

## **The Register-Guard**

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### **Money is crucial to covered skate park**

**BY SHELBY MARTIN**

*The Register-Guard*

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Ten-year-old Jaron Adams had his skateboard tucked under his arm when he showed up at a planning meeting Tuesday for Eugene's first covered skate park.

He's been skating for three years.

"I practice everyday, even when it's raining," he said.

His mother, Dharmika Henshel, said Jaron usually skates at Trainsong Park in Bethel, but that he would really benefit from a covered skate park.

"Where he tries to skate when it's raining is my living room," she said.

Jaron and his mother were among more than 60 people who attended the city-sponsored meeting at Campbell Senior Center to explore the idea of a skate park underneath the Washington/Jefferson Bridge. People asked plenty of questions, but no one spoke against the idea.

The \$500,000 project has been in the works since 2006, when the City Council decided that a skate park in the city center should be a high priority. As a result, the city allocated \$300,000 from capital improvement funds for the project.

Skaters for Eugene Skateparks, a local nonprofit agency, hopes to raise \$250,000 by the end of this year. At Tuesday's meeting, city landscape architect Emily Proudfoot said the goal is to begin construction in January 2010 and for the park to open in the fall of that year.

"That's still very preliminary," she said. "It all depends on the money coming together."

She said the city is now accepting proposals from design firms, and is looking for input from individuals who would use the park.

Some at Tuesday's gathering said they hope for something distinctive. "It looks like six million other skate parks," Austin Arrowood said after scrutinizing a conceptual drawing. "We want it to be unique."

He proposed some kind of sculpture that people could skate on.

Vanessa Heilmann agreed. "We want something where people will just be like, 'Oh my

God,'” she said.

Erika Winters brought up lighting at the park. The current lighting is high-pressure sodium lights, which cast an orange light that is not conducive to skating.

“It washes out transition and hides terrain,” she said.

She recommended metal halide lights, which shine blue-white light.

Jaron’s suggestion was for more quarter-pipes to skate over, and an area where beginners can skate without getting in the way of more advanced skaters.

Proudfoot said the proposed skate park would be built in an area currently occupied by a playground.

Plans also include razing an existing restroom and building one in a place with more visibility.

City Councilor Andrea Ortiz attended the meeting and expressed her support for the proposed skate park. “The whole area needs rejuvenation,” she said. “I wish you all luck.”

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