

Our Creston Community Park

ILC – July/August 2020 FINAL

On May 15, 2015, I received a very respectful and well written letter from four community minded Grade 7 students attending ARES (Adam Robertson Elementary School) inquiring about the possibility of developing a new skate park. They felt strongly that although there had been many positive improvements to the Town in the last number of years, amenities for the “younger people were being left out”. Here is an excerpt from that letter: “Recently, we went to Cranbrook to use their skate and bike park. We were able to stay there for five hours without getting bored. If Creston was able to have an expanded version of its current skate park then more teens would have a safer place to bike”. Today, five years later, I would like to thank these young gentlemen (three of whom are part of the PCSS 2020 graduating class) for this letter. It formed a part of the June 23, 2015 Council agenda package and was the catalyst for the development of the new skate park which is now a prominent feature in the new Creston Community Park!

As an RDCK Director representing the Town of Creston, I am very pleased that the Creston Community Park project which includes a reconstructed skate park, accessible walkways and seating area for spectators, and a picnic/civic space with seating for social and community gatherings has been completed. Other features include a revitalized playground, horseshoe pits, beach volleyball courts, pickleball courts, a multipurpose basketball court, and upgrades to lighting, landscaping, parking areas and pathways as well as enhancements to accessibility between the indoor and outdoor amenities of the Creston & District Community Complex.

From 2015 to the project’s completion in 2019, there have been numerous skate park assessment meetings, request for proposals for designs, public consultation, open house planning sessions and grant applications submitted. In March 2018, the RDCK staff were pleasantly advised that the \$3.1 million grant application for the Creston Community Park was approved. The skate park and surrounding amenities are the result of a collaborative design process between VDZ Landscape Design and New Line Skateparks. Border Holdings led the construction on the rest of the Community Park infrastructure (the majority of which was completed by November 2019) and the results are truly breathtaking.

Some of the features that the boys mentioned that would be, “fun and useful” for a new skate and bike park included “a large bowl, multiple levels of stairs, ginds, step ups, boxes, half pipes, quarter pipes, and a drop off”. Well, my “sk8 sources” tell me that the new skate park features a multilevel bowl complete with pool coping and hips. There is also a street section with a variety of stairs, quarter pipes, ledges, rails, manual pads, and transitions. I also have it on good authority that the bowl is particularly awesome and is the best in the Kootenays!

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an official opening ceremony for the Creston Community Park that was planned for June 2020. Given that we currently can not have gatherings of more than 50 people, we obviously are not able to proceed with the official ceremony as planned. However, this should not stop us all from celebrating this remarkable achievement and magnificent addition to our community.

Andre, Jacob, Kyle and Travis – congratulations to you and your fellow graduating class. We wish you all the best in your future endeavours! You may not have known that your letter would be the spark of this truly community initiative, but I hope that you are as proud of yourselves as this community is of you and this project!

Do not hesitate to contact me by:

Visiting me at my office in Town Hall

Email me at ron.toyota@creston.ca

Call me at 250 428 2214 (extension 111)

Word Count: 639

Dear Mr. Toyota

I am a grade 7 student from ARES and I ride my bmx 3-4 hours a day. My friends and I ride our bikes every day during hours we are not attending school. We appreciate all of the positive things you have done for the town of Creston such as the dog park, the community trails, and the expansion of the recreation centre. This has improved the lives of many families and adults of Creston, but we feel younger people are being left out. Biking and skateboarding are a favourite pastime among most Creston teens. We feel that the current skate park is limited in the amount of time we can spend there and the amount of tricks we can practice. We have been searching for an appropriate place to practice our tricks. Often we are biking on the town roads and parking lots which are not safe. We do not want to bother anyone or bike in areas that are illegal, but we are running out of options.

Recently we went to Cranbrook to use their skate and bike park. We were able to stay there for five hours without getting bored. If Creston was able to have an expanded version of its current skate park then more teens would have a safer place to bike.

Some of the features of a bike park that would be fun and useful are a large bowl, multiple levels of stairs, ginds, step ups, boxes, half pipes, quarter pipes, and a drop off. What are the options to help make this a possibility? We think the field between the college and Extra Foods parking lot would be an ideal location for a new skate park. It is away from busy areas, yet close to the high school.

Can you please send a letter to ARES school to let us know of any developments on a new skate park or if this is even a possibility. We are willing to fund raise and help build the skate park if the town of Creston is supportive. ←

Thank you for your time,

Jacob Fehr

Kyle Qualtieri

Travis Overhault

Andre Beaucher