



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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AKWESASNE CELEBRATES GROUNDBREAKING OF NEW SKATEPARK

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne (MCA) is breaking ground for Akwesasne's first skatepark which will be located at the A'nowara'ko:wa Arena. Officials and project team members celebrated the milestone on Friday, June 24, 2022 with an official groundbreaking ceremony.

Construction for the 9,600 square-foot skatepark will be ongoing throughout the summer, with completion slated for Sept. 16, 2022. A grand opening is tentatively set for Sept. 17th.

The skatepark will be constructed by Papillon Skateparks. The planning process has consisted of engagement and collection of design ideas from 30 skateboarders from Akwesasne, Cornwall/SDG and Tyendinaga.

The Akwesasne Skatepark will not only cater to skateboarders but also to youth using scooters, bikes, rollerblades and wheelchairs. It will be a safe, outdoor place for people of all ages to work on their physical and mental health, while having fun.

The nearest skatepark is 45 minutes away so beginner to veteran skateboarders from Akwesasne, Cornwall and surrounding communities will no longer have to leave the area to have access to an exceptional skatepark.

MCA's Dept. of Economic Development, which is leading the project, will be providing training camps, competitions and other events once the skatepark is completed. MCA is hoping to boost tourism by drawing in people both nationally and internationally to utilize the skatepark. The skatepark will also provide jobs through construction, coaching, and sales/rentals of skateboards, scooters and equipment.

The total project cost is \$407,300, which does not include signage, landscaping or lighting.

MCA is very grateful for the many donations it received for the project, including \$241,000 from Canadian Tire and Jump Start Charities. We received many other donations, from businesses down to individuals. The support for this endeavor is appreciated, and we look forward to celebrating the opening with the public in September.



Quotes:

Grand Chief Abram Benedict:

“We are proud to celebrate the next step in this major project. Our youth will have access to another positive activity without having to leave Akwesasne. It is our continued goal to use innovation, collaboration, and community-based planning to build up our community and establish entertainment venues today, for present and future generations to enjoy. We look forward to the biggest step to come, which will be the grand opening this September.”

Kawehno:ke District Chief Edward Roundpoint:

“We are very excited to introduce new forms of sports and recreation activities to the community. Through engagement with our youth, and seeing how excited they are for the skatepark, it further validates the endeavors of bringing a new activity for the community. COVID-19 has had such a detrimental impact on everyone, we hope this outlet brings back togetherness amongst generations to build confidence and overall well-being. Young, old, beginner, veteran skaters, we are looking forward to seeing everyone utilize the space at the arena.”

Director of Economic Development Kylee Tarbell:

“We are very appreciative of the support and collaboration from our community and neighbors, to introduce the Akwesasne Skatepark initiative. This would not be possible without the financial support from our sponsors! We are also able to integrate capacity development through construction, landscaping, as well as spin-off businesses to support the socio-economic needs of the community. To see the excitement from our youth about our skatepark is very rewarding and we can't wait to see families being together once again and enjoying the grounds.”

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