

BUILD IT!

Washington/Jefferson Bridge Skate Park City of Eugene Citizen Petition

Overview: This is an informal petition to demonstrate citizen support for building a downtown skatepark in underutilized areas of the Washington/Jefferson Park area near the I-105 onramp. This petition will be presented to the City Council, Parks & Rec, and the Mayor's Office. Any information collected will not be used for commercial purposes.

What: A partially covered and lighted skatepark open to all ages. The design of the park would allow for use by all levels of skateboarders from beginners to advanced and incorporate the widest range of obstacles and terrain. Skateparks are urban recreation centers created for skateboarders and rollerbladers.

Who: The skatepark will benefit all of Eugene, especially our youth. Skateboarding is a healthy, athletic activity and is an important recreational outlet for all participants, especially youngsters who are not as interested in group sports. Participation has been growing rapidly for the last decade and the total number of skateboarders in the United States now exceeds 10 million.

Why: "A healthy body fuels the mind!" Like all positive youth recreational activities, skateparks keep kids away from the TV and video games, allowing them to interact with their peers and channel their energy. Also, everyone knows, it rains in Eugene! Building a roof over at least a part of the park or perhaps utilizing the highway as part of the roof, kids would have a year-around center instead of one dependent on our fickle weather.

Where: The Washington/Jefferson Park area is a city park encompassing approximately 10 square blocks underneath the I-105 downtown bridge. There is ample underutilized land that is perfectly suited for use as an urban skatepark. Constructing a larger flagship skatepark in this central location would be a perfect complement to the city's outlying smaller skateparks in the north, south, and west of town. It would also provide an alternative to the Springfield skatepark that is in the far eastern edge of the metro area.

When: If the City of Eugene Parks and Recreation Department incorporates the skatepark construction into their Parks Comprehensive Plan currently in progress, construction could start as early as the summer of 2004 and be completed by the spring 2005.

How: Funding is always an issue, especially in these fiscally constrained times. However, communities around the state from Lincoln City and Newburg to Medford and Redmond have demonstrated that with grassroots support as well as a clear direction from civic and political leaders, skateparks can be built in short periods of time. Funds for the project are likely to be derived from a partnership of public and private sources. The total construction costs will likely be approximately \$350,000.