Explaining the Impact of Funding on Public Skatepark Design: A Case Study of Skateparks in Hamilton, Ontario

by

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A Thesis
presented to
The University of Guelph

In partial fulfilment of requirements for the degree of
Master of Landscape Architecture

Guelph, Ontario, Canada

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ABSTRACT

EXPLAINING THE IMPACT OF FUNDING ON PUBLIC SKATEPARK DESIGN: A CASE STUDY OF SKATEPARKS IN HAMILTON, ONTARIO

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Over the past decade, Hamilton, Ontario has been committed to bringing new and improved skateparks to the city. Some of these projects were funded via the municipal tax base, and others were funded by developer fees. The aim of this study is to determine how support and funding was garnered for these new projects and discern what impact the source of funding has on each project’s final design. This study covers three case studies of skateparks within Hamilton and compare their funding and design to determine how alternative funding impacts public recreational space. Each case includes semi-structured interviews with key informants involved in planning, design and community engagement and secondary analysis of news articles and studies on skateboarding conducted by the City of Hamilton. Findings indicate that funding through developer fees places limits on the location and size of the project, but overall is beneficial from an advocacy standpoint.

Key Words:
public space, neoliberalism, skateboarding culture, skatepark
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I want to thank the friends that I made in the program, whose support throughout the program was truly indispensable. I have no doubt that Nate’s predictions will come true and we will remain friends for the rest of our careers.

I am also indebted to the MLA faculty especially Dr. Nadia Amoroso, whose direction and leadership helped assuage my worries and lend a designer’s eye to my research. Thanks also to Steven Clarke for acting as co-advisor, and to Dr. Nate Perkins for serving on my committee. To Diana Foolen, thank you for performing your responsibilities with patience and grace. I promise to read my emails every day. And thanks also to Dr. Martin Holland for chairing my defense and proving that philosophy has a place in landscape architecture.

To the participants, my research would be nothing without your help. Your time and insight brought skateboarding in Hamilton to light in a way that would have been impossible otherwise.

A thousand thanks and much love to my family, Mom, Dad & Jessie.

Finally, thanks are due to the “staff” at “Guse & Associates” who made me feel wanted and helpful, even if all I ever did was go on coffee runs. Go flamingos.
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CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCTION

1.1 | OVERVIEW

The skateboards who call Beasley Park home claim that it is the oldest skatepark in the province, dating back to the 1970s. While this research has not been able to confirm the validity of this claim, it sheds light onto the deep roots that the skateboarding community has in Hamilton. Throughout the past decade, the City of Hamilton has been committed to improving and expanding the skateparks in the city and is planning to complete at least two more skatepark projects within the next few years. Most of these projects were funded via the municipal tax base, but one project, Valley Park, was funded by a less common source: developer charges. This research will examine the implications of this funding source and aim to determine if it has a significant impact on the design and implementation of public skateparks.

The topic of research examined here is the processes by which the source of funding affects public recreational space and those who use it. To put the research in context this work will view the relevant processes through the lens of neoliberalism. In another work focused on neoliberalism and its impact on public recreational space, Beal defines neoliberalism as, “a process of applying the logics of a ‘free market’ not only to economic sectors but also to public cultural life more broadly” (2017, pg.12). Additionally, neoliberalism generally favours the rights of the individual over that of the public and is often seen as going hand-in-hand with gentrification (Giroux, 2005).

Specifically, this research focuses on skateparks within the city of Hamilton and the processes by which they were planned and funded. Skateparks that serve as case studies for this research are Beasley Park, Turner Park and the yet to be completed Valley Park.
Skateparks are an ideal subject for this examination because they fall under public ownership, yet they facilitate an activity that is treated as both transformative and destructive of the public realm. Skateboarding contradicts the intended uses of built space when performed anywhere outside of designated skateparks, leading to the notion that skateparks can simultaneously empower and physically contain this sometimes-destructive behaviour (Borden, 2001). In addition to performing an unexpected re-examination of built space, successful skateboarders and advocates of the sport exhibit some of the characteristics that underpin the principles of neoliberalism. Many of the keys to success in skateboarding, such as individualism, perseverance and fearlessness in the face of adversity translate well to business, leading Ocean Howell, a prominent researcher in the field of skateboarding culture, to describe the sport as "an incubator for entrepreneurialism" (2009). Due to the relevance of capitalist business models to skateboarding culture, is relevant to the field of landscape architecture to discern the impact that neoliberal governance and business thinking has on the creation, preservation and function of recreational space created for skateboarders.

For landscape architects in general, the knowledge gained in this research can inform how to successfully understand the implications of alternative funding on public recreational spaces such as skateparks. Finally, this work will attempt to offer suggestions to landscape architects on how to initiate and navigate the earliest stages of creating a skatepark.

Some may argue that community-building initiatives are not within the purview of landscape architects. However, as the arbiters of the built realm, it is our responsibility to address the needs of the public and fulfill them, even if there is not sufficient support at the municipal level.
Rather, it is the landscape architect’s knowledge of community design, public procedure and the built landscape that makes them uniquely suited to this task.

1.2 | THESIS OUTLINE

This study includes seven chapters. This chapter includes an acknowledgement of the problem and background for the study. Chapter 2 highlights the existing literature relevant to the problem and highlights key themes for skatepark advocacy and some alternative means of skatepark funding found there. Chapter 3 outlines the research problem, goals and objectives, and specifies the question that this study aims to answer. Chapter 4 describes the research methods and explains the purpose of the parallel methods. Chapter 5 present the results and analysis of the secondary data analysis and the key informant interviews. Chapter 6 discusses the results of this research and combines the findings of the two methods. Finally, Chapter 7 acknowledges the limitations of this study, offers recommendations to landscape architects and skateboarding advocates, and highlights opportunities for future research on this topic.

The following page contains a flowchart representing the thesis outline.
Figure 1: Thesis outline flowchart
CHAPTER 2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | PURPOSE OF LITERATURE REVIEW

This research operates under the assumption that the capacity for a skatepark to best serve the community is determined by factors including the public perception of skateboarding, the community’s needs regarding public recreational space and the attitude of governing municipal bodies. The complex nature of these factors dictates that this literature review must attend to the history of skateboarding culture, its public perception and the attitude of oppositionality within that culture. To further illuminate the topic, this literature review will also examine examples of high-profile private-public agreements that have successfully aided in the creation or maintenance of skateparks in North America and the United Kingdom. Finally, this review will address the recent history of social policy in Canada in an attempt to categorize the attitude of relevant governing bodies. This final section will determine if and to what degree the tenets of neoliberalism apply to Canada and put the framework through which this research operates into context.

2.2 | THE ADVANCE OF SKATEBOARDING AND OPPOSITIONALITY

Skateboarding’s relationship with capitalism and neoliberalism has historically hinged upon its fluctuating degree of cultural oppositionality and subversion of normative means of expression. In its infancy during the 1950’s, skateboarding lacked a discernible identity, borrowing most of its cultural relevance from surfing and scootering, from which it also borrowed spiritual inspiration and the physical equipment to perform the activity, respectively (Borden, 2019). Though it was still a financially viable venture at this time, it was not until
Skateboarders like Tony Alva and Stacy Peralta, colloquially known as the Z-Boyz, began skating drained pools and abandoned concrete pipes in the desert that skateboarding started to adopt its typical counter-culture identity (Borden, 2001; Borden, 2019). Since then, skateboarding has experienced times of varying popularity and shifting levels of oppositionality but has maintained a relatively stable identity from the perspective of the public. At least in part, the varying degree of oppositionality may be associated with the different terrain used for skateboarding. For example, during the 1970's and 80's, the most popular form of skateboarding was performed in skateparks and private locations specifically designed for skateboarding (Borden, 2019). This form of skateboarding is known as 'vert' or 'transition' skateboarding, which involves riding on surfaces of concrete or wood that gradually transition in slope from horizontal to completely vertical (see figure 2).

Since these features allow a skateboarder to experience moments of weightlessness, riding along a vertical surface or even ‘airing-out’ of the feature to float above it for a moment and then land on the vertical surface and allow it to translate their downward momentum to horizontal movement. Because these features are rarely found outside of concrete pools, the development

Figure 2: Vert skating (Hyden, 2018)
of this type of skateboarding relied on the construction of large, typically concrete structures, the iconic half-pipe for example that were designed specifically for skateboarding. As a result, the image of skateboarding took on a less oppositional figure, one usually covered in pads and wearing a helmet, and which did not disrupt city landscapes quite as actively (Borden, 2001). This all changed with the popularization of street-skateboarding in the 1980’s and early 90’s.

Although street skateboarding began in the 1950’s and never went away completely, it was revolutionised by the advancement of flat-ground (skateboarding that takes places on a flat surface with no obstacles) maneuvers which ironically opened up a plethora of unrealized obstacles. Likely the most important of these is known as the ‘ollie,’ (see Figure 3) originally a transition move adapted to flat-ground by freestyle skateboarder, Rodney Mullen (Borden, 2019; Schaffer, 2015; Mullen, 2016). The ollie allowed the skater to jump into the air and take the

![Figure 3: The ollie (Kyro, 2020)](image-url)
skateboard with him or her and, though it may seem commonplace to the modern observer, it was ground-breaking to skateboarders in the early 1980s. With the capacity for verticality added to their arsenal, street skateboarders, notably Mark Gonzales, took to the streets and by the end of the 1980s had shifted skateboarding culture’s major focus away from the park and centered it on finding new means of appropriating urban architecture and transforming it to fit their unique vision (Borden, 2019). In short, street skateboarding’s popularity increased skateboarding’s level of oppositionality and changed the collective identity of skateboarders along with the way they are perceived.

Inevitably, the challenge that skateboarders offer to the meaning and purpose of urban architecture, as well as the inherent risk and resulting liability issues, have led to a desire to deter skateboarding in some realms of the city (Carr, 2010; Chiu, 2009; Dinces 2011; Tsikalis and Jones, 2018). Some debate in the skateboarding research community revolves around the effect that skateparks have regarding the proliferation of skateboarding outside of the skatepark. Researchers found, in a study regarding the construction of skateparks in rural Alabama, that these sites did not dramatically increase the rate of unwanted skateboarding in their respective urban spaces (Tsikalis and Jones, 2018). However, this finding may not hold for urban spaces, especially for cities that have passed laws restricting skateboarding on public sidewalks and plazas like New York and Philadelphia. A study on the skateparks and commonly skated public areas of New York found that skateparks do not offer the same skate experience, including the act of transforming public space by skateboarding, as purpose-built skateparks, thus leading to the continued use of public space over designated skateparks (Chiu, 2009). Chiu’s work does not aim to call the value of skateparks into question, but rather to explain the different roles that street vs. park skating experiences have from the skateboarder’s perspective. In this case,
neither sweeping legislation nor the presence of purpose-built skateparks have worked to deter skateboarders from taking to the streets. In conclusion, more research is required to determine whether the presence of skateparks acts to increase or decrease what some view as undesirable skateboarding outside of a given skatepark.

Regardless, the skatepark’s capacity to add value to the surrounding community is not a matter of debate within skateboarding’s academic community. Skateparks are able to provide recreational space for adolescents and fill a void of public place-making that is not sufficiently provided for by other public facilities, thus helping teens feel belonging and stay active in a sensitive time of development (Hung, 2018, Taylor and Khan, 2011). They are capable of providing financially accessible activities for underprivileged communities, by facilitating an activity with low costs to the individual (Beal et.al., 2017; Borden, 2019; Dinces, 2011; Howell, 2009; Hung, 2018).

2.3 SKATEBOARDING AND NEOLIBERALISM

Instead of assessing the efficacy of skateparks in enriching community values, a point that has been argued by previous research such as those mentioned above, this research will focus on the link between commercialization in skateboarding and the built recreational spaces where the activity is performed. It will do so through the lens of neoliberalism, as a means of focusing and illuminating the findings. Thinking of skateboarding through the lens of neoliberalism is not a new avenue of research, and there are several works that have specifically sought to understand skateboarding in this way. Due to the intricate nature of skateboarding’s interplay with public governance and commercial enterprises, it is best to examine the research community’s stance in a case-by-case manner, since the field is not developed enough to present the research in terms of over-arching schools of thought.
In his 2009 paper, *Skatepark as Neoliberal Playground*, Ocean Howell argues that skateparks find the perfect middle-ground between servicing the public and operating independently enough to self-fund, and thus are an ideal form of public recreational space under neoliberal governance (Howell, 2009). His paper works under the assumption that United States municipal governments already operate under neoliberal principles, and that public-private collaboration has resulted in an efficient, “post-bureaucratic” form of public governance (Howell, 2009, 481). Furthermore, Howell argues that, due to their tendency to self-govern, skateboarders promote entrepreneurialism among the community and also deter, “vandalism, drug use, prostitution and homeless encampments- skateboarders provide ‘eyes-on-the-street’” (Howell, 2009, 485). Ultimately, the paper suggests that skateparks provide all of the community engagement, child development and social integration that are sought after by the original playground movement that began in America in the 1880’s. Yet even more impressively, skateparks can do so with less funding and supervision from municipal governments, making them ideal candidates for development within a neoliberal framework.
There are a number of case studies regarding skateboarder’s struggle to perform their sport in cities that deem them ‘undesirable’ that support Howell’s claims such as the West Los Angeles Courthouse and the Brooklyn Banks in New York City (see figure 4), both famous spots among the online skateboarding community (Chiu & Giamarino, 2019). In the case of the Brooklyn Banks, skaters used an argument centred on security to justify their occupation of the space. The site is located in an abandoned lot strategically under Brooklyn Bridge, and in the post-9/11 era skaters were seen as extra “eyes on the street” (Jacobs, 1961). Policy makers were able to overlook legislation that discouraged skateboarders because their presence deterred criminal activity in a space that could have been a target for potential terrorist attacks (Chiu & Giamarino, 2019). However, the fear of terrorism eventually wore off and the city closed off the space in 2010 when residents complained that skateboarders were a nuisance, but the skateboarding community is currently seeking a private-public solution and lobbying the city of New York to recognize the Brooklyn Banks as a permanent skatepark (Chiu & Giamarino, 2019). Similarly, the skateboarding community around the LA Courthouse sought a private-public partnership,

Figure 4: Brooklyn Banks (Umali, 2017)
but it has met with a great deal more success. When the spot was threatened in 2014 due to the construction of a nearby legal skatepark, the community acquired a contract from Nike allocating $10 000 a year to go to maintaining the spot and successfully lobbied to allow skateboarding to continue using a policy of relationship-building between skaters and the local municipal buildings (Chiu & Giamarino, 2019). Similarly, the skate community that frequents the LA Courthouse (see figure 5) sought a private-public partnership, the difference being that theirs has come to fruition. This partnership involved a $10 000 a year grant from Nike for site maintenance and support from local Councilpersons, which they leveraged by selling skateboarding as, “entrepreneurial, creative and competitive” (Chiu & Giiamarino, 2019). Both of these exemplify the skateboarding community’s ability to overcome the perception of oppositionality and garner private funding to support the protection of recreational space.

Figure 5: West LA courthouse (Pangilinan, 2014)
One of the most published success stories involving skateboarding’s ability to resist opposing commercial enterprise and survive in a neoliberal landscape is the Southbank Skatepark (see figure 6) and the work done by the non-profit Long Live Southbank Foundation. Originally not designed as a skatepark, the site’s collection of banks and slopes created a vibrant community geared towards skateboarding, leading it to be lauded as the ‘cultural home’ of British skateboarding (Escobales, 2013). But despite its nearly forty-year history, the site was slated for redevelopment into retail units in early 2013. Of course, the resulting political pushback from the skateboarding community and their supporters was immense. The Long Live Southbank Foundation garnered support in the hundreds of thousands for a petition to preserve Southbank and even gained political allies like Boris Johnson, eventually securing legal protection for Southbank to remain suited to skateboarding permanently (Borden, 2015). In this case, skateboarding demonstrated its cultural value above and beyond more typical commercial enterprises. The argument for the community values that skateboarding embodies won out against a potential for property owners to maximize profits, but skateboarders from the same community have also offered their support to decidedly corporate initiatives as well.

Figure 6: Southbank Skatepark (Ka, 2013)
In 2010, skate-shoe multinational Vans opened a 2500m² public-access skatepark in the Southbank area (Borden, 2015). Typically, corporate sponsored skateparks are looked down upon by the skateboarding community at large who see them as large corporations looking to take advantage of skaters for solely their own benefit (Beal, 2013; Borden, 2015; Borden 2019). However, the House of Vans was able to thrive even in a skateboarding community that has as long a history as that of Southbank due to a policy of direct community engagement and growth (Borden, 2015). From the House of Vans example, it is evident to see the complex web of commercialization and community engagement in which skateboarding hangs. It is entirely likely that the House of Vans would not have been successful without the forty-year skateboarding legacy that was preserved by the Long Live Southbank Foundation. Yet just as likely, the House of Vans would have been rejected by the skateboarding community if it did not engage in a careful campaign aimed at giving back to the people that patronize the company.

