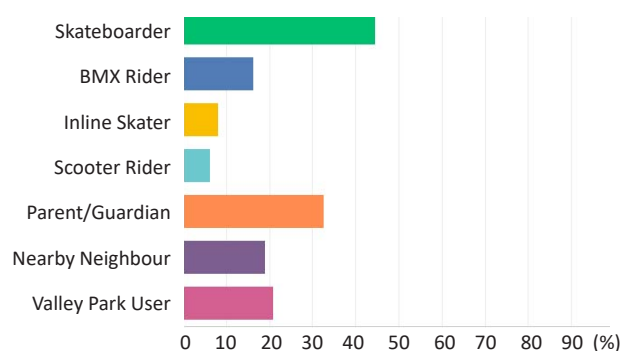
A 20-question survey was made available online to the public from October 5th to November 14, 2018. The survey received 119 responses from respondents across Hamilton, with clusters around Central Hamilton, as well as around the Valley Park neighbourhood. The survey results revealed positive support and excitement for the construction of the park.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Nearly half (44%) of survey respondents fall within the age category of 25 to 39. This was followed closely by the 40-54 age category (29% of respondents) and the 14-24 age category (21% of respondents). Four percent of respondents were under the age of thirteen. **The diversity in age of respondents suggests that the park users will have a wide range of ages.**

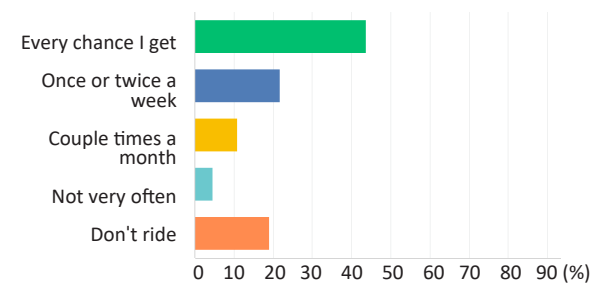


Nearly half of the respondents (43%) were interested in the Project because they are skateboarders. The second largest category of respondents were parents/guardians or spectators (34%). A smaller proportion of respondents were interested in other multi-wheeled activities including BMX riding, inline skating, scooter riding, quad skating, and roller skating. Respondents were able to choose multiple categories.



Amongst the respondents, we saw a fairly even distribution of riding ability with 34% identifying as intermediate, and 32% as advanced; 14% as beginners. **This reinforces the need for varied skate spaces.**

In response to the question regarding "how often do you ride?" nearly half the respondents (44%), indicated, "every chance I get" while 23% responded once or twice a week. Nineteen percent of respondents also responded that they did not ride.



TERRAIN FEATURES

Riders, as self-identified in the survey, were presented with a series of questions regarding their preferred terrain features. Findings included:

Street / Plaza Features

The most preferred street/plaza features were **skateable art features**, and **ledges** and **benches**. This coincided with results from the workshop dotmocracy exercise, where these were the more favoured features in this category.

Bowl Feature

The most preferred bowl feature is the **flow bowl**.

Obstacle Terrain

The most preferred obstacle terrain feature was **quarter pipes**.

Organic Flow Terrain

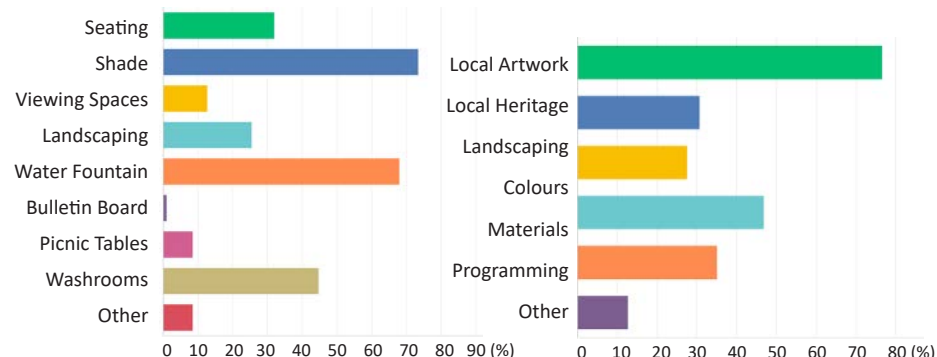
The most preferred organic flow feature was a **snake run** feature. This mirrors comments made on the workshop analysis panels, feedback forms, as well as during the 3D modelling exercise results that mentioned the idea of a snake run.

Open Ended

From the open ended question regarding other terrain features, the most popular responses included **euro gap**, **vert ramp**, and **pool coping**.

The top three amenity features survey respondents wanted to see were **shade structures**, **water fountains**, and **accessible washrooms**. An open-ended question revealed that another significant concern was **lighting**. This coincides with some of the design considerations identified (the addition of a vertical shade structure), and what was heard from the other activities (need for a water fountain) during the in-person workshop.

The top two responses for how to make this skate park unique to Hamilton were to include **local artwork**, and to use **materials** in construction that reflected Hamilton's character. An open-ended follow-up question revealed that many wanted the skate park to be **unique** and others considered **programming** important to activate the space.



FINAL REMARKS

In response to the open-ended question regarding other precedent parks, over 50 different skate parks were identified along with a number of images submitted of other parks and features that riders liked. The most mentioned park was Waterdown Memorial Park, located in the Waterdown area of Hamilton. Other key parks included Turner Park and New Beasley Park in Hamilton, and Norton Park in Burlington. A few people also mentioned Guelph Park, Vanderhood, Linda Vista, Brantford, and Smithville.

