

SK8
c/o Gwendolyn Friedrich
66 Rawlinson Place
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4S 6C9

Mayor Doug Archer Dec. 9/94
2476 Victoria Ave.
Regina, Saskatchewan
S4P 3C8

Dear Mayor Archer;

This letter is written on behalf of the approximately 200 citizens of Regina, citizens from every walk of life, both professional, and skilled workers, housewives, doctors, teachers, architects, government employees, and small business operators---All of whom have one thing in common. The overt discrimination against our children. In this letter I will attempt to clarify the basis for our concern, and also offer methods by which we can work together to achieve an equitable solution which meets both our needs, as well as the needs of the City of Regina.

The group of children we are concerned about are a group referred to as THE SKATERS. This group of young people have chosen a recreational activity of skateboarding. This activity has been around for more than 25 years, and thus we are already into our second generation of skateboarders. Like all sports, skating has gone through a number of transitions through-out its history. As little as five years ago many skaters were intrigued with RAMPING. This type of skating called for a ramp with a vertical drop-off. The necessity to have a large area, and excellent supervision has essential in order to ensure the safety of individuals involved in this area of skating.

We congratulate the City of Regina for foresight during this stage of the sport to see the necessity to develop park spaces for the youth involved in skateboarding. However, in the last two years these ramps have remained closed through-out the season.

Further as mentioned earlier Skateboarding, not unlike other sports has undergone some changes. Skating is now done on flat spaces with the skill and challenges coming from various manurers that the skater is capable of completing. These skills such as the Auli, Varial Flip, Grind and Kick-Flip, all demand physical finesse, precision timing, and tremendous dedication to learn the skills. The spaces required to train are really no more than a well paved or cemented area with large broad steps, smooth curbs, and smooth paved inclines.

Since the City of Regina, unlike its counter-city Saskatoon, has NOT developed any SKATEBOARD PARKS, the youth of this City must use the only spaces available to them. The parks, streets, and parking lots of the City of Regina.

Despite the fact that the mandate of the Parks and Recreation Board is to develop recreational spaces to accommodate the needs and activities of the largest possible segment of society, somehow the needs of this group of young people has been completely overlooked. Not only have WE failed to provide an adequate space in which this SPORT can be engaged in, THE CITY OF REGINA, AND ITS POLICE DEPARTMENT charge and harass these youth for skating. The park spaces that we build and develop are OFF LIMITS TO THEM. The side walks and streets ARE OFF LIMIT TO THEM. The parking lots of our city are OFF LIMITS TO THEM.

This situation has reached the point of ridiculousness when youth simply skating home from school are stopped by our local police officers and demanded to "GET OFF THEIR BOARDS AND WALK HOME".

When this situation came to our attention, we recommended to the young skate enthusiasts that perhaps it was WHERE they choose to skate that caused concern to our fair city. We recommended that instead of getting upset when approached in this brisk manner they ask the question, "WHERE SHALL WE SKATE?? WHERE IS IT O.K.?" Everytime they have asked this question the answer has been the same "There is nowhere in the City of Regina in which it is lawful to skate." What a sad inditement for our city.

Lets bring some important points to bear here:

#1. The youth involved in Skateboarding are not in any way vandalizing or hurting anyone. Quite to the contrary they are law abiding individuals dedicated to a sport.

#2. The skaters, as a group, partake in social benefit concerts. They are concerned about social action, such as date rape, child abuse, drugs, and alcohol problems.

#3. The skaters of Regina ARE CLEAN. (Don't do drugs and alcohol) This is part of their belief system.

#4. The skaters of Regina are among the students with the best grades in their high schools. Many of these students have been identified for their outstanding scholastic achievements in the area of arts, computers, or academics.

#5. The City of Regina has developed green spaces unsurpassed by any Western Canadian City. It has developed beautiful arenas for the ice sports, of hockey, ring-ette,. and ice skating. The REC CENTERS are well furnished and accommodate a maraud of sports. (Including spaces for: soccer fields, baseball diamonds, lawn bowling, gymnastics, dance, biking, golf) All these we embrace, and encourage. WHY THEN THE OVERT PREJUDICE AGAINST ONE GROUP OF PERSONS AND THEIR SPORT????

It is in reflecting this question that I believe the root to our solution lies. It is inconceivable to me that a city like our own which believes in equal opportunity, has encouraged and developed accessible recreation projects, and see's itself as leader in the area of recreation is attempting to be deliberately prejudice. I BELIEVE RATHER THAT THE CRUX OF THE MATTER LIES IN A LACK OF UNDERSTANDING. This in fact is the heart of most prejudice. One fears what one does not understand.

It is therefore my hope that the two proposals that we are about to lay forward to you will be taken very seriously. And an attempt to gain increased understanding and achieve an equitable solution to the challenges will in fact be achieved.

PROPOSALS:

#1. Our first proposal is that a meeting take place. This meeting should include at least one person from the CITY PARKS AND REC department, one City Planner, one member of the Regina City Police, Three parents of skaters, and three skaters. The purpose of this meeting should be to establish what the needs of the skaters are, what the needs of the City of Regina are, and to consider proposals and ways in which these needs can be met.

#2. Our second proposal, which can also be discussed at this initial meeting is one of developing a skatepark.

It is our belief that a number of locations within the City of Regina currently exist that due to regulations cannot be developed into housing. One such area currently exists inbetween 25th and Pasqua in the area south of the RUGBY FIELDS. This area cannot be developed due to MOT regulations.

It is our hope that one of these spaces will be allotted by the City Of Regina toward the development of a SKATEBOARD PARK.

It is further our proposal that the group of skaters, and their parents will become actively involved in FUND-RAISING in order to access the community SELF-HELP grant. It is our understanding that this grant allows groups to raise \$7,500 in funds including voluntary labour, and corporate donations, and the CITY OF REGINA will match this with an additional \$7,500.00

It is our proposal that a person from the City Parks Landscape Architect department assist our group in the development and design of a skateboard park which meets with the aesthetic and safety regulations of the City, and meets and accommodates the needs of the Skateboarders of Regina.

It is our belief that should an adequate park of this nature exist that the conflicts that now exist between the Skateboarders and the CITY OF REGINA AND THE REGINA POLICE DEPARTMENT could be eliminated, and this socially minded group of our youth could once again enjoy their citizenship within our fair city.

As spokesperson for this group I look forward to the opportunity to speak with you, and to work with the City in this joint venture project.

Please respond to this proposal as quickly as possible, thereby allowing us time to generate the needed funds to access the SELF-HELP GRANT, (deadline date for this application is Dec. 31/94.)

Thank-you in advance for your anticipated co-operation in this matter.

Yours in recreation:

(Mrs.) Gwendolyn Friedrich
for SK8 REGINA

cc: Chief Murry Langgard--Chief of Police City of Regina
Superintendent Weighill --Commanding Officer, Community
Services Division Regina Police Department
* all councillors
* Mr. Andy Cooper -- City Editor Leader Post Regina
* all parents and skaters of Regina