Unlike the above researchers, Becky Beal’s work shows that not all skateboarding research takes such a rosy view of the effect of capitalism and neoliberalism on both the culture and built realm of skateboarding. After a study involving the relationship between various commercializing agencies and three California skateparks, Beal expressed concern about the neoliberal ideology in that, “being a ‘good citizen’ is equated with individual rather than collective or state responsibility” (Beat et al. 2017, 22). In spite of this view, the research uncovered some of the ways in which private stakeholders and community leaders can work together for the well-being and health of their communities. For example, they can fund and facilitate public space for ethnic minorities in the case of Oakland Park, or function as gang prevention in the case of Bay Area Skatepark (Beal et al., 2018) Unfortunately, it seems that the system of “leaner, meaner government” is still to blame for opening up public recreational space to the possibility of
corruption through the potential ulterior motives private stakeholders (Beal et al., 2017, 20). There seems to be genuine opportunities for private stakeholders to simultaneously appear philanthropic and contribute to the development of underprivileged communities, but the author’s expression of concern is still valid. At the moment no research has come to light that explicitly outlines a case in which private stakeholders have used the clout gained by funding public recreational space to negatively impact a community. In all likelihood, any case of that sort of private corruption would exist in a haze of conflicting interests and hidden consequences, and thus be very difficult to uncover in the context of short-term academic research. However, this notion makes the subject all the more interesting and thus all the more appropriate for further research.

Another threat to skateboarding’s subculture of oppositionality is the tendency for large companies to co-opt skateboarding identities for their own financial gain. There are those that see commercialized events, like the X-Games, as forces that undermine the creative expression of skateboarding culture and “suck any dissent right back into conventional marketing strategies” (Lorr, 2005). Others are less opposed to the idea, arguing that further legitimization means more skateboarders can turn their skills into a viable career (Beal, 2004). Beal found that skaters from an older generation are generally more opposed to commercialization, while younger skaters see the potential for sponsorship and employment as worth the risks to skateboarding’s identity as a whole (2004). The implications of these findings provides an opportunity for further research and are reflective of a changing attitude among skateboarders, and the relationship between the continued legitimization or commercialization of skateboarding and its capacity to thrive in the neoliberal political landscape provides ample opportunity for further research.
2.4 | CASES AND TECHNIQUES OF ADVOCATING FOR SKATEPARKS

The cases outlined above exemplify several arguments and strategies that community advocates or skateboarders themselves used to support the preservation or expansion of skateparks. The following chart codifies these arguments and strategies for use in the subsequent research. Arguments and strategies were further subdivided based on how the argument or strategy was structured around community improvement, opportunities for funding or their relationship with the planning process.
Table 2.1: Codified arguments and strategies for skatepark advocacy

| COMMUNITY BASED |
|------------------|------------------------------------------|
| **Source**       | **Argument**                            |
| Chiu & Giamarino, 2019 | Community surveillance, or "eyes on the street" |
| Beal et al., 2018 | Gang prevention                         |
| Borden, 2015     | Legacy conservation                     |
| Beal, 2004       | Legitimization of skateboarding as a career opportunity |
| Carr, 2010; Chiu, 2009; Dinces 2011; Tsikalis and Jones, 2018 | Deterrence of unwanted skateboarding outside of skatepark |

| FUNDING BASED |
|------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Chiu & Giamarino, 2019; Escobales, 2013; Borden, 2015 | Partnership with skateboarding related companies (e.g. Nike or Vans) |
| Howell, 2009     | Capacity to engage sponsors and supplement municipal funding |
| Howell, 2009     | Promotion of entrepreneurialism in young people |

| PLANNING BASED |
|------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Chiu & Giamarino 2019; Vivoni, 2009 | Subversion of typical planning process, where the activity of skateboarding precedes skatepark planning |
2.5 | A CONTEXTUALISATION OF NEOLIBERALISM IN CANADA

In order to complete this literature review, there is an additional question that still needs to be answered. For instance, most of the literature here focuses on neoliberalism in the United States, and since the research will concern the cities of Guelph and Hamilton, there must be additional literature review that covers neoliberalism in Canada and its effect on local municipalities. This is not meant to bridge the gap between skateboarding and neoliberalism in Canada, that is the purpose of this research, and will not cover skateboarding specifically. Instead, it will cover a brief history of recent Canadian economic policy.

Since the term itself is an analytical concept rather than a distinguishable mode of government such as an autocracy, for example, or a political stance such as conservatism, it can be difficult to determine when and to what degree the term applies to a given government. Rather, it is easier to look at shifts in policy to determine if the term applies, instead of trying to paint an entire administration or political party as neoliberal. Thus, this section will examine the literature on recent examples of Canadian social policy and attempt to determine if the term can be applied to the recent or current political landscape. It is by no means an exhaustive list of legislation regarding social policies, but a study of those which highlight the flux of major social assistance thinking in the last three decades.

According to the work examined here, there is some debate as to exactly when and during which political events neoliberalist policies began to overshadow the earlier Keynesian economic philosophy, yet most agree that Canadian social policies have by-and-large shifted toward neoliberalism starting from the 1980s (Brodie, 2010; Finkel, 2006; Sossin, 1998; Siddiqi et. al. 2013). These changes were partly in response to the economic downturn of the 1970s,
and partly as a result of the rhetoric employed by social elites who had been arguing against the welfare state since the inception of postwar Keynesian policy. These groups blamed Keynesian policy for the slowing of the Canadian economy, which they argued was only sustainable in the booming postwar era (Brodie, 2010; Finkel, 2006). Whether or not their argument holds true in retrospect, the rhetoric gained momentum and ushered in what Canadian economists view as the neoliberal era via changes in federal commitments to social assistance, support for healthcare and the Ontario provincial government’s level of commitment to municipal funding, each of which will be examined below.

At the outset of this era, the government under Pierre Trudeau was concerned with controlling the rate of inflation and tried to control it by restricting the minimum wage and setting limits on health-care spending (Finkel, 2006). However, these efforts failed to stem inflation, and the subsequent Mulroney government took cut-backs a step further. Mulroney’s strategy was backed up by the Nielsen Task Force on Programme Review, which was tasked with discovering how to more economically and efficiently spend taxpayer money (Clark, 2002). Originally, they reduced spending on pension plans, but this backfired when senior population - a large portion of the Mulroney government’s supporters - pushed back on these cuts (Finkel, 2006). To appease his base, Mulroney reversed his position on pension plans and decided to make 2% yearly cuts to the Established Programs Financing, a Trudeau healthcare initiative, instead (Finkel, 2006). By the end of the 1980s federal governments had balanced the budget, but at the cost of social programs (Brodie, 2010; Finkel, 2006).

Another of the most important policy changes of this era is the Canadian Health and Social Transfer (CHST), a major block transfer payment enacted in 1996 (Brodie, 2010). This policy
saw the federal government shed responsibility to guarantee social assistance to Canadians in need that was put into place by the Canadian Assistance Plan of 1966. Instead, provinces received a grant from the federal government and were themselves responsible for providing this assistance (Brodie, 2010; Sossin, 1998). In effect, this reduced the total funding available for post-secondary education, unemployment insurance and social assistance programs, as well as widening the gap in “health inequality” between social classes (Brodie, 2010; Siddiqi et. al., 2013; Sossin, 1998). By substituting a responsive, flexible commitment of social assistance funding to provincial governments with a lump sum, the CHST aimed to cut back on spending while simultaneously appearing to support social programs. This tactic is typical practice during the neoliberal era and is indicative of a neoliberal philosophy.

In addition to major federal level policy changes, neoliberal philosophies were also making headway during this period at the provincial and municipal level. Roger Keil cites the Mike Harris government as a major factor in extending the lifespan of neoliberal policy-making (2002). He describes their rhetoric as internally contradictory in that they garner voter support by selling themselves as advocates for small government while intervening extensively in existing policies regarding public schools, healthcare and social assistance programs (Keil, 2002). Harris’ push towards neoliberalism was facilitated by conservative Toronto mayor Mel Lastman, in a period between 1997 and 2000, whose cooperation with the provincial government allowed political restructuring to trickle down to the municipal level (Keil, 2002). Keil’s stance is highly critical of conservatives and associates these administrations with the rise of neoliberalism in Canada, but others argue that even center and left-leaning governments have passed neoliberal legislation in Canada since the 1980s. (Brodie, 2010; Clark, 2002; Finkel, 2006).
According to Brodie, the neoliberal era ended in Canada in the mid-1990s (2010). However, the concept of cutting social programs and replacing them with a lump-sum cheque is a precedent that neoliberal policy shifts can still emulate today. For example, the changes to the Development Charges Act in 2018 reflect this attitude, and directly affect funding for public recreational space. For a full explanation, see sections 5.1.3.2 and 6.1.3.
CHAPTER 3 | THE CURRENT STUDY

3.1 | PROBLEM
Skatepark construction continues to rise in southern Ontario. This is likely because they fulfill a need that traditional recreational space like baseball and soccer fields fail to meet: skateparks are better suited to cater to adolescents (Hung, 2018). Yet because of skateboarding’s subversive culture and a cultural reluctance to fund youth activities, their value in the community is often called into question. In southern Ontario skateparks are most often completed with municipal funds, but sometimes receive primary funding from developer fees as part of a master planned community. Additionally, the skateboarding community’s tendency to foster entrepreneurialism and self-reliance means that skateparks often receive the help of advocacy groups and community initiatives in the development process. Given the complex and diverse means by which skateparks are developed, there is a need to examine the consequences of these means and determine which are most beneficial to the design process, the skatepark’s value in the community and the skateboarders themselves.

3.2 | RESEARCH GOAL
The goal of this research is to explore opportunities for funding skateparks and the impact that source of funding will have on the project.

3.3 | RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Where does the funding for skateparks in Hamilton Ontario come from, and how does the sponsor affect the project?

2. Who can successfully advocate for the improvement of skateboarding facilities in Hamilton, Ontario, and what strategies are best?
While undergoing this research, these questions may also prove relevant: Who is able to successfully garner funding and support for skateparks in Hamilton? Why are the design strategies in the case studies successful?

3.4 | RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Review existing research on skateparks and how they exist in a neoliberal political framework.

2. Identify alternative modes of public skatepark funding from the literature.

3. Examine the breadth of funding behind the case study sites and identify the stakeholders behind that funding.

4. Examine the strategies used by skateboarding advocates to garner public support and navigate the approval and planning processes.

5. Outline the strategies used by landscape architects and planners that led to the success of the skateparks in Hamilton.
CHAPTER 4 | METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach was most suitable to this study because it allows for a more complete comparison of skatepark funding alternatives, specifically municipal versus developer funding. Since the cost of various projects differs, a direct comparison of actual funds and their respective sources would not inform the question at hand. The research design was constructed to determine the means by which each skatepark was funded and how the source of the funding impacted the design process. These methods include semi-structured key informant interviews and secondary-data analysis.

4.1 | CASE STUDY APPROACH

The case study approach has been selected because it allows the researcher to focus on a case of a specific type, instead of engaging in a statistical analysis. Since the alternative funding of skateparks is statistically less common than funding by a municipal tax base, the case study approach is most appropriate because it allows for a, “purposive sample,” of skateparks (Van den Brink et. al., 2016, p. 108). The two methods of analysis attempted here are meant to provide a, “richer but not necessarily more precise outcome” (Van den Brink, 2016, 111). They expand the scope of this research by allowing the researcher to compare two representations of each case study. By comparing across cases and across the two modes of analysis, the relationship between advocacy for skateparks in Hamilton and the funding those parks receive will come into focus.

4.2.1 | CASE STUDY SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

Cases were selected to provide a, “purposive sample,” as described above. Therefore, the criteria for selection was: (1) A variety in majority funding sources from municipal tax base to developer fees, (2) concentration of each site in a single municipality, (3) interest within
Hamilton for development of future skateparks in Valley Park and Alexander Park areas, (4) availability and willingness of key informants, (5) the need for research on alternative funding for skateparks in Canada, (6) feasibility of transportation to Hamilton from University of Guelph, (7) comparable skatepark size, ranging from community sized to city sized according to 2017 LANDinc Hamilton Skateboarding Study.

4.2 | SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

The first method was secondary data analysis, which was used to provide an unobtrusive way to supplement and inform the primary research (Goodwin, 2012). This method allowed for the collection of a variety of different sources and highlight perspectives that would not have been allowed under the key informant interviews. Other sources include online newspaper articles, webpages for crowd funding initiatives, web posts from Hamilton ward councilors, scholarly journal articles and the 2017 LANDinc Hamilton Skateboarding Study.

These were collected via online searches in Google and Primo, and were gathered from email correspondence with City of Hamilton staff. These were then analyzed in an online webapp called Saturate, where key concepts were coded into separate categories based on key themes found in the literature. This method also allowed for key themes recognized by the researcher that did not emerge from the literature.

This data was converted into comma separated files, or CSV Microsoft Excel files, which allowed the researcher to sort and quantify the results.

4.3 | KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

The second method chosen was semi-structured key informant interviews. The purpose of this method is to find inside information on the topic and, “yield rich and relevant data’ (Deming &
Swaffield, 2011). This method was appropriate for the case study approach because it provides data that is, “rich and robust” (Deming & Swaffield, 2011). A series of five questionnaires were developed due to the diverse roles and responsibilities that the respondents had in each project. It was not suitable to provide the same questionnaire to each key informant because there were some important questions that needed to be asked of respondents specific to their personal role in the respective skatepark project. These questions would not have been relevant to other key informants. This method also allowed the researcher to ask novel follow up questions as the interview unfolded.

Key informants were contacted via email and were informed as to the goals and objectives of this study, and asked for permission to record the conversation, prior to the interview. Informants were selected based on knowledge of the case studies, association with organizations different from other interviewees, willingness, availability and were often found via the, “snowballing method” (Deming & Swaffield, 2011). This involves earlier key informants suggesting subsequent interviewees that the researcher has not yet contacted. In one case, the researcher received the contact information for KI6 and KI7 from KI4.

Interviews were conducted in person and over telephone. In person, the interviews were recorded on a Samsung Galaxy A5 phone with the Samsung Voice Recorder App. Telephone interviews were conducted on the same phone, but were recorded over speakerphone with a Shure SM137 condenser microphone running through a Steingberg UR22 mkII audio interface into the Cubase Digital Audio Workstation on an Apple MacBook Pro laptop. In both cases, the recording was uploaded to an online transcription service, otter.ai, which converted the audio to text. The text required some correction on the part of the researcher.
The text was then transferred over to Saturate. There it underwent the same coding process as the secondary data, where key concepts were coded into separate categories based on key themes found in the literature.

See an expanded flowchart of methodology on the next page.
Figure 7: Expanded methodology flowchart
CHAPTER 5 | RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This chapter highlights the secondary data analysis and codifies the results from the key informant interviews and briefly describes the physical characteristics and history of the sites, with each case presented in sequence. The secondary data analysis was codified according to the strategies and techniques of advocating for skateparks identified in the literature review. Because each case is implemented under different circumstances and the skatepark projects outlined in the literature review were located outside of Canada, additional strategies were identified and found to be successful in the case studies. These are described below.

5.1 | BEASLEY PARK

5.1.1 | HISTORY

The researcher was not able to determine exactly when skateboarding began at Beasley Park, except to say that in the late seventies or early eighties Hamilton skateboarders appropriated a public wading pool for their own uses. Similar to the concrete backyard pools of Southern California, this pool was deeper and more contoured than usual and lent itself to skateboarding in an unexpected way (Orpana, 2015).

In Orpana’s academic paper on Beasley, he mentions several additions and improvements to the park that were not contributed to or sanctioned by the City of Hamilton. The first of which includes, “parking blocks, garbage cans and other elements,” added to the original wading pool (Orpana, 2015, 155). In 1992, the City officially recognized Beasley as a municipal skatepark. This led to the addition of several ramps and a large concrete pad surrounding the pool, giving it the general shape that it retains currently. A quarter pipe was also added, but reportedly it was installed incorrectly with very steep transition, which earned it the colloquial name, the “widow maker” (Orpana, 2015).
In 2013, the City began the planning process for sweeping updates to the park, which, once completed in 2018, involved a new half pipe (in the vernacular of skateboarding this would likely be called a mini-ramp, with transition walls that are roughly 1.8m high. What is known as a half pipe usually has walls that are 6m to 7m high), a pyramid, a unique ‘teardrop feature’, a bank-to-ledge feature and a general resurfacing of the concrete at the park. The process involved consultations with local skateboarders, including those in the Hamilton Skateboarding Assembly, who advocated for retaining the original wading pool and some other features. The final construction tender for these improvements cost approximately 1.4 million dollars, not including the consulting fees of OMC Landscape Architecture and Canadian Ramp Company.
### 5.1.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**SITE 1 - BEASLEY PARK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Site Conditions</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>96 Mary Street, Hamilton ON</td>
<td>No vertical barriers from sidewalk to park. Good circulation to adjacent splash pad and street. Near to residential areas, downtown and transit stops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square footage</td>
<td>16 000 ft²</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td>Sloping slightly eastward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Municipal tax base and community DIY improvements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade</td>
<td>Adjacent trees offer shade on Northern side only</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Street parking. No dedicated parking</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti/street art</td>
<td>Graffiti and street art on skateable features throughout the park.</td>
<td>Old splashpad converted to bowl is central to park flow. 5-Sided pyramid next to quarter-pipe “island” feature dominates the middle of park. New mini-ramp at north side of park is larger than average, but not so big as to discourage beginners. The whole park slopes slightly toward bank-to-ledge/stair feature at East end of park.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Images by Sam Heaman*
5.1.3 | SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

Seven separate themes or strategies of advocating for park improvement were identified during the analysis of secondary data for Beasley Park. These were used to shed light onto the question: Who can successfully advocate for the improvement of skateboarding facilities in Hamilton, Ontario, and what strategies are best?

The first theme was community building, which came up in the secondary data in relation to Beasley Park as a community hub. The second theme was the promotion of skateboarding culture, which was identified as important to Hamilton in the 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study. Third was the general need or demand for improvement to the park, which was identified as a result of the park’s age. Fourth was the capacity for a skatepark to foster entrepreneurialism in skateboarders, which was noticed in the initiative skateboarders had to find their own ways of gathering funding. Fifth was legacy conservation, which appeared in the rhetoric of news articles that highlighted the park’s history. Sixth was local business support, which noticed by the researcher in the relationship between a local ‘skate shop’ and the skateboarders who frequent Beasley Park. And finally, the seventh was the promotion of youth health, which is a common strategy used in advocating for skateparks.
Table 5.1: Strategies for skatepark advocacy in secondary data regarding Beasley Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency in secondary data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community building</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skateboarding culture</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need / demand</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering entrepreneurialism</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy conservation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative funding</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.1.3.1 COMMUNITY BUILDING

According to the Hamilton Spectator’s Code Red Project, the Beasley neighbourhood is designated as a ‘Code Red’ neighbourhood (Buist et. al., 2010). This means that the average life expectancy in this neighbourhood is 20 years less than in the average life expectancy for Hamilton, and that this is likely tied to economic disparity (Pecoskie, 2014). Factors like poverty, working class and health and aging were found to contribute to this statistic in a follow up article by DeLuca & Kanaroglou (2015). These factors were also linked with mental illness and were shown to be more impactful than health care considerations. To mitigate these issues, the study recommended investing in early childhood development and education (DeLuca & Kanaroglou, 2015). Given the vulnerability of this neighbourhood, it is logical that writers examined in the
secondary data see community building and economic development as an important consideration for the area.

In recounting a skateboarding competition held at Beasley Park in 2012, CBC Journalist Adam Carter described the competition as a way to, “bring people together” (Carter, 2012), while noting that the prizes in the competition were secondary to the community building goals. The same article also quoted Peter Hanson, a member of the Hamilton Skateboarding Association as saying that, “we want to be part of the community on the grassroots level” (Carter, 2012).

Another member of the Hamilton Skateboarding Association, Simon Orpana, wrote an article in the 2015 book *Skateboarding: Subcultures, Sites and Shifts* highlighting Beasley Park and its community building capacity. Here, he highlighted the proximity of the park to other community amenities such as, “the downtown police headquarters, a prison, several homeless shelters, soup kitchens, a hospital, and (until 2013) a mosque” (Orpana, 2015). Carter also mentioned the proximity of the park to the Beasley Community Center (Carter, 2012).

As this evidence shows, the park is central to the community both physically and metaphorically. It is evident that journalists and community activists see the park’s community building capacity as a useful strategy in advocating for the park’s improvement.

### 5.1.3.2 SKATEBOARDING CULTURE

The secondary data showed strong evidence for the importance of skateboarding culture in advocating for improvements at Beasley Park. The 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study by LANDinc describes skateboarding in Hamilton as being, “a uniquely strong skate scene, grounded by the passion and pride in the Beasley Skatepark” (LANDinc, 2017). Furthermore, the study highlighted the DIY construction of several features at Beasley and argued that this was in line with the tenets of, “true skate culture” (LANDinc, 2017).
Carter also mentions the importance Beasley Park in comparison to other parks in Hamilton. In the coverage of the competition, he notes that each skater interviewed viewed Beasley Park as, “integral to skateboarding culture in Hamilton” (Carter, 2012).

It is also worth mentioning that Beasley Park is labeled as a Youth and Heritage Cultural Site, according to the Hamilton Spectator (Van Dongen, 2017). Based on the evidence, the data suggest that presenting Beasley Park as a cultural site that protects and promotes Hamilton as a unique skateboarding city is effective in advocating for the skatepark’s improvement.

5.1.3.3 I NEED / DEMAND

Unlike the other sites, the theme of need or demand for skateparks revolved around updating and improving the facility rather than expanding or creating new skateparks. In an article chronicling a DIY update of the park in 2010, Carmelina Prete of the Hamilton Spectator noted that “the Beaz needs a facelift” (Prete, 2010). She mentions the cracked concrete and calls the park, “tired looking,” especially when compared to the much newer and nicer Turner Park (Prete, 2010).

Another Hamilton Spectator article on the 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study shows concern about the state of Beasley Skatepark at the time. The article also notes the, “beloved-but-crumbling concrete,” and quotes a local skateboarder as saying, “so many young kinds are getting into the sport” (Van Dongen, 2017). That same local skater also noted that the closest skatepark to Beasley, Turner Park, is over 12km. Furthermore, the article quotes the study as stating that, “the improvements are long overdue” (Van Dongen, 2017). It is notable that this author uses the 2017 study to justify the improvements of the historic skatepark, even though the official process for improving the park began in 2013.
The secondary data shows that the poor upkeep of Beasley Park is associated with the need or demand for city funding in the park and the authors use this concept to promote its improvement.

5.1.3.4 | FOSTERING ENTREPRENUERIALISM

Entrepreneurialism is a key theme identified in the literature, particularly from the paper by notable skateboarding researcher Ocean Howell. It appeared in the secondary data related to Beasley Park in the form of a phone application and a crowd-sourced funding opportunity on indiegogo.com (similar to the more widely known gofundme.com).

A local skateboarder from Ancaster, Ontario, Sean Corrigan was part of a team that developed an app that catalogued sites for skateboarding and BMX across the GTA. He also put forth a petition to begin a skatepark project in his local Ancaster, and was involved in the DIY resurfacing of Beasley Park (Van Dongen, 2017). The author’s choice to highlight the achievements and initiative of this youth shows how skateboarding’s capacity to foster entrepreneurialism is a key strategy for the advocacy of skateparks and their improvement.

Another example of entrepreneurialism related to Beasley Park is a crowd-sourced funding drive put forth by Derek LaPierre, the head of the Hamilton Skateboarding Association, in 2012. In the text behind this drive, LaPierre acknowledges the City’s intention to provide funding for park improvements, but voices a desire to have it happen, “SOONER rather than later,” and wants to make sure, “the City will have no reason to delay” (LaPierre, 2012). The diversity of skateboarders, both young and old, who take the initiative to find funds and make improvements to public skateboarding facilities shows that skateboarding’s capacity to foster entrepreneurialism is a key strategy for advocating for skateparks.
5.1.3.5 | LEGACY CONSERVATION

Being as old as it is, it is not surprising that the importance of legacy conservation emerged as a key theme in advocating for the improvement of Beasley Park. The importance of diverse users of multiple generations was made explicit in the article noted above when Carter quoted Hamilton Skateboarding Association chair, Derek LaPierre, as saying, “there’s guys in their forties, kids in their twenties, and then the young grommets there” (Carter, 2012). This goes against the typical view of skateboarding as an activity that only appeals to youths. Indeed, in a phenomenon discussed later in this chapter, it also highlights the unique capacity of Beasley Park to attract a more diverse ridership than Turner Park. This is further confirmed by another HSA member, Simon Orpana, who stated, “there’s a culture of sharing in between generations – you don’t get that everywhere” (Carter, 2012).

Orpana himself published a paper on the economic and cultural history of Beasley Park, in which he lauded the park as harboring a, “pedagogical relationship, with several generations of skateboarders learning from each other” (Orpana, 2015, 159). While his chronicling of the park’s history was intended as an academic paper for the partial completion of a master’s degree at McMaster University, it exemplifies the extent to which a park’s legacy can be presented as a strategy for advocating its improvement.

5.1.3.6 | LOCAL BUSINESS SPONSORSHIP

Only one example of alternative funding for Beasley Park appeared in the secondary data, but it is worth identifying as a key theme because of the commonality of relationships between skateboarding businesses and the spaces in which the sport is performed.

In a CBC online article journalist Samantha Craggs acknowledged a local skateboarding shop, Flatspot, would be contributing $1000 to improvements at Beasley Park. The funds were the
result of winning an international competition between skateboarding shops in five different countries intended to find the, “world’s best skateshops” (Craggs, 2012). It is worth noting that to win the contest, Trevor Rowan, the shop’s owner, submitted a video filmed at another skatepark in Waterdown, but believed that the funds were best used to make improvements at his, “favourite skate spot…for Rowan that is the Beasley skate park” (Craggs, 2012).

As noted above, it is quite common for local businesses to support the development of skateparks financially (Beal & Wilson, 2014; Beal, et.al, 2011; Borden, 2015; Escobales, 2013; Taylor & Khan, 2011; Wheaton, 2010). Thus, it is quite likely there are more examples of local business support/alternative funding for Beasley that the researcher could not find or were not documented through secondary data.

5.1.3.7 | YOUTH HEALTH

There were only two example of secondary data that specifically mentioned youth health as a means of advocating for skatepark improvement at Beasley Park. This may be because the idea of skateparks as a healthy outlet is already understood and simply not newsworthy.

Both these articles were written about the 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study, but also about Beasley’s centrality to the skate culture of Hamilton. In an online CBC article on Beasley Park’s, Sarah Peterson states that wheeled sports, “support skill development — including social and academic skills — as well as a healthy lifestyle” (Peterson, 2017). This theme also appears in a Hamilton Spectator article where it highlights the changing attitude the public holds towards skateparks and skateboarding, stating that unlike in previous years, “parents and community members are asking for skate parks to give youth a healthy, active outlet” (Van Dongen, 2017).

Another possible reason as to why youth health did not come up as often as expected in the secondary data is because it is not a phenomenon unique to skateboarding. Unlike this theme,
skateboarding may have an increased capacity to foster entrepreneurialism, bring the community together, create a unique culture and conserve the legacy of that culture.

5.1.4 | KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

This section describes the results from the key informant interviews and, where the secondary data analysis was meant to answer primarily the second research question, this method was used to answer both research questions. In summary these were, (1) where does funding for Hamilton parks come from and how does this affect the design and (2) who can successfully advocate for skateparks and what strategies are most effective. The results pertaining to each question with be divided into separate sections.

For comparison’s sake, the section on advocacy will also identify key themes on advocacy that emerged in the interviews and quantify these themes in charts like those in the previous section. The section on funding will take on a narrative style in order to tell the narrative of how funding was secured for each case study. These results will be amalgamated and interpreted in the following chapter.

In total, seven key informants were interviewed. These were selected based on their involvement with the planning, design, financing or community engagement of the three case studies. They were also selected based on availability and willingness to engage with the research. Their titles and backgrounds are described in the following chart, listed in chronological order of interview.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Informant</th>
<th>Profession/Background</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KI1</td>
<td>Landscape architect for OMC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI2</td>
<td>Landscape architect for LANDinc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI3</td>
<td>City landscape architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI4</td>
<td>City landscape architect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI5</td>
<td>HSA former secretary and current member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI6</td>
<td>City recreation supervisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KI7</td>
<td>Skatepark designer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.1.4.1 ADVOCACY TECHNIQUES FROM KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

This section describes the key themes for skateboard park advocacy that emerged in the key informant interviews regarding Beasley Park. To quantify this data, the researcher identified each key theme as a single instance when the interviewee spoke about that theme in a discrete answer to the respective questions asked by the researcher. This means that, unlike the secondary data, it is possible for a single interview to yield multiple instances of a single key theme. This is noted in the “Frequency in the KI interviews” section of the following chart.
Table 5.3: Key themes for skatepark advocacy in key informant data regarding Beasley Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency in KI interviews</th>
<th>Respondent key informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community design</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>KI1, KI3, KI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need / demand</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>KI1, KI3, KI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skateboarding culture</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>KI1, KI3, KI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community building</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>KI1, KI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy conservation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>KI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban redevelopment</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>KI5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth health</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KI1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The context and direct quote from the instances of each key theme in the KI interviews that qualified it as relevant to the theme will be discussed in the following sections. They are also described here to provide rich and robust information from this data.

Five out of seven key themes in this section were also present in the secondary data, and two new themes emerged: community design and urban redevelopment. Community design emerged as interviewees often highlighted the importance of community involvement in the design process. This did not emerge in the secondary data because the sources were not written from a design perspective, but five out of seven key informants have a design background. Urban redevelopment emerged in the data from one key informant only, because this concept was of particular interest to this key informant and was relevant to the respondent’s personal area of study.
5.1.4.1.1 | COMMUNITY DESIGN

Among all the case studies, community design was either the most frequent or second most frequent key theme to emerge from the key informant interviews. In particular, the respondents spoke of the important role that the Hamilton Skateboarding Assembly played in the redesign of Beasley Park. This may not have been an advocacy technique used to promote the redesign, according to the secondary data. However, based on the frequency and fervor with which the respondents spoke about this theme, it is potentially an effective technique for advocating for skatepark improvement and development and thus worth including in this section.

KI 1, a landscape architect from the primary consulting firm responsible for the redevelopment, described the HSA as, “one of the very best community groups that we’ve ever worked with.” The respondent praised the group as being, “absolutely essential in every design meeting,” even noting that they were involved in the site analysis and feature testing processes. According to KI1, members of the HSA directly intervened in the design process providing, “sketches to kind of illustrate what they wanted.” The KI worked closely with the HSA and was enthusiastic about the organization’s impact on the park. From the City of Hamilton’s perspective, according to KI3, a member of Hamilton’s Landscape Architectural Services, community design was pivotal to the success of the park. So much so that, when asked about the HSA’s involvement, KI3 noted that, “the success of the park really is attributed to them.” These comments indicate the necessity of the community design process at Beasley Park.

The next respondent, KI5, takes this concept one step further and implies that community involvement was not a reaction to the designer’s interest in community design, but rather a result of their own initiative, which began far before the redevelopment project began in 2014. As a former secretary and current member of the HSA, KI5 was able to further recount the history of community design at Beasley. Before 2014, “the HSA was already working with the
city, and the city was dropping off like Jersey barriers.” Jersey barriers are a common feature in street skateboarding and their donation by the city represents what KI5 called, “a collaborative DIY project.” These comments are instrumental in telling the story of Beasley Park. They show that for a park with as long a history as Beasley, the processes of advocacy, planning and design overlap significantly.

5.1.4.1.2 | NEED / DEMAND

The cases of need/demand for a skatepark improvement regarding Beasley fell into two categories. The first is the need for improvements based on the park’s age and resultant state of disrepair. The second is based on the economic and social disparity of the Beasley neighbourhood (ward 2) compared to the rest of Hamilton.

A common view among interviewees was that the facilities at Beasley before the 2018 redevelopment were in need of repair. KI1 acknowledge the difficulty of repairing the wading pool/bowl feature, stating that it was, “a lot more challenging than just building a brand new one.” Of course, the skateboarders at Beasley were interested in preserving not just the legacy of the park, but also the historic features.

In a joint venture by The Hamilton Spectator and McMaster University, ward 2 was designated as a ‘Code Red’ neighbourhood. According to KI1, this means that, “the life expectancy of people Code Red is twenty years less than the suburbs. There’s high rates of poverty, substance abuse, there’s more pollution, a whole bunch of issues.” This designation was a driving factor in the selection of Beasley Park as a necessary redevelopment project. KI3 noted that this term is used by journalists, not an official city term. However, it did, “cast a light on some neighbourhoods that were challenged.” In response, the city developed a Neighbourhood Action Strategy Team, “who looked at several neighbourhoods and worked with the community.”
The resulting report listed the redevelopment of Beasley Park as an important means of revitalizing the community (City of Hamilton, 2013). In response to the expanding skatepark facilities across Hamilton, KI1 noted that, “I would be disappointed if they built a big brand new skatepark in the suburbs and ignored Beasley.” This report, and the respondent’s awareness of the socioeconomic standing of ward 2, highlight the neighbourhood’s economic need as a technique for skatepark advocacy.

One instance where the data from key informants overlapped with the literature was on the issue of skateboarding in the streets. KI5 acknowledged that during the original considerations before Beasley was made into an official public skatepark in 1992, “there was a problem with people skateboarding in the streets and citizens complaining.” This is consistent with typical advocacy techniques for skateparks found in the literature (Hung, 2018).

5.1.4.1.3 | SKATEBOARDING CULTURE

As a skateboarder and member of the HSA, KI5 was highly concerned with the preservation and promotion of skateboarding culture in Hamilton and believed that this was an important means of skatepark advocacy. The respondent also believed that this culture was valued by the city, despite skateboarding’s history of oppositionality. Regarding the increase in skateparks across Ontario, KI5 believes that, “the whole skatepark phenomenon is kind of like incorporation of skateboarding into the mainstream.” This incorporation is contrary to the former relationship that skateboarders had with cities, once characterized by KI5 as, “a rebellious, countercultural practice.” However, the perception of the sport has shifted into what KI5 calls, “organic street culture.” In effect, skateboarding has gone from, “being public enemy number one…into being like a sort of celebrated part of the culture.”
Though respondents KI1 and KI3 are not skateboarders, they share KI5’s view of skateboarding culture as valuable to the urban fabric of Hamilton. In their view, the visual art that goes hand in hand with skateboarding offers something unique. To support this, they discussed a phenomenon that is sometimes contentious: urban art or graffiti. In fact, the difference between the terms was discussed by KI1 when he stated:

“In the case of Beasley, I know there was a team that was looking at trying to find a definition, which is very difficult because there are some items that are put there with thought. And if it’s put there with thought, and generally accepted by the community, it’s deemed urban art.”

According to KI3, the spray painting on the skateboarding features at Beasley would fall into the category of urban art, because it is sanctioned by the community in a, “big event, like a tournament, where people come and refresh the paint or they do different motifs on it depending on the year.” Here, spray painting is considered a part of the culture.

KI3 takes the notion of skateboarding culture as improving the urban fabric when the respondent refers to the physical features of the skatepark as a, “beautiful curve. This curve goes all around. It’s just a work of art.” It must be noted that KI3’s firm was involved in the design of the features in question, but the spirit of this description, that skateparks themselves are beautiful, can be taken as a means of skatepark advocacy.

5.1.4.1.4 | COMMUNITY BUILDING

Once again concerned with the culture of skateboarding, KI5 argues that by its very nature skateboarding has a way of promoting community building, stating that, “skateboarding is sort of grassroots originally, like it’s a sort of working class or underclass sport.” The respondents mention of ‘grassroots’ reveals that skateboarding, particularly in the case of Beasley, has emerged organically from the community’s individual socioeconomic position. Further, KI5 recounts his own position in the HSA at the outset of the redesign process in 2014, where the
respondent was communicating with the Beasley Neighbourhood Association. KI5 describes his role as, “being a liaison between the two groups and building a closer relationship because the association really like the skateboarders.” This shows not only that skateboarders in this project took direct action to build relationships in the community, but also that the community was open and receptive to skateboarders in their neighbourhood.

In addition to improving relationships between official neighbourhood groups, the presence of the skatepark and skateboarders at Beasley were able to improve relations between individual citizens. KI1 brought up the annual Skate Jam as an agent of community building and mentions that it can promote Beasley as a destination. According to KI1, the HSA will hold, “community events that bring people from outside of Hamilton to their annual event. I know skaters visit from other places. I think it’s pretty positive.” KI1’s portrayal as Beasley as a tourist destination is a potent indicator for Beasley Park’s potential as a means of community building.

5.1.4.1.5 | LEGACY CONSERVATION

While not as prevalent as a means of skatepark advocacy when compared to those found in the secondary data, data from KI5, the only skateboarder interviewed, shows that this respondent was very enthusiastic about the legacy of the park.

In an effort to confirm the notion that Beasley Park is the oldest skatepark in Ontario, KI5, admittedly without certainty, Beasley is, “the oldest skatepark on the Eastern seaboard.” This assertion came with the qualifier that there may be a park that is roughly equal in age in Sarnia, Ontario. Obviously, this means that the legacy of the park is incredibly important to the skateboarders of Hamilton. The importance of the park’s legacy is apparent from KI5’s concerns over Beasley’s redevelopment. The respondent stated that, “originally the City was going to tear up the old park and just put a brand-new park in, and nobody wanted that. Nobody wanted that
because they had so much invested in it and plus the history of the place.” According to KI5, the park’s legacy is tied into its physical make up because, “It’s not simply that it’s downtown and not suburban, but that does shape the character of it. But it’s also the way the architecture of the park preserves the history of skateboarding.” Here, KI5 is referring to the history of skateboarders appropriating terrain not meant for skateboarding. The skaters at Beasley appropriated the wading pool for skateboarding, similarly to skaters in California appropriating backyard pools. Thus, the history surrounding Beasley allows the skateboarders here to approach skatepark advocacy from a unique perspective.

5.1.4.1.6 | URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

As a current professor at the University of Alberta and former secretary for the HSA, KI5 was able to offer a nuanced perspective on Beasley that, like the issue of urban art vs graffiti, can be interpreted positively and negatively. That is the dichotomous issue of urban redevelopment vs. gentrification. While broaching this subject, KI5 argued that these subjects are two names for the same phenomenon and acknowledge that skateparks contribute to both its positive and negative aspects. According to KI5, part of the motivation for the city to redevelop the park was to, “make it more attractive to condo developers.” The respondent compared skateboarders to artist communities being used as a, “frontline of gentrification.” The problematic nature of this phenomenon is summed up in the following:

“There were like councilors and community members who were trying to push that form of urban development, which is also sort of a form of gentrification. And it seems to me like skateboarders kind of fit into that pattern. They were a gritty authentic street culture that would maybe attract young people, then the city was hoping to attract like young investors. At the same time, the skateboarders were under threat of possibly losing the skateboard park or losing the places they like to go because of gentrification, so they were both part of a process of gentrification without even possibly realizing it, and then they were also threatened by that same process.”
From a skateboarder’s perspective, this line of reasoning would not be a good means of skatepark advocacy. However, from the perspective of a municipality looking for a good investment, this is an effective argument. Thus, it is worth noting here.

5.1.4.1.7 | YOUTH HEALTH

Youth health emerged only once as a recognizable form of skatepark advocacy in the key informant data regarding Beasley Park. In reference to the HSA organized Skate Jam, KI1 referred to the contestants as, “getting exercise, like it’s actually an athletic event.” As a means of advocacy, this theme was considered by key informants. However, the low frequency at which it occurred suggests that other means are more effective.

5.1.4.2 | FUNDING SOURCES

The key informant data showed consistent findings regarding funding and its effect on the park as the secondary data. As stated above, the final construction tender for these improvements cost approximately 1.4 million dollars according to information available on City of Hamilton’s website. These funds were provided by the municipality from the tax base.

It is clear that the community of skateboarders and the legacy of the park was more influential in the design of the park than the source of the redevelopment’s funding. Through the HSA’s cooperation with OMCLA and Canadian Ramp Company in the design process and their actions regarding their DIY improvements, they were able to guide the design of the park to their liking. The legacy and historical value of the park make the preservation of the original features the primary factor in its redesign.
5.2 | TURNER PARK

5.2.1 | HISTORY

Before plans to construct a skatepark at Turner Park were solidified the city considered another location in the McQuesten area of Hamilton, but due to a backlash of community opposition to the plans the City had to reconsider (Orpana, 2015). In order to quell fears in the general community of graffiti, drug use and delinquency, the City decided to locate the new skatepark directly adjacent to a police station (Van Dongen, 2017). This strategy apparently worked quite well, as Turner Park plans went ahead without complaint from concerned community advocates.

The exact dollar amount of funding that went into the skatepark is difficult to determine because it was part of a large development project that included a YMCA, public library and parkland. One source quotes the park as costing half a million dollars (Orpana, 2015), while another mentions the library and surrounding amenities cost around 8.7 million (Hamilton Spectator, 2009). Interestingly, some of the city funds that contributed to the park were raised as a result of the City of Hamilton’s sale of the formerly public hydro-electric utility to a private company (Orpana, 2015). In Orpana’s opinion, the legacy of privatization and surveillance adjacency of Turner Park creates a distinct socio-political environment from that of Beasley Park.

Nonetheless, Turner remains a well-used park.

Since its completion in 2009, Turner Park has played host to the annual Cop-Shop Skate Jam, which facilitates a, “positive community presence” (Orpana, 2015). This event and its implications on Turner Park’s presence in the community will be discussed in the following sections.
### 5.2.2 | PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**SITE 2 - TURNER PARK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Site Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>344 Rymal Road East, Hamilton ON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square footage</td>
<td>27,000 ft²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td>Flat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Municipal tax base in conjunction with YMCA project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade</td>
<td>None at the moment. Trees will offer shade on West side once mature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Plenty of parking due to adjacent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti/street art</td>
<td>No graffiti/street art, likely due to adjacent police station</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accessibility</th>
<th>No vertical barriers from sidewalk to park. Close to large residential area, but far from downtown Hamilton.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use / Popularity</td>
<td>Popular due to its size and breadth of modern features</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main features</td>
<td>Expansive park with both street and vert style features. Large, pool-style bowl with adjoining ledges. Hip/pyramid and bank-to-ledge features. 9-stair and 4-stair sets with hubbas and rails. Several flat-ground areas with ledges and banks.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 9: Turner Park characteristics*
5.2.3 | SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

Not all the same themes that were identified as key to the advocacy for Beasley Park were identified in the secondary data on Turner Park. Of the previous seven themes, only four of the same themes were identified: community building, local business support, need/demand and youth health. However, two additional themes were identified as significant to Turner Park that did not appear in the secondary data regarding Beasley Park. These were skatepark size and surveillance.

Another theme that is worth noting is the opinion of Simon Orpana’s concerns over Turner Park’s lack of capacity to promote the subculture of skateboarding. His opinions are not a strategy for advocacy and will not be counted towards the chart below, but they are worth noting as they are a significant argument that emerged from the secondary data on Turner Park.

Table 5.4: Strategies for skatepark advocacy in secondary data regarding Turner Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency in secondary data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community building</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need / demand</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth health</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surveillance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative funding</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skatepark size</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.3.1 COMMUNITY BUILDING

Like the secondary data on Beasley Park, the most prevalent theme identified for the advocacy of Turner Park was community building. However, the apparent goals and effects of the community building strategies were quite different. For example, in a community involvement piece in the Hamilton Spectator, a young user writes in to tell the paper about the benefits of having the skatepark in the neighbourhood. The piece focuses on the police presence as a positive, explaining that, “the police hold fun events throughout the year.” (Hamilton Spectator, 2009). She also argues that the park is used by, “all ages – parents, boys and girls included” (Hamilton Spectator, 2009). This is contradictory to the argument that Orpana made about the age range of users in Beasley compared to Turner, which will be discussed at the end of this section.

The “fun events” the young contributor mentions above refer to the Cop-Shop Skate Jam, an annual event held in partnership with the Mountain Police Station, which is the focus of other community building arguments on Turner Park. Two short articles on The Hamilton Spectator’s website also mention this event. Both were written in 2013, and respectively they mention that the event is, “fifth year of the free annual event,” and that the event is, “free and open to all ages” (Hamilton Spectator, 2013).

Another Hamilton spectator article focused on the Turner Park development as a whole mentions the skatepark as a means of community building. Specifically, it refers to the development as, “the focal point of the neighbourhood” (Hamilton Spectator, 2009). It even mentions the approval that long-term residents of the area hold for the development, which is significant when considering the McQuesten community’s opposition to a skatepark when it was proposed in their neighbourhood.
5.2.3.2 | NEED / DEMAND

Several authors writing on Turner Park also highlighted some of the shortcomings of the site. Since these articles called for the improvement or expansion of the facility, they still are relevant strategies of skateboarding advocacy.

The first article from The Hamilton Spectator mentions the lack of space at the park, noting that it is, “always busy. The demand is only getting worse” (Van Dongen, 2017). The fact that Turner is the largest park in Hamilton and the recency of this article is worth noting.

The issue of BMX bikes at Turner emerged as significant in the secondary data. Two sources argued that BMX bikes should be allowed at the park, one written by a young skateboarder, and another that takes the form of a petition on Change.org. The article by a young skateboarder expresses her concern for inclusiveness, noting that the exclusion of BMX bikes is, “the worst part,” of the park (Hamilton Spectator, 2009). Additionally, the petition cites the, “large investment the city has made,” in the park, and argues that by barring BMXers the park is, “only reaching a small portion of its full potential” (Mrowka, 2015).

5.2.3.3 | YOUTH HEALTH

Once again, the strategy of youth health emerged less often than the researcher expected, most likely because the phenomenon is already understood, and it is not unique to skateboarding.

One article in the Hamilton Spectator only mentioned youth health indirectly, as a result of the “intense competition” involved in the Cop Shop Skate Jam (Hamilton Spectator, 2013). The second instance of youth health advocacy also appeared in the Hamilton Spectator, when Van Dongen argues that, “parents and community members are asking for skateparks to give youth
a healthy, active outlet” (2017). This article was written as a response to the 2017 LANDinc. Hamilton Skateboarding Study.

5.2.3.4 | SURVEILLANCE

The emergence of surveillance as a key theme for skatepark advocacy at Turner Park was not surprising. Of course, this is a result of the adjacent police station and is unique to Turner Park.

Both articles that used surveillance as a strategy for advocacy were surprisingly tentative. They mentioned the fact that the police station is adjacent to the skatepark and then move on. In effect, it seemed to this researcher that the mention was meant to justify the decision to site the park where it is, and an explanation of how the police presence is less intrusive than it might seem.

It is interesting to note that, in other cases identified in the literature, a common strategy for skatepark advocacy is the skateboarder’s ability to perform unofficial surveillance on at-risk locations where police presence is not always welcome or available (Borden, 2015; Carr, 2010; Chiu, 2009; Howell, 2008). In this example, that relationship is flipped on its head and skateboarders are portrayed as a liability rather than an asset. The articles that mention surveillance and police presence here do so in a positive light, but the fact that the site was chosen to dissolve concerns over skateboarder delinquency is telling.

5.2.3.5 | ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

The secondary data only uncovered one example of alternative funding for skateboarding at Turner Park. This came in the form of donated prizes for the Cop Shop Skate Jam.

An article in the Hamilton Spectator mentions that prizes of skateboarding equipment were donated by, “Arnett Skate Shop, West 49, Henry's Camera of Lancaster, Men in Black D.J.
Services, Rang tang Skate Shop and Seven Star Sports” (Hamilton Spectator, 2013). Unlike Beasley, there was no reporting on local business donating money for skatepark improvement. This could be because there is not as much community support for skateboarding at Turner but is more likely due to the fact that Turner does not need as much repairs as Beasley has in the past.

5.2.3.6 | SKATEPARK SIZE

The petition to have BMX bikes allowed at Turner was the only article the research found to specifically mention the park’s size. It lauds the park as being the, “only significant park in Hamilton” (Mrowka, 2015). The author’s choice to disparage other parks in Hamilton can be attributed to their desire to present a convincing argument. These findings suggest that Hamilton, especially the ‘Mountain’ section of the city, was underserved in regard to public skatepark space, meaning that the square footage of skatepark space was outweighed by the number of skateboarders.

5.2.3.7 | ORPANA ON TURNER PARK

As a former member of the Hamilton Skateboarding Assembly and the author of a published journal article on skateboarding in Hamilton, Orpana’s perspective (2015) on Turner park is worth considering during this secondary data analysis. However, these notes will not count as a strategy for skatepark advocacy, as they are generally negative.

Orpana’s article focuses on spatial-temporal incorporation and the Fordist vs. neoliberal economic philosophies that dictate the pace of development in Hamilton. For the purposes of this research, Fordism can be considered as similar to the Keynesianism discussed in the literature review, especially in its opposition to neoliberalism. The article’s primary argument is that DIY, community focused parks like Beasley let skaters shape their skateboarding
experience in a Fordist way where labour and activism have direct results. On the other hand, the experience of Turner Park is mired by a history of parental fear and neoliberal privatization (Orpana, 2015). For Orpana, the placement of Turner Park next to the police station is extremely problematic. It stifles the original spirit of skateboarding and creates a, “contradictory space of controlled rebellion” (Orpana, 2015). He supports this claim by referencing the lack of diversity at Turner Park. However, this claim was contradicted by another article cited above. In essence, Orpana believes that the subcultural challenge which skateboarding presents to urban politics is as important as youth health, community building or any of the strategies for skatepark advocacy presented so far.

5.2.4 | KEY INFORMANT DATA

5.2.4.1 | ADVOCACY TECHNIQUES FROM KEY INFORMANT DATA

This section describes the key themes for skateboard park advocacy that emerged in the key informant interviews regarding Turner Park.

Table 5.5: Key themes for skatepark advocacy in key informant data regarding Turner Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency in KI interviews</th>
<th>Respondent key informants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need / demand</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>KI2, KI7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community design</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>KI2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>KI2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative funding</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>KI2, KI7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skateboarding culture</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>KI2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The key themes that emerged from the key informant data for Turner Park were largely the same as for Beasley Park, but lacked youth health, legacy conservation and urban revitalization. The data did not reflect a need for legacy conservation because Turner is a relatively new park, when compared to Beasley. Urban revitalization did not emerge as a key theme because the key informant who was interested in this topic had more expertise and history with Beasley Park.

A new theme of alternative funding also emerged from the key informant data that was not discovered in the secondary data on Turner. This will be discussed in the section below.

5.2.4.1.1 | NEED / DEMAND

KI2 walked through the considerations made to determine the demand for skateparks in Hamilton. The respondent confirmed that the techniques applied by the 2017 study are widespread and applied to the Turner Park planning process as well. These techniques included, “showing what a catchment area is for a city park or a neighbourhood park,” and from those catchment areas determining a, “minimum size for the skatepark.” According to KI2, that minimum is calculated as, “on the number of users you should have 200 feet per person.” According to KI2, these considerations are essential, but the determination of need for spaces like skateparks requires more than a calculation. KI5 reaffirmed the usefulness of calculable processes for determining need when he referred to the 2017 study. Though the respondent did not use the study for design considerations, preferring the community design method, he called the study itself a, “useful tool for the city in building a case for demand, resource allocation, funding allocation. And then it was probably really critical to have a proper site selection.” Once again, the study was a direct result of the calculable considerations used in determining need and demand for Turner Park and was compiled by the same professionals including KI2.
KI2 also spoke to the human element in determining need when the respondent stated that, “the city in this case, they knew there was a trend of misuse of other parks, and that they needed to create a place to bring people. And that’s also one of the reasons that precipitated the increase in skateparks, to get kids off the street, to create a safer place.” This final point illustrates a point that was not present in the secondary data for Turner Park, but one that highlights a primary purpose of recreational space in the city. Though this is not unique to skateparks, KI2’s argument is certainly one that can be used effectively for the advocacy of skateparks.

When speaking more generally about the need or demand for more skatepark facilities in Hamilton, KI2 mentioned an opportunity for a regional sized skatepark. Currently, Turner is the largest park in Hamilton at a size categorized by the 2017 LANDinc study as a “City Skatepark” (City of Hamilton, 2017). KI2 believes that there is an opportunity to build what the study calls a “Regional Skatepark,” or a skatepark over 25 000 square feet. According to KI2, a regional sized skatepark could function as a measure to reach tourism goals, arguing that, “the tax base advantage of people coming and staying in hotels, using that site, the park will pay for the skatepark within three years.” When asked about this assertion, other key informants showed varying levels of doubt, but the assertion itself is a unique perspective in regard to skatepark advocacy.

5.2.4.1.2 | COMMUNITY DESIGN

The respondent familiar with the design of Turner Park, KI2, showed a similar level of enthusiasm as those familiar with Beasley. KI7 is also familiar with the design process of Turner, but that respondent’s interview related mostly to Valley Park and the comments on community design were in reference to that park.
First, KI2 compared the process of designing skateparks to public design in general, noting that, “there is really little direction given to designers on public preferences, but with skateparks you really can’t ignore the end user.” The respondent also compared skateparks to other recreational facilities, with the assertion that, “skateparks are probably the only recreational facility that has its end user involved in the design process… so skateparks are very unique that way.” KI2’s belief in the custom design process is apparent, but perhaps this opinion is enhanced by the enthusiasm that the respondent has for skateparks. It is unlikely that skateparks are the only recreational facility in which end users get involved in the design process, as KI2 suggests above. However, the respondent’s comment shows that skateboarders are highly specific in detailing their preferences.

The community consultation process begins even before design, according to KI2. This is evident from KI2’s statement regarding the site inventory process: “we look at principles in terms of crime prevention and visual accessibility to the park, and so we start the process with the site and the concerns of the public.” Admittedly, KI2 referred to some of these principles as, “dead principles,” meaning that they are more of a token consideration to alleviate the public concern around delinquency in skateparks. In this way, some elements of community design may not serve the end user directly, but they are still an effective means of dealing with these concerns and advocating for skateparks.

5.2.4.1.3 | ACCESSIBILITY
Comments on the accessibility of Turner confirmed the importance of a skatepark’s capacity to cater to different user groups, as well as the physical accessibility from offsite. This is consistent with advocacy techniques found in the literature, but there were not comment in the key informant data on Turner that spoke to the financial accessibility of skateparks like those in the literature.
During the design process for Turner, KI2 examined the site in relation to, “skateboarding as a means of transportation,” and even considered if, “sidewalks should be made of asphalt so it’s easy to skate to these sites.” This level of analysis is consistent with comments made by KI7 regarding Valley Park. Both designers are concerned with integrating a skatepark into the community as accessibly as possible.

KI2 also commented on the social accessibility of Turner and its success in appealing to different user groups. To accommodate beginner skaters as well as experts, KI2’s firm employs a system they call, “the ski approach, you know, double diamond, black, blue and red levels.” Though the features are not individually marked on the skatepark, they are designed with a range of difficulties as a primary consideration. This shows the commitment that KI2’s firm had to designing for different user groups at Turner, a concern that was echoed in another comment on gender groups:

“So for instance. Girls got involved in [designing] skating elements. One example is I remember one workshop they designed these rollers, these humps, and the boys are like, that’s not a skate park element that no one’s going to use that no one you know, when it was built, it became one of the biggest features for youth. So the youth would do try different tricks the older kids would try to ollie over one of the loops, that became a real desirable thing. And it became, it’s one of the elements that became prevalent in many skateparks. And, you know, the origin of that idea was developed by you know, three girls and they got what they wanted because they were the main people involved in the fundraising of this park.”

This comment could be an example of community design as well as accessibility, but it was included here because, as KI2 puts it, it is an example of, “the breakdown of stereotypes,” that is likely to happen at skateparks. The effect of skateboarding on gender norms is well documented in skateboarding literature (Bäckström, 2013; Bäckström & Nairn, 2018; Kelly et. al., 2005; Mackay & Dallaire, 2013; Pomerantz & Kelly, 2003; Wheaton, 2010). However, the texts listed above do not describe women & girl’s
involvement in the design process. The account that KI2 describes offers an interesting new perspective on the importance of accessibility to skatepark design.

5.2.4.1.4 ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

Notably, no key informants were able to confirm the story put forth by Orpana that a skatepark was originally planned for the McQuesten neighbourhood but was moved next to the police station at Turner due to community pushback. However, KI2 did comment on the project’s connection with the YMCA project that happened in conjunction with the skatepark, and some of the financial implications of that connection. According to KI2, “it was tied to the YMCA budget, so I think there was some private money that came into the development for the infrastructure of the park.” KI7 did not know for certain that this was the case, but spoke to the fact that there was, “a fair amount of budget and a fair amount of terrain to work with,” as a result of the project being tied to the YMCA.

5.2.4.1.5 SKATEBOARDING CULTURE

With comments similar to those made by KI1 about Beasley, KI2 highlighted the value of Turner Park, and skateparks in general, to the cultural landscape of Hamilton. The respondent said that their firm, “encouraged that every skatepark had something unique about it that was representative of either the area or location that made it reasonably regionally unique, or that the opportunities came from the landscape itself, its topography, its location, its geography.” This perspective is something that did not emerge from the secondary data or the literature and presents a new mode of skatepark advocacy. The respondent believes that skateparks offer a unique landscape feature, especially compared to other public recreation spaces such as baseball diamonds or soccer fields where, according to KI2, “there is no design.”
5.2.4.2 | FUNDING SOURCES

Exact figures for the cost of Turner Park were not available in the secondary data and were not revealed by the key informant interviews. However, according to KI2 and KI7 the primary source of the municipal tax base was supplemented by private funds tied to the YMCA development that occurred jointly with the skatepark. The impact of these funds on the design contributed primarily to the size and diversity of features in the park. Compared to Beasley Park, Turner is more topographically diverse, with several levels of skate-able features.

The difference in design styles between Beasley and Turner can be attributed more to the input of the community in the design development process, rather than the source of funding. The community at Beasley was very much concerned with the preservation of historic features, where at Turner the community was open to new styles of skatepark features and obstacles.

5.3 | VALLEY PARK

5.3.1 | HISTORY

The largest contributor that directly led to the planning and shortly anticipated completion of Valley park is the 2017 LANDinc Hamilton Skateboarding Study (City of Hamilton, 2017). This study guides the development of skateparks in Hamilton and recommends three to five new skateparks in the next ten years (Werner, 29 October 2018). The study considers several potential sites, Valley Park among them, and the City of Hamilton chose to move ahead with Valley Park first. According to information available on the City of Hamilton website, Valley Park was the highest scoring park in the study, which began a public consultation process in February of 2018 (Cellini, 2018). This prompted several community consultations that drove the design forward until it was finalized by Newline Skateparks, Dillion Consulting and the City of Hamilton.
Hamilton Landscape Services teams in late 2019 (City of Hamilton, 2019). From the outset, the goal was to design a park that allowed for the use of BMX bikes, rollerblades, scooters and skateboards, as was recommended by the LANDinc study (City of Hamilton, 2017).

Because this skatepark is a new development and is within a growth community, it qualifies for funding from the pool of developer fees accessible by the City of Hamilton.
### 5.3.2 PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

**SITE 3 - VALLEY PARK**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Site Conditions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>970 Paramount Drive, Hamilton ON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square footage</td>
<td>18,000 ft²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topography</td>
<td>Flat, with a large depressed area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>90% developer fees and 10% donations to the councilor’s office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shade</td>
<td>Rendering includes surrounding trees and a shade structure with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>Plenty of parking due at community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graffiti/street art</td>
<td>Graffiti planned to be mitigated by “street art wall” designated for spray</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accessibility**
- No vertical barriers to shade structure.
- Park is central to Stoney Creek residential area and adjacent to community center and a catholic and public

**Use / Popularity**
- Unable to speculate

**Main features**
- Park is made up of three skatable areas joined by a flat gorund space. Large “flow bowl” with circular and square sections, medium-sized stair and rail section with transition turn-around transition borders and spine transfer. Large stair and rail section with surrounding banks. Banked hip and manual pad with flat ground area.

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*Figure 10: Valley Park characteristics (Newline, 2019)*
5.3.3 | SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS

Again, there was a disparity amongst the key themes identified in the secondary data for Valley Park. Many of the themes identified for the other two case studies appeared in the data concerning Valley Park, such as community building, need/demand, skateboarding culture and youth health. However, some key themes such as surveillance, legacy conservation, local business support, fostering entrepreneurialism and skatepark size did not appear in the data. It is easy to understand why surveillance and legacy conservation did not appear in the data, as there is not an adjacent police station and the park is too new to have a legacy to conserve. The other missing themes will be considered in the discussion section.

A theme that was not present in the secondary data for Turner or Beasley Park emerged as well: alternative funding. This theme will be discussed below.

Table 5.6: Strategies for skatepark advocacy in secondary data regarding Valley Park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Frequency in secondary data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Need / demand</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative funding</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community building</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth health</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skateboarding culture</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.3.1 | NEED / DEMAND

The most significant piece of secondary data regarding Valley Park is the 2017 LANDinc Study, and three of the other examples of community building as a theme are references to the study.

The study is intended to address the needs and demands that skateboarding in Hamilton faces, so it is no surprise that there is an abundance of instances of this theme emerging in the document. This section will address those instances that specifically comment on Valley Park.

In order to assess the viability of the potential sites, the study implemented a five-point ranking system based on the access and surroundings, amenities and infrastructure, and site conditions of potential sites. Valley Park was ranked the highest at a 4.8 out of 5 among the top twelve sites considered, where the average score was 3.875 (City of Hamilton, 2017). The study gave the sites a score for each of the three categories and average those scores out to give a total score, also out of five. For access and surroundings, Valley Park scored a perfect five based on its proximity to two public schools, the Valley Park community center and library, bus stops, parking, and open green space (City of Hamilton, 2017). In the site conditions category. Valley Park scored a 4.5, which came down to the sites ability to integrate with other sports activities in the area, the sites size and the low impact the development would have on existing mature trees. The varying grade and lack of protection from wind and sun were the factors that prevented the site from having a perfect score in this category (City of Hamilton, 2017). In amenities and infrastructure, the site also scored a perfect five based on the nearby washrooms, drinking water and food (City of Hamilton, 2017). It is evident that the City’s decision to develop this site was primarily influenced by this study.

Three references to the study occur in the Hamiltonnews.com. Each article is written by Kevin Werner on the upcoming development at Valley Park (Werner, 2018; Werner, 21 October 2019;
Werner, 6 December). They do not add an alternative view on the development, but their frequency is significant.

The final example of this key theme came in the form of a CBC article that quoted the 2017 LANDinc study which mentions the, “increased popularity of wheeled sports” (Peterson, 2017).

5.3.3.2 ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

A major factor that lead this research to focus on Valley Park was its use of developer fees as primary funding. However, three out of four of the secondary sources that mentioned alternative funding as a key theme focused on a grant from Terrapure Environmental, a waste management company with a facility located approximately 2km from the proposed skatepark site.

Hamilton councilor, Judi Partridge, published an article on her personal website outlining the success of skateparks in Hamilton. The article outlines a $100 000 grant that, pending the city’s approval, will be used to, “design a skateboard park at Valley Park” (Partridge, 2017). Two other sources corroborate this claim, one from the CBC and one written on Hamiltonnews.com by Kevin Werner. The latter article mentions that Valley Park ward councilor, Doug Conley, approved the motion to use the grant and has been, “an eager supporter of a skate park” (Werner, 2018).

Another Werner article highlights the funding process by which the city will allocate a budget for the park in 2020. With the design costs being offset by the aforementioned grant, this article is the only piece of secondary data that this research uncovered which mentions the use of development fees. It quotes another Stoney Creek ward councilor, Brad Clark, who mentions the developer fees were used in this case so that, “there will be no impact to taxpayers” (Werner, 21 October 2019).
5.3.3.3 | COMMUNITY BUILDING

Unlike the two previous cases, community building was not the most frequent key theme identified for Valley Park. However, it is still present in three secondary sources and plays an important role in advocacy for skateparks.

The CBC quotes Jason Farr, a Hamilton ward 2 councilor, in an article outlining the City’s need for an additional nine skateparks (Peterson, 2017). Valley Park is not in ward 2 but when asked about the new development Farr compares it to existing skateparks in his ward, stating that, “it brings communities together, and keeps them involved in sports (Peterson, 2017). Additionally, Farr aims to quell fears of skateboarder delinquency and points out that, “[in my ward] I have one of the most active parks in the city, and don’t receive complaints” (Peterson, 2017).

Two secondary sources focus on inclusiveness as a means of community building, both are written by Werner for Hamiltonnews.com. The first article illustrates the importance of age inclusiveness and quotes Bill Gurney, senior design manager for Newline Skateparks, as saying, “we want the skatepark to be as inclusive as possible for all age groups (Werner, 6 December 2019). The second article quotes project manager from City of Hamilton Landscape Architectural Services, Wes Kindree, as highlighting the park’s inclusiveness in relation to varying wheeled sports. Kindree states that the, “proposed park design accommodates BMX bikes, scooters and Rollerblades, marking the first time in the City” (Werner, 2018).

5.3.3.4 | YOUTH HEALTH

With only one example of youth health as a key theme in the secondary data for Valley Park, the researcher was again surprised at the lack of attention paid to this method of skatepark advocacy.
In fact, the CBC article that used this method of advocacy only did so in reference to the 2017 LANDinc study where it argues that it supports, “skill development – including social and academic skills - as well as a healthy lifestyle” (Peterson, 2017).

5.3.3.5 | SKATEBOARDING CULTURE

As a new park, it is understandable that there is only one secondary source that highlights skateboarding culture as a means of skatepark advocacy.

Hamilton councilor, Judi Partridge, argues that Hamilton is in need of more skateparks to, “address Hamilton’s growing skateboarding culture” (Partridge, 2017). The councilor’s attitude reflects the policy and actions of the City of Hamilton and shows that skateboarding in the city is valued culturally.

5.3.4 | KEY INFORMANT DATA

5.3.4.1 | ADVOCACY TECHNIQUES FROM KEY INFORMANT DATA

This section describes the key themes for skateboard park advocacy that emerged in the key informant interviews regarding Valley Park.
Due to the recency of the Valley Park project, there were a greater number of respondents available with knowledge of the project. Thus, there are a greater number of coded responses for each key theme. No unique key themes emerged from the key informant data on Valley Park; they all are present in either the secondary data or key informant data of other sections of this research.

5.3.4.1.1 **COMMUNITY DESIGN**

The key informant from Newline Skateparks, KI7, was able to illustrate the extensive community design process the firm underwent to aid in the design process for Valley Park. The respondent’s sheer enthusiasm for the community engagement process is evident from the remark, “for us it’s always been about…community, community, community, custom, custom, custom…and inclusive, inclusive, inclusive.” By KI7’s account, community design is an effective technique for advocacy not only among the public but also in motivating city staff to engage with
a project. On the topic of community engagement, the respondent explains, “even the practitioners and the people at the city…get stimulated by the whole notion of that.”

The HSA was involved with the community design process like they were for the Beasley redesign, but at a much lesser level. For the city, the HSA helped develop question for the community engagement sessions. KI4 states, “we used them as a sounding board when we created our surveys to see it from a rider’s perspective.” However, KI7 found the involvement of the HSA in the Valley Park project to be less than that of other community organizations the respondent is familiar with. Despite creating opportunities for the HSA to engage in the process, KI7 was, “quite disappointed with the turnout from the Hamilton Skateboarding Assembly.” This is contradictory to the experience of KI1 during the design process for Beasley. A possible explanation will be covered in the Discussion chapter.

Regardless of the HSA’s involvement, the community design process was still extensive and impactful on Valley Park’s final design. Newline’s community engagement process is laid out by KI7:

“We gather a whole kind of collection of data that’s specific to our local user group. And also feedback forms…we leave the right hand side of the page open just to draw and sketch out ideas. And that’s totally fun as well, because we get tons of… crazy fun and interesting photos… usually coming out in younger people. We never demand to have just one design solution, we get the best design out of exploring multiple different ideas. And then what we’ll typically do for a second public engagement, we call that design alternatives. And we’ll go forward with two or three options of different designs…the different designs carry something different about them so we can probe the user group about really where their priorities are.”

After two design meetings with the community, Newline will present that same group with a final 3D rendering of the proposed design. KI7 argues that these meetings are important to the success of the design because, “skateboarders are passionate, and they are knowledgeable, they are opinionated, and they are not shy about letting you know that.” The stress that KI7 put
on the necessity of community design is telling, and it is notable that it did not show up in the secondary data or in the literature. It shows that skatepark advocates can use the passion and knowledge of the users to ensure that these recreational spaces will be effective, well used and unique to the region.

5.3.4.1.2 | ACCESSIBILITY

Like the findings in the section on secondary data, key informant data on Valley Park found that there are two modes of thought when it comes to accessibility: Valley Park can attract user other than skateboarders such as BMXers and rollerbladers, and Valley Park will be used by a large variety of user groups, not just teenage males. The financial accessibility avocation argument found in the literature did not come up in the key informant data.

KI4 identified the need for skateparks to appeal to several modes of wheeled sports from a city official’s perspective, citing that, “we don’t have the land or funds to build an amenity for a specific BMX park and not a skatepark.” To this end, KI4 suggested the term, “multi-wheeled sport park.” However, for the sake of brevity and consistency, this research will still refer to these as skateparks. KI6 confirmed this, explaining, “we’re really trying to encourage more than one sport using the amenity, just in terms of…its accessibility to multiple sports. But then it’s also financially…more sustainable with more people being able to use it.” KI7’s experience with the community engagement sessions reflected the same concept of accessibility. The respondent stated, “we probably heard more from the BMX group than any other group.” The commitment of all of these respondents to the park’s accessibility to groups other than skateboarders is evident from these comments.

The respondents were also concerned with the inclusiveness at Valley Park. KI4 mentioned a, “group of four women [who] were quad skaters,” (four-wheeled roller skaters). According to KI4
these women attended the community meetings to voice their opinions and help mold the park's design to suit them as well. KI7 also explained the process of attending to the diverse user groups at the meetings. The respondent explained, “we collect some data regarding age groups and gender distribution, skill level, and… preference.” KI4 added to this sentiment by comparing skateparks to other recreational spaces. The respondent explained:

“Not everybody wants to play on a baseball diamond. not everybody wants to play on a soccer field. And sometimes play structures are outgrown by teenagers. We know that on skateparks anywhere from a 5-year-old on a scooter up to a 60 plus male/female, who might not be able to do the jumps anymore, but they are still enjoying the facility.”

Here, KI4 is confirming the finding in the literature that skateboarding has a wider appeal than that of many other sports. KI6 offered in summation that the goal of skatepark development in Hamilton is to ensure that, “every kid has access, if they want to learn how to scooter or skateboard that there’s a spot for them.”

5.3.4.1.3 | ALTERNATIVE FUNDING

The exact nature of the legislature that allowed for the funding opportunities at Valley Park will be discussed in the Funding Sources section below. However, this opportunity was a beneficial one for the City and one of the major techniques used in its advocacy.

By using development charges to cover 90% of the park’s cost, the City was able to, as KI3 puts it, develop the park in a way that, “doesn’t burden the 550 000 other residents of Hamilton to pay for growth.” The advocacy value of this funding was summed up by KI4, who stated, “we’re going that route rather than impacting the tax levy, which was welcomed with open arms by the community because…Hamilton taxes are going up this year.” The purpose of this sort of advocacy, according to KI4, is to avoid complaints from the general public like, “why a skatepark and not a road?” The funds for Valley Park come from a separate pool and, “doesn’t impact any
of those developments for essential needs as in servicing roads, water and sewer.” Given the history of pushback against skateparks that occurred during the Turner Park development, the value of this type of advocacy is evident.

The key informant data also revealed where to other 10% of the funding for Valley park was found. KI4 explained, “the other 10%, being found through what we call whip funds or raise monies through the councilor’s office, or other accounts through the ward 9 office.” These funds account for the $100 000 grant from Terrapure mentioned in the secondary data and show that the park was funded without the use of the municipal tax base. KI3 suggests that this system is beneficial when it comes to recreational facility advocacy because, “the growth pays for itself.”

**5.3.4.1.4 | NEED / DEMAND**

The comments on need and demand for Valley Park revolved around the 2017 LANDinc. study, as it was this study that initially identified the need for more skateparks in Hamilton. KI6 referred to the study as, “a roadmap for city staff to identify gap areas where we are deficient in skateboard parks. The importance of the study as an advocacy tool is evident from the key informant data.

Specific to Valley Park, KI4 noted that the study highlighted Valley as the best candidate site. The respondent explained, “it checks all the boxes. It has a space close to the community… parks within the area, recreation center attached to it, facilities, on bus route reachable by most people in the Eastern part of the City of Hamilton.” These characteristics were all highlighted by the study and served to advocate for this site. KI6 suggested that the success of the park can be contributed in part to the study. The respondent was pleased to work on the project because, “Valley Park was suggested by the community or by the people who participated in the skatepark study. So if anything, this is a win for them because they are actually seeing their
suggestions be implemented." This data illustrates that, even if the study was not helpful in the design process as suggested by KI7, it is a great advocacy tool because it allows the public to be heard and help build the recreational space that is best suited to them.

5.3.4.1.5 | SKATEBOARDING CULTURE

Key informants were concerned with the use of spray paint at Valley Park, as they were with Beasley. However, they identified the value of urban art at skateparks as well. KI4 explained that the city has designated, “safe zones for skateparks for graffiti,” because the city hopes that, “if we start creating these graffiti safe zones... hopefully we will reduce the amount of graffiti and increase the amount of street art.” Like KI3, KI4 brought up the difference between graffiti and street or urban art in relation to Valley Park, noting that, “street artists get offended with the term graffiti because they associate it... with things you shouldn’t be drawing.” The ultimate goal of this policy is to, “use the skatepark as a canvas,” in what KI4 thought could be achieved through, “a community initiative... they kind of regulate themselves”. This type of street art is unique to skateparks, and KI4 believes it is something that the city values on a cultural level.

5.3.4.1.6 | URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

Though only one key informant provided data in which urban redevelopment emerged as a key theme, the insight provided is rich and relevant to the goals of this research. The implications of this theme are complex, especially in terms of skatepark advocacy, but skateboarders play the same role as artists in the process of gentrification according to KI5. In this respondent’s view, the construction of Valley Park would, “play into the city’s vision... of densification toward the Eastern end of downtown.” This is problematic because, “gentrification displaces people, and so we need to have modes of development that simply doesn’t displace people.” This is the same issue brought up by KI5 surrounding the redevelopment of Beasley Park, but here the
respondent believes that redevelopment is being done in a manner that benefits the city. KI5 explains that the city needs,

“growth of cities, and the growth of tax bases, and the intensity of the densification, and production of amenities without displacing the people that already live there by raising rents and the cost of housing. So, I mean, there’s forms of development that are just more responsible. I think having developers pay for the creation of infrastructure is one of them.”

This argument is one of the most powerful means of skatepark advocacy because it is supported by decision-making that is beneficial to a city both economically and socially. Furthermore, Valley Park serves to intensify and densify in a location that will not displace Hamilton residents, nor impact their tax levies.

5.3.4.2 | FUNDING SOURCES

Key informant data, along with online research into public policy that snowballed from the interviews, revealed that Valley Park was funded by developer fees charged by the city to private developers in Hamilton. In the past, the sort of public development happening at Valley Park would be funded by provincial funds collected under the Development Charges Act of 1997 or funds from the municipal tax base (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2020). As a result of a change in the Provincial government, funds that would have been provided by the provincial government for parks are no longer assigned for that use. KI3 explained, “they have excluded the soft services from that, and kept it only as being the infrastructure kind of components.” This left the city in what KI3 called, “a state of limbo.” Subsequently, they were responsible for providing the funds for future skatepark development. To achieve this, they directly charged the private developers of Hamilton, to make up for funds that could have been provided from developers province-wide through the Development Charges Act. According to
KI3, the developer is likely to transfer those fees to new homeowners purchasing houses in Hamilton from those developers.

Further information from KI6 revealed that this, “state of limbo,” described by KI3 was corrected shortly after the funding for Valley Park was secured. According to KI6, the changes to the Development Charges Act resulted in several municipalities communicating to the provincial government that the list of public amenities covered by the act’s replacement, Community Benefits Charges, was too limited. They argued, “the list is so constrained that it will be extremely difficult for the city to be able to…build future parks and amenities to put in the parks.” The provincial government responded by proposing that funding through development charges for public parks should be reinstated in the Development Charges Act. The relevant section of the proposal’s text, published February 28, 2020, is shown here:

“It is proposed that the following services would be identified in regulation under subsection 2(4) of the Development Charges Act:

1. Public libraries, including library materials for circulation, reference or information purposes
2. Long-term care
3. Parks development, such as playgrounds, splash pads, equipment and other park amenities (but not the acquisition of land for parks)
4. Public health
5. Recreation, such as community recreation centres and arenas

Development charges may be imposed to fully recover the capital costs related to the provision of these proposed services due to new growth” (Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing, 2020).

In effect, the provincial government reversed their stance on development charges used for the amenities listed above under pressure from municipalities. These changes have not come into effect and will not do so until a year after the changes to the Community Benefits Charges have been approved. Since the funding for Valley Park has already been secured, it will not receive additional funds from this proposal.
5.4 | CHAPTER OVERVIEW

This chapter presented the results and analysis for the secondary data and key informant interviews used in this study. The results were grouped first by each case study and subsequently by the method to which they pertained. Analysis found that the advocacy strategies from the literature such as community building, surveillance, fostering entrepreneurialism, youth health and accessibility applied to these case study sites, with community building be the most prevalent. Novel strategies also emerged from the data such as alternative funding, community design, need/demand and urban redevelopment.

The combined methods showed that, though there was some financial support from outside sources such as a local skateshop for Beasley and the YMCA Foundation for Turner, these parks were funded via the municipal tax base. Valley Park however was funded 90% by developer fees and 10% by donations to the Ward 9 councilor’s office. This variance in funding source did not have a significant affect of the design of Valley Park, except for its size and location. Notably, Valley Park did not receive funding from the province under the Development Charges Act of 1997, but instead from fees paid by developers working specifically in Hamilton.

The following chapter will cover the discussion and findings of these results.
CHAPTER 6 | DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

This chapter will be divided into two major sections, each based on answering the two questions guiding this research: (1) “where does the funding for skateparks in Hamilton Ontario come from, and how does the sponsor affect the project?” and (2) “who can successfully advocate for the improvement of skateboarding facilities in Hamilton, Ontario, and what strategies are best?”

The case studies will be discussed together in the same section, in a comparative manner.

6.1 | FUNDING

According to the combined results of the secondary data and key informant interviews, the funding source for the respective case studies had an impact on each project’s outcomes but was not the primary influence on each skatepark’s design. Instead, this was the community stakeholders, which in most cases were the skateboarders who would become the end users. By weighing these community considerations against the forms of funding, this section will aim to answer the first research question.

6.1.1 | BEASLEY PARK

The Hamilton Skateboarding Association, who call Beasley Park their home, have a significant interest in preserving the physical layout and skate-able features that make up the park. Since the funding came from the municipal tax base, Beasley skaters, and by extension the HSA, were able to assume that the redesign would be done with these interests in mind. However, a contradiction in the key informant interview data shows that this may not always be the case. KI1 spoke very highly of the HSA, noting several times that they were involved in every facet of the 2018 redesign of Beasley. This interviewee was directly responsible for consulting on the project and interacting with the HSA, so the respondent’s comments can be read as the most accurate available to this study. Yet KI7, despite being not directly involved in this process,
suggested that the HSA might not have been invested in the dialogue between the designers and the community at first, stating that, “…from what I understand, the HSA involvement in Beasley Park was a little bit more after the fact and not during design development…the HSA was like, holy crap this doesn't look like a great design I should step in here.” According to the respondent, the original design replaced most of the key skate-able features that make Beasley so unique, ignoring their historical and sentimental value in the eyes of Beasley skateboarders.

Whether this statement is true or not, it illuminates on of this studies key findings: the importance of community consultation in the design process for skateparks. Another point KI7 made clear was the extent to which municipalities and private landscape architecture firms are ill-equipped to design a space as specialized as a skatepark. Instead, these professionals must rely on the expertise of the end user.

As a Beasley skateboarder and member of the HSA, KI5 was concerned with the preservation of the park and anticipated a redesign by the city that could put the park’s historical features in jeopardy. In fact, KI5 confirmed KI7’s suspicions, stating, “originally the city was going to tear up the old park and just put a brand new park in.” In the respondent’s view, this is, “part of the gentrification of downtown in terms of making it more attractive to condo developers.” Here, KI5 shows that from the perspective of a Beasley skateboarder whose main concern is the preservation of skateboarding history, the source of funding is incredibly important to the design of a park. If the city was more determined to create opportunities for development than serving the existing community, then the municipal funding may have been detrimental to the concerns of local skateboarders.

Luckily, the municipality listened to the community and retained the historical features of the park. It is possible that, if a private stakeholder were responsible for funding the park, they might
not have been willing or financially capable of responding to the HSA’s complaints about the original plan to replace the old park with new features. However, this is speculation and according to these findings the funding played less of a role in the finished product than the community considerations.

6.1.2 | TURNER PARK

Although exact figures were not available, the evidence shows that some of the funding for Turner Park came from YMCA Canada, but the majority came from the municipal tax base. According to KI7, the extra funding was used to ensure, “quality construction.” As with Beasley, the funding had less impact on the project’s outcome than the community considerations. These considerations were twofold. First, the pushback from the McQuesten community to the presence of a skatepark in their neighbourhood dictated the relocation to its eventual location next to the police station. Second, KI5 also highlighted the importance of community consultation in the design process.

There are several notable differences between Turner and Beasley that exist despite their similarity in funding. First, Beasley is covered in urban art/graffiti, and Turner is completely bare in this regard. This is due to the different ridership of each park, as highlighted in the secondary data by Orpana, and Turner’s adjacency to the police station. Second, Turner has a high degree of verticality, including several levels separated by stairs and banks. Considering the original plan to redevelop Beasley and the proposed design at Valley Park, this suggests that skateboarders favour parks with topographical variety. Barring the historical considerations at Beasley, new parks with municipal funding will trend toward including these features.

This study is not able to comment on the YMCA’s motivations for providing funds for Turner Park. While some, like Orpana, may question the validity of the park’s cultural impact on
skateboarding in Hamilton, the park is nonetheless well-used and overall is a successful facet of Hamilton’s skateboarding facilities. Simply because Turner appeals to a younger skateboarder who may not align with the oppositional perspective of a traditional skateboarder does not detract from its value in the community.

6.1.3 | VALLEY PARK

The funding for Valley Park has altered the project’s outcome in several important ways, but once again is outweighed by community consultation when it comes to strictly design. The funding did however dictate the size and location of the park, as well as necessitate that these funds must be used to develop a new park not redesign an existing one.

What is most important to this study is the fact that Valley Park’s lack of funding through the Development Charges Act confirms the concern found in the literature that government funding for skateparks may disappear as a result of neoliberal changes in legislation. As a result of the provincial government change, funding for public parks was removed from the Development Charges Act and Hamilton was forced to find these funds on their own. Though they still gathered the funds from developers, the stripping of the Development Charges Act is a prime example of neoliberal changes to government, which directly impact a municipality’s capacity to provide recreational amenities for the public. The speed at which the provincial government reversed these changes indicate that municipalities rely heavily on these funds for creating new public parks and amenities and would have a great deal of difficulty doing so without them.

The danger of stripping away the municipality’s access to provincial developer fees is highlighted in a remark by Kl7. The respondent is involved in a skatepark project in Toronto funded by developer fees, where a single developer has a direct role in design and construction. In this project, the developer is responsible for hiring consultants and overseeing construction.
The developer hired KI7’s firm as consultants and, “since we got involved there was no involvement of public consultation. So that seemed to have backfired.” Additionally, the developer in this project is not bound by public purchasing policies that would bind the city, if they had been responsible for the skatepark’s construction. Overall, KI7 believes the project, “maybe went forward a little too quickly.” Fortunately, KI7 reports that the consulting firm has corrected the project’s course and emphasized the importance of community consultation for skatepark projects, but the possibility for the rushed, shoddy implementation of a public skatepark is evident here. In this way, Hamilton is fortunate that the city was able to fund and implement the Valley Park project in much the same way as they would have before the changes to the Development Charges Act in 2018. Had a single developer been charged and held responsible for the park’s implementation it could have easily been subjected to the problems which KI7 outlined above.

6.2 | ADVOCACY

This section will address the means of advocacy used by community skateboarding advocates, journalists, city councilors, landscape architects and the city parks department. The section will be organized by the key themes which emerged in the secondary data and key informants, addressing the frequency with which each argument occurred and the relevance it had to the specifics of each case study project.

The necessity for advocacy became evident in the research surrounding Turner Park’s history. The community pushback from McQuesten neighbourhood residents shows that skateparks are not always accepted by a community in the manner that a new baseball diamond or hockey rink might be. Luckily, the general perception is changing of skateparks is changing according to KI6, who is responsible for consulting with the general population in Hamilton and identifying
areas of need. The respondent explained that community members who oppose skatepark are not as prevalent as in the recent and, “a lot of people are understanding that…it’s a sport in its own right.” This comment is reassuring but obstacles to new skateparks, like funding and public perception, mean that advocacy for public skateparks is required if Hamilton wishes to continue creating new facilities.

6.2.1 | COMMUNITY DESIGN

Community design emerged as a significant means of skatepark advocacy based on the results of the key informant interviews but did not emerge at all from the secondary data. It is possible that the results were skewed in favour of this means of advocacy because five out of seven interviewees were landscape architects and thus interested in the design process. However, the lack of community design emerging as a key theme in the secondary data shows that this is an underused means of advocacy. Key informants KI1, KI2, KI3, KI4 and KI7 each reported that skateboarders in Hamilton voluntarily and enthusiastically engaged in the community design process shows the commitment they have to the sport and to ensuring skateparks are built responsibly. As a means of advocacy, this enthusiasm could be harnessed by journalists, city councilors and other non-designers to promote expansion of skateboarding facilities.

According to KI7, Newline Skateparks is very invested in the community design process and uses it to motivate city staff involved in other aspects of their skatepark projects. The recurrence of this key theme in the key informant data indicates that it can also be used by journalists and city councilors to promote skateparks in the preliminary planning processes in Hamilton.

The notion of skateboarders being anti-social, which still exist in the public according to comments by KI6 and are explained in the literature by Taylor & Khan (2011), were refuted by the key informant data. Instead, the data showed that skateboarders in Hamilton enthusiastically
appear to community design meetings and fully engage in the dialogue. Data from respondents involved in all three cases showed that designers and end-users learn from each other to create a facility that fits the needs of the community while remaining within the constraints of the respective project. The constructive relationship that exists between these groups can be used as an effective means of skatepark advocacy.

6.2.2 | COMMUNITY BUILDING

Unlike the previous theme, community building was the most prevalent key theme to emerge from the secondary data, showing that it is not an underused form of advocacy. Findings suggest that skateparks, especially those in less economically strong areas like Beasley Park, can act as a community hub. As KI5 noted, the collaborative relationship between the HSA and the Beasley Neighbourhood Association sets an example for other areas of Hamilton and illustrates the potential for community building inherent in public skateparks. Findings from the secondary data showed that events held by the HSA at Beasley and the Copshop Skate Jam at Turner act as positive publicity for skateparks in Hamilton and are themselves an effective mode of advocacy.

For Valley Park, there is a great deal of potential for events such as these to integrate Valley Park successfully into the existing community, which as KI7 noted is a primary objective of Newline Skateparks. This potential is multiplied because the park is located next to a public school and recreational center within a growing community and the community has already shown considerable interest at public consultation meetings.

The results from both methods showed that Beasley Park had the most potential for community building of any park due to the socio-economic class of the surrounding neighbourhood and the legacy of skateboarding at the park. The Hamilton Spectator’s designation of the neighbourhood
as 'Code Red' highlighted that the neighbourhood needed attention, even if it is not an official designation as used by city officials. However, it was the HSA that acted to preserve historical park features. This story is exemplary and holds power as a means of skatepark advocacy.

6.2.3 | ACCESSIBILITY
The literature preceding this study suggested that skateboarding’s accessibility is a valuable means of advocacy because it is financially accessible and accessible to a wide range of social groups. However, the findings of this study only supported the latter for of accessibility. The secondary data included groups of young women writing in support of Turner Park, as well as Orpana’s assertion that a wide variety of age groups use Beasley Park. Key informant data showed that a group of young women were present at community meetings and will presumably use the park when complete, and that rollerbladers, BMXers and scooter users were considered in its design in addition to skateboarders.

It is possible that part of Beasley’s success in its economically challenged community is due to the skatepark’s financial accessibility, but this is inductive reasoning on the part of the researcher and not directly confirmed by the data. Regardless, social accessibility was used by the secondary data authors and key informants frequently, confirming the value of accessibility as a means of advocacy found in the literature.

6.2.4 | ALTERNATIVE FUNDING
This theme was the focus of the literature review and several types of alternative funding were found. These were skateboarding related business sponsorship, local business sponsorship and entrepreneurialism by independent skateboarders. The latter two modes of alternative funding appeared in the secondary data regarding Beasley Park, but funding by developer fees was the primary focus of this study.
The secondary data on Valley Park did not mention this mode of funding, instead focusing on a grant from local waste management company, Terrapure (Werner, 2018). However, the key informants believed that the use of development fees was more relevant to the story of Valley Park than the grant because these fees covered 90% of the cost of the park. KI3’s statement regarding the park’s funding not impact Hamilton’s tax levy is especially powerful. The other two cases examined by this study were funded almost entirely from municipal taxes, but if the City can design and build parks without the use of those funds, they will possess a powerful rhetorical tool for advocacy.

Local business support is a useful tool for supplementing funding skateparks, but the support provided to Beasley ($1000) is not nearly enough to support new skateparks. Internet supported funding, like those mentioned in the 2017 LANDinc Hamilton Skateboarding Study and those initiated by the HSA (LaPierre, 2012), can also be useful but again do not possess the rhetorical power of a 90% funding through developer fees.

6.2.5 | NEED / DEMAND

The combined data revealed a diverse set of indicators for skatepark demand in Hamilton. For Beasley Park, the economic need of the surrounding neighbourhood and poor condition of the concrete features was justification for the 2018 redesign. At Turner, a statistical analysis of the catchment areas provided by existing Hamilton skateparks showed a lack of facilities on the upper mountain area. Yet the most interesting finding, and relevant for the advocacy of future skateparks in Hamilton and abroad, was the 2017 LANDinc Hamilton Skateboarding Study.

This study included an analysis of catchment areas but went further by collecting online data from 720 Hamilton skateboarders, BMXers, rollerbladers and scooter users (City of Hamilton, 2017, Background Study). Additionally, the study examined skateboarding culture in Hamilton,
skatepark typologies and potential sites for new skateparks, leading to Valley Park being recommended as the most suitable candidate site. Based on key informant data from members of Hamilton’s Landscape Architectural services, the study was the key reason for the site’s selection. KI2 and KI4 noted that the study acted as an advocacy tool by proving that future skateparks like Valley Park will be well-used before the public is able to question the validity of the project. While the means of highlighting need that occurred for Beasley and Turner proved effective, the skateboarding study goes performs the roles that those means filled and goes above and beyond to justify the demand for skateparks in Hamilton.

5.2.6 | SKATEBOARDING CULTURE

Some sources, such as Orpana and KI5, highlighted a dichotomy between Beasley and Turner as to how these parks align with “true skate culture.” Even the LANDinc study alluded to this when suggesting that the culture of skateboarding in Hamilton revolves around Beasley Park. Without question, a police station next to a skatepark will hamper its capacity to foster the rebellious spirit that skateboarding sometimes represents. The appearance of each park furthers the contrast, in that one is covered in spray painted urban art and the other is bare. If skateboarding culture is to be used as a means of advocacy, the data shows that it is Beasley that must be the example park.

However, the cultural impact of a skatepark requires that parks be viewed as art, and this notion is a matter of opinion. The data shows that Orpana and KI5 believe Beasley to be more culturally relevant, but both are skateboarders and view the parks in Hamilton from within the skateboarding community. From without, it is easy to imagine that the public may view Beasley as covered in unappealing graffiti, not culturally relevant urban art. Further research involving
the general public is required to answer this question and evaluate skateboarding culture as an
effective means for skatepark advocacy.

6.2.7 | YOUTH HEALTH

Youth health emerged as a key theme for skatepark advocacy in the literature more prominently
than it did in this study’s data. Findings indicate that youth health is not the primary focus of
skateboarders and skateboarding advocates in Hamilton. Some attention was paid to this theme
in the secondary data, and one key informant referred to youth health on one occasion.

6.2.8 | FOSTERING ENTREPRENEURIALISM

Researchers like Ocean Howell highlighted this theme as a means of skatepark advocacy,
especially from the neoliberal perspective, but it was the least prominent theme revealed by this
study. It emerged only from the secondary source analysis regarding Beasley Park. However,
Howell’s reasoning as to why skateboarders tend to exhibit entrepreneurial tendencies revolves
around the DIY scenarios in which they create skateparks (Howell, 2008). It is evident that direct
examples of skateboarders in Hamilton exhibiting entrepreneurial behavior sufficient to fall
under the requirements for this key theme are rare. Yet, the DIY origin of Beasley Park is an
example of the type of behaviour that lead Howell to make the initial assertion. For a mode of
advocacy this behaviour is notable and commendable, but not prevalent enough to outweigh
key themes that emerged more frequently.

6.2.9 | URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

As a means of skatepark advocacy, this theme is both situational and overly complicated. Urban
redevelopment was only explicitly stated as a means of advocacy by KI5, who did so with some
hesitation. The respondent admitted that skateboarders, like artists, are victims and agents of
gentrification. The choice of words here (urban redevelopment versus gentrification, essentially
the same concept with opposing connotations) shows that this concept is beneficial for some but not others. If skateparks can be used to make a neighbourhood more attractive to condo developers, as KI5 suggests, then this could be a mode of advocacy. However, this potential benefit is overshadowed by the resulting side-effects of gentrification, such as the displacement of economically challenged residents. Further still, this mode of advocacy could only be used in neighbourhoods with a high potential for redevelopment.

6.2.10 | SURVEILLANCE

In the literature, surveillance was found as a means of skatepark advocacy in the case of the Brooklyn Banks (Chiu & Giamarino, 2019). In the wake of the 9/11, skateboarders were seen by police as a way of monitoring the streets and reporting suspicious activity. This ultimately allowed the formerly DIY Brooklyn Banks skatepark to garner official sanctions from the city. This study however did not support this as a means of advocacy.

Interestingly, the argument for surveillance was reversed in the case of Turner Park. Here, public concerns around delinquency were quelled by the relocation of the planned skatepark to its current address, next to the Mountain Police Station. These findings suggest that there is still a connection in the eye of the public between skateboarding and delinquency, and that surveillance of skateboarders by police is an effective means of advocacy in this situation. However, this rhetoric is not transferrable to other skatepark projects.

In this researcher's opinion, it is unfortunate that a skatepark built just ten years from today received so much resistance from community members and it represents a missed opportunity for education regarding skatepark potential. One can only speculate at the crime-preventing power of Beasley Park, given its location in an economically challenged neighbourhood, but this means of advocacy was not supported in the data.
6.2.11 | SKATEPARK SIZE
This key theme emerged only once in the study under the secondary data for Turner Park. As a means of advocacy it is highly situational, only appropriate for a park that is larger than those in the surrounding area. Additionally, it could backfire if funded by a municipal tax base, leading to questions form the general public as to the necessity of such a large and presumably expensive skatepark. Given that KI6 admitted that public push back to publicly funded skateparks is shrinking but still present, this study cannot recommend this key theme as a means of skatepark advocacy unless funding can be secured from source other than a municipal tax base.

6.2.12 | LEGACY CONSERVATION
This study confirmed the effectiveness of legacy conservation as a means of advocacy found in the literature. This argument proved successful in the case of the Los Angeles courthouse and South Banks in London (Chiu & Giamarino, 2019; Borden, 2015), as well as the redevelopment at Beasley. However, findings indicated that legacy conservation is an effective means of advocacy but is also highly situational. The enthusiasm of Beasley skateboarders showed that once a space has been used by skateboarders for an extended period, even if that space was appropriated without municipal consent, the history and culture of the space becomes a powerful tool for skatepark advocacy. This type of advocacy could be used in situations where a DIY skatepark seeks official municipal sanctions and/or funding but would not be appropriate for a new skatepark like Turner or Valley Park.

6.3 | CHAPTER OVERVIEW
This chapter discussed the findings and patterns revealed through the two parallel methods. These were divided into two sections: those pertaining to advocacy and those pertaining to funding. Key themes for advocacy that aligned with the literature were those on community
building, alternative funding, accessibility, skateboarding culture, youth health, fostering entrepreneurialism, surveillance, urban redevelopment, and legacy conservation. Other themes emerged that were not found in the literature review. These were need/demand, community design and skatepark size. It must be noted that the literature review predominantly considered alternate/unusual means of skatepark advocacy. Additionally, most of the literature considered was not written from the perspective of designers.

This study found that the source of funding has an impact on the outcome of skatepark projects that is unique to each case. However, the ultimate design of each project evaluated in this study was more heavily influenced by community considerations.

The next chapter will cover limitations, recommendations for landscape architects and skateboarding advocates, opportunities for future research and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 7 | CONCLUSION

The goal of this study was to determine the impact that funding had on skatepark projects and examine how skatepark advocates in Hamilton argued for the value of skateparks in order to secure this funding. In the literature review, authors highlighted means by which various skateparks across North America and England were funded and discussed how the relationship between skateboarding advocates and public governance exists through the neoliberal lens. These authors presented various means of funding and came to varying conclusions regarding how funding for skateparks should be acquired to best serve the needs of skateboarders. Thus, this study was designed to continue this line of questioning.
Three case studies of skateparks in Hamilton, Ontario were conducted and the funding and advocacy of each was examined and compared. This was accomplished with the use of secondary data analysis and semi structured key informant interviews. The secondary data included online news articles, journal articles, crowd-funding initiatives and the 2017 LANDinc Hamilton Skateboarding Study, which together allowed for an analysis of written skatepark advocacy. Seven key informants were interviewed with backgrounds in landscape architecture, parks planning and community activism, which illustrated the link between advocacy and funding as well as their impact on the respective case studies. These findings will be used later in this chapter to inform recommendations for landscape architects and skateboarding activists on how and when to implement the forms of funding and modes of advocacy examined in this study.

7.1 LIMITATIONS

The first limitation was the small sample size of key informants. This was due to the 8-month time frame of the project and the availability of key informants. Some members of the HSA did not respond to emails requesting their involvement in the study. Additionally, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in the final months of this study meant that some key informants contacted for follow-up questions were not available. As a result of these limitations, some perspectives, such as a representative of the YMCA adjacent to Turner Park, did not appear in this study.

Second, was the absence of youth skateboarders from the study. Due to the limited time frame, the researcher chose to conduct key informant interviews instead of general population interviews that could have included the perspective of active park users and community members who attended consultation meetings for Valley Park. The addition of those
perspectives to this study could have further illuminated the reception that Valley Park will have in the community.

The secondary data research did not include every type of secondary data (journal articles, news clippings, online petitions, crowd-funding initiatives and municipal studies) for each case study. This is largely because Valley Park has not yet been completed, which limited the distribution of data for this research method.

Another limitation comes from the fact that Valley Park has not yet been constructed. As noted previously, the evidence for Valley Park’s positive impact in the community is notable due to the strong turnout at community consultation meetings and its suitability determined by the LANDinc study. However, until the park is complete, it will be impossible to predict exactly the strength or success of the skatepark in the future.

The replicability of this study will suffer as a result of the variable questions asked in the semi-structured key interviews. This choice was made because each of the cases were unique in their implementation, and the key informants had different backgrounds and professions. However, without consistent key informant interview questions, any attempt to replicate the results of this study will suffer. This study was designed to provide robust data on a single municipality. Since every community is unique, adaptable interviewing and case study research design were required to reach this goal.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are a set of eleven recommendations on how to improve the planning, design, research and implementation of skateparks in Hamilton and in general.
Relevant to landscape architects and planners

1. Community consultation should be the primary concern for skatepark designers. Skateparks are complex spaces with variety in terrain typology and user groups with differing skills and preferences. Most landscape architects do not possess the knowledge required to design skateparks without help and even specialized skatepark designers make community consultation a priority. As K17 noted, skateboarders are knowledgeable and opinionated, and their preferences change based on geography. Consultation will highlight the preferences of the users specific to the area in question and it is the best way to ensure that a skatepark will be successful before it is built.

Figure 11: Community consultation (City of Hamilton, 2017)
2. Under the current legislation in Ontario, provincial developer fees are a good way to pay for skateparks, as long as the restrictions attached to these funds still allow the project to serve the needs of the public. The use of funds that do not impact Hamilton taxpayers was an invaluable advocacy tool for Valley Park. However, if Beasley Park had not been redesigned in 2018, it would not have been appropriate to focus the city’s attention on Valley Park while a well-used existing park was in disrepair.

3. Engage in post-occupancy evaluation on skateparks in Hamilton and abroad. This may help identify successful strategies in design and implementation, as well as ensure the continued efficacy of current parks.

Figure 12: Post-Occupancy Evaluation (City of Hamilton 2017)
4. Perform regular repairs on public skateparks. Before the 2018 redevelopment, many improvements and repairs at Beasley were done by the skateboarders and the HSA without municipal aid. More attention needs to be paid to the state of the surfaces at Hamilton skateparks if they are to be safe and well-used.

Figure 13: Repairs at Beasley (City of Hamilton Public Works, 2018)
5. *Perform studies on existing skateparks and areas of need in cities.* The LANDinc study examined nearby skateparks, took inventory of existing facilities and ranked potential sites for new development. This is the inventory and analysis work that precedes good landscape architecture. If cities can afford to invest in a study such as this, it can lessen the workload for future designers and serve as a valuable tool for advocacy.

*Figure 14: LANDinc Study (City of Hamilton, 2017)*
Relevant to skateboarding advocates

6. Community activism is the most powerful tool available to skateboarding advocates. Skateboarders of all ages and social groups care about their skateparks and often are willing to volunteer to accomplish their goals. Skateparks serve as recreational space, but as seen at Beasley Park they can also be the basis for community associations. Together, these associations hold more political sway than any individual initiative.

Figure 15: Beasley Skate Jam logo (Hamilton Skateboarding Assembly, 2019)
7. **Employ local artists to beautify public skateparks.** The relationship between local artists and skateboarders at Beasley Park is exemplary and highlights the potential that these spaces have for improving a city’s cultural aesthetic.

![Figure 16: Local art at Beasley (photos by researcher)](image)
8. Highlight the aesthetic and cultural value that skateparks hold. No other part of the built landscape can compare to the robust forms of a skatepark, whether it is painted with urban art or not. Unlike soccer fields and baseball diamonds, every skatepark is unique and this is a underused form of advocacy.

Figure 17: Skatepark form at Turner (Photo by researcher)
9. *Crowd fund and apply for grants.* There are opportunities for grants from skateboarding specific foundations, like the Tony Hawk Foundation, and local businesses can also provide support. This shows initiative on the part of skateboarding advocates and a pre-existing interest in skateparks.

*Figure 18: Trevor Rowan, owner of Flatspot, donated $1000 to repairs at Beasley (Craggs, 2012)*
10. *Gain media attention to increase interest and community involvement.* Online news articles and posts by ward councilors released before Valley Park highlighted the project’s potential and may have increased attendance at community consultation meetings.

11. *Educate the public on the community benefits of skateparks.* According to KI6, fear around skateboarding delinquency is decreasing but still exists. Forums like town hall meetings can be used to address these fear and limit pushback from concerned citizens.

### 7.3 | FUTURE RESEARCH

As is the nature of case study research, this study offers a close look at the skateparks in a single city. This allows for robust and purposive data but can limit transference of the findings to other cases. To build a better base of evidence, more research on the narratives behind the planning, design and implementation of skateparks in other major Ontario cities will be necessary. This could allow for a longitudinal comparison of the processes for skatepark implementation across the province, which could let a researcher offer recommendations that were more applicable province wide.

Specifically, a study of the skatepark project at Wallace Emerson Park in Toronto could further the goals of this line of research. This project was not covered in this study because it is in early stages of development. In this project, a single developer is responsible for handling the design and hiring contractors for a public park, including a skatepark. Unlike Valley, the developer has significant control over this project. Research of the developer’s impact here could illuminate the implications of private funding and control over public recreational space.

As KI5 pointed out, skateboarders and the spaces they occupy can be both, “victims and agents of gentrification.” This topic was covered briefly in this study, but the potential implications and
complexities of skateparks economic impact on surrounding neighbourhoods is worthy of further research.

This study only touched briefly on the provincial and municipal legislature that supports funding for public parks. A consolidation of the legislature in an easy to read format, as well as a chronicling of the history of this legislation, would illustrate the tendencies of provincial and municipal spending and allow a researcher to report on the efficiency and effectiveness of this process.

7.4 | CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this study was to increase the readers understanding of the relationship between funding, advocacy and public skateparks in Hamilton. This relationship informs the way that skateparks are implemented and ultimately how they perform in the community. The narrative examined here shows that developer fees are an effective mode of funding skateparks that acts as both a relief for municipalities and a tool for advocacy. However, the restrictions on these funds must also be acknowledged. Since they can only be used on new development, the context of skateboarding facilities in the rest of the city, especially existing skateparks, must also be considered. Fortunately, Hamilton attended to the needs of Beasley Park before developing the Valley Park project.

It is worth noting that an association between skateparks and gentrification was uncovered during this study. While this is a complex and somewhat troubling issue, the implications of this finding refute the traditional view of skateparks as homes of delinquency. If, as KI5 suggests, skateparks make neighbourhoods more appealing to condo developers, then the social benefits they provide must outweigh the potential delinquency they promote. This is consistent with the
finding that skateparks have aesthetic and cultural value to add to their neighbourhood or city landscape.

One of the most significant findings of this study is the link between community advocacy and skatepark success. Skateparks in Hamilton were successful due to a strong relationship between neighbourhood associations, skatepark designers, skatepark users and city officials. By combining their efforts, these groups were able to offer unique perspectives on advocacy and find alternative means of funding when provincial funding was removed. Hamilton’s commitment to improving public recreational facilities and promoting skateboarding culture is evident and the path the city took to get here can be used as an example for other municipalities hoping to do the same.
REFERENCES


SECONDARY SOURCES


**IMAGE REFERENCES**


Questionnaires for Key Informants

For Hamilton Skatepark Assembly

- According to your Steep Transitions article, you were a member of the HSA from 2009 to 2011? What were your responsibilities while you were a member?

- Are you still able to keep up with the HSA and the skateboarding community in Hamilton?

- It’s apparent from the number of skateparks and the dedication of the HSA and the skateboarders themselves that Hamilton has a vibrant skateboarding community. What makes the Hamilton skate scene so strong?

- What is it about Beasley that makes it so beloved among Hamilton skateboarders?

- Were you ever a part of any DIY improvements to the park? Or do you know how they were organized or funded?

- Were you involved with the 2018 resurfacing and redesign of Beasley?

- In your Steep Transitions article you characterize gentrification as exploiting and displacing “homeless, immigrants, the working poor, sex workers, and street-involved youth.” I’m guessing that this is a problem that isn’t unique to skateboarding, but I’m curious if you think that the expansion and improvement of skateparks in a city like Hamilton contributes to that exploitation, and is there something that skateboarders or the skate community can do to combat that phenomenon?

- In your article you describe it as “individualizing, regulating, and rationalizing the subculture” Is it primarily the location of the park, next to a police station that has that effect, or is there something more?

- Valley Park, is being funded 90% by developer fees, by a pool of money that developers contribute to, and the city has access to use for new recreational space. Do you think that this sort of new development will contribute to the exploitation of the disenfranchised that you talk about in your article? Can a skatepark like that be aligned with the traditional grassroots type of skateboarding?

- One more thing: is Beasley the oldest park in Ontario?
For City of Hamilton:

- What impact did the 2017 Hamilton Skateboard Parks Study done by LANDinc have on the decision to redesign Beasley Park and build a new skatepark at Valley Park?

- Did Beasley’s location in a “Code Red” neighbourhood have an influence on the way that the City approached the project?

- What role did community advocates, such as the HSA, have in the projects?

- What has been the community’s reaction to the improvements in Beasley Park? Does the city do any sort of Post Occupancy Evaluation on this sort of project?

- Will the construction process be overseen by the developer, the city or Newline Skateparks?

- How common is the use of developer fees for funding public recreational projects in Hamilton? Has the City of Hamilton undergone an agreement like this in the past?

- What impact does the presence of the developer fees have on the planning process? Will it change at all as a result?

- According to a hamiltonnews.com article, Valley Park will be the first Hamilton park design to cater to BMX bikes and rollerblades, in addition to skateboards. What led to that decision?

- Now that the Valley Park concept design has been revealed, what journey will the park undergo before construction? Is the design finalized or is it still subject to change?

- Part of the concept design indicated a legal street art wall, presumably used to shield the park itself from graffiti. Some parks in Hamilton have graffiti on the parks themselves (e.g. Beasley), while others do not (e.g. Turner). What is the policy on graffiti in skateparks moving forward? What makes it undesirable for Valley Park?
For LANDinc:

- I’m curious about LANDinc’s involvement with skateparks in general. Meaning, how often will LANDinc get involved with a skatepark project, either in the GTA or across Canada?

- How and why did LANDinc get involved with skateparks in Hamilton?

- Who at the City of Hamilton did LANDinc work most closely with during the study? Did you work with Landscape Architectural Services at all?

- Since the study, Hamilton has ramped up construction on skateparks. What do you think made the study so successful in this regard?

- How did you approach the section on skateboarding culture in Hamilton and abroad? For example, did you contact the Hamilton skateboarding Assembly?

- Regarding the hierarchies of skateparks, it seems that all the skateparks in Hamilton are City skatepark size or smaller. Do you think Hamilton needs a Regional size skatepark or would that be something that only belongs in a larger city like Toronto?

- The next skatepark up for construction in Hamilton is Valley Park, and in an online article a member of Hamilton Landscape Architectural staff is cited as saying that it will be the first park in Hamilton designed for BMX bikes and rollerblades as well. The Implementation study outlines a number of issues with parks that mix BMX and skateboarding. Do you think it’s a good idea to design a park this way? How might some of these issues be overcome?

- The implementation study outlines a number of alternative funding sources such as the Trillium Fund and GoFundMe. Do you know if any of these strategies were used? How common are these alternative means of funding in your experience with skateparks?

- Valley Skatepark received 90% of its funding from developer fees. Did LANDinc uncover any other skateparks that were funded this way during the study? How common is it that developers will provide the majority of funds for a public skatepark?
For OMC:

- When did OMC come on board to the project? Were there other LA firms interested in this project?

- What was the subcontracted firm that OMC worked with on Beasley?

- What can you tell me about the story of the park? According to some sources, Beasley is one of, if not the, oldest park in Ontario. How important was preserving the legacy of the park in the design process?

- Did the 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study by LANDinc influence the design process in any way? Did it add anything to the process that otherwise might have been missed?

- How important was community involvement to the design process? Did the HSA participate heavily?

- The study outlines a number of funding sources and partnerships. Do you know if any of these strategies were used?

- Valley Park, the next park to undergo construction, received 90% of its funding from developer fees. Have you ever heard of this happening to another skatepark, or public recreational space?

For Newline:

- Were you part of the team that worked on turner park as well?

- Is it true that the original site was supposed to be in McQuesten neighbourhood, but the park was moved to Rymal Road because of community pushback against a skatepark in their neighbourhood?

- Given the history of Turner Park, it seems that the public view of skateparks in the public has changed considering the public response to the new park. Am I right in this, or has there been pushback against from the community? How has the perception of skateboarding changed among the general public?

- Did the 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study by LANDinc influence the design process in any way? Did it add anything to the process that otherwise might have been missed?

- How important was community involvement to the design process? Did the HSA participate heavily?

- Are there a lot of similar groups to the HSA in Ontario? I know about the Toronto Skateboarding Committee, but I’m not aware of any such group in Guelph.
- When it comes to skate able features, what were some of the design goals for Valley Park?

- Do you find that some communities are more interested in vert features vs street features?

- Someone from LANDinc said that Hamilton might be suitable for a regional size park, because it may be able to catch some of the tourist traffic moving from Toronto to the US. Do you agree? Or are multiple smaller parks more suitable for Hamilton

- I recently was part of a webinar hosted by Kanten Russel from Newline in San Diego. What differs in the design process between a place like Sand Diego and that in Ontario?

- When I asked Kanten about the trends of alternative funding in the US, he talked about grants available for projects relating health and green infrastructure. I’ve seen some grants available for skatepark development in Ontario as well, but more so I have seen developer fees being used to fund new skatepark projects. Have you noticed the same trend as well?

- Kanten also spoke about the importance of integrating the skatepark into the community and ensuring that the park benefits the community as a whole. How is Valley Park going to be integrated into the Stoney Creek neighbourhood?

For City of Hamilton Recreation

- Did the 2017 Hamilton Skateboarding Study by LANDinc influence the planning process? Did it determine the site location?

- When I spoke to Hamilton Landscape Architectural staff he told me about recent changes to the Development Charges act, but I don’t really have a full understanding of it or the changes that occurred due to the new Ontario government. Can you walk me through the process by which developer fees are relegated for use in the Valley Park project? How much and when do developers contribute to the funds that are used here?

- Given the history of Turner Park, it seems that the public view of skateparks in the public has changed considering the public response to the new park. So I’m wondering how has the perception of skateboarding changed among the general public in your experience?

- According to a hamiltonnews.com article, Valley Park will be the first Hamilton park design to cater to BMX bikes and rollerblades, in addition to skateboards. What led to that decision?

- I spoke to a representative from Newline Skateparks this morning, who told me that their community engagement process is incredibly important to the design. But he also
said that the Hamilton Skateboarding Assembly wasn’t as involved as he might have liked. Do you know why that may have been?

- Now that the Valley Park concept design has been revealed, what journey will the park undergo before construction? Is the design finalized or is it still subject to change?

- Someone from LANDinc said that Hamilton might be suitable for a regional size park, because it may be able to catch some of the tourist traffic moving from Toronto to the US. Do you agree? Or are multiple smaller parks more suitable for Hamilton?

- Part of the concept design indicated a legal street art wall, presumably used to shield the park itself from graffiti. Some parks in Hamilton have graffiti on the parks themselves (e.g. Beasley), while others do not (e.g. Turner). What is the policy on graffiti in skateparks moving forward? What makes it undesirable for Valley Park versus someplace like Beasley Park?