

Canada's Number One Skateboard Plaza To Open
At 2 pm, June 30, 2006
In Manitoba's Number One Tourist Destination

The Forks, Winnipeg, Manitoba – In just over a week, Canada's number one skateboard plaza will open with a bang followed by a bunch of stars.

"This Plaza is really going to be huge in every sense," says Paul Jordan, Chief Operating Officer, The Forks. "So, we're going to literally blow the sides off it to open it up. Then, the stars will come out and show us how it really should be done starting with the big guns: Steve Berra, Eric Koston and more of the best skateboarders in North America."

Berra and Koston are just the beginning of what will be the biggest day Manitoba skateboarders have ever seen. While the official opening happens at 2 pm on June 30, the entertainment continues on throughout the day.

"We're firing up the Scotiabank Stage with some of the city's best new bands, including Burn the 8 Track and The Details and then in The Plaza we're alternating great DJs with the live music," says Jordan.

But, beyond the opening day star power is The Plaza itself. It is already being called by skateboarders, designers and insiders across the country "Canada's Number One Skateboard Plaza", even before it welcomes its first set of wheels.

"I am totally stoked to help open this park. There's no way I'd miss this man." says Steve Berra, one of the world's best skateboarders who, along with parts of his pro team, will be there to open The Plaza on June 30.

"We set out to make this the best park of its kind and we have, in our eyes, done just that," says Jordan. "The success of this project is really down to the vision of the Burns Family Foundation who came to us with the project, told us it had to be the greatest and then funded it to the level we needed to make it just that. It's also down to the designers and construction team who took that original idea and set out to make it the top one in the country."

The Burns Family Foundation, who donated close to \$2 million to this project, is extremely pleased with the outcome.

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“This is going to be a jewel in the heart of our downtown, something we were, and are, very proud to be a part of, “ says James Burns, head of The Burns Family Foundation. “We established the Foundation just over 2 years ago as a way to give back to the community forever. This project for the young people in Winnipeg fits that goal perfectly.”

The Plaza, unique in its design and approach will also feature original artwork from The Graffiti Gallery and an original sculpture from local artist Pat Lazo.

“We are looking at The Plaza as an ‘off-site’ gallery that works in conjunction with the main gallery,” says Steve Wilson of Graffiti Art Gallery. “We plan on featuring a rotating array of talented graffiti artists, some shown at the gallery at the same time and others exclusive to The Plaza.”

The sculpture within The Plaza is completely in keeping with the spirit of the place.

“I started out with the idea of a fish emerging from water,” says Pat Lazo, local sculptor. “It eventually became a fish jumping out of water as a way to capture the energy and movement that embodies skateboarding as a sport.”

The Plaza at The Forks officially opens to the public on June 30 at 2pm with an official opening ceremony.

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Background Information – The Plaza at The Forks

Covering a total area of over 44,000 square feet, The Plaza at The Forks consists of a meticulously detailed world-class skateable sculpture plaza and expansive modern bowl complex tied seamlessly into the heart of downtown Winnipeg's urban fabric.

Skateable terrain caters to beginners through pros with a myriad of 'real street' and transition influenced features split into two main areas:

Central Plaza: The 30,000 square foot Central Plaza features terrain inspired by famous international skate spots in places such as San Francisco, Barcelona, Japan and beyond. And, the main plaza area is made up of a combination of various stair sets, banks, rails and ledges set within a host of custom sculptures and other art pieces - the majority of which are skateable.

Particular highlights include the notched custom tile vert wall, the "Magic Carpet" - a super elevated steel ribbon track, granite capped ledges and blocks, brick bank hip, and a series of small to large slappy ledges.

Bowl Complex: Separate and adjacent to the Central Plaza, lies a one of a kind 8,500 square foot bowl unit combining traditional pool and modern coping lines.

Walls begin at 5 feet and progress through a series of hips, elevators, extensions, and a pump bump to a massive 17-foot cradle and 13 foot over vert pocket. The bowl itself weighs 42,000 pounds.

The Skate Patrol: As a way to introduce visitors to The Plaza at The Forks, The Forks Renewal Corporation is working together with SK8 to provide "ambassadors" within the confines of the park.

The Patrol, all experienced skateboarders themselves, will tour the site from noon until dusk daily and will work to educate skaters on the etiquette of the park and create an atmosphere where inline skaters, skateboarders and BMX riders all enjoy The Plaza harmoniously.

Confirmed List of Skateboarders – June 30 Opening

Steve Berra
Eric Koston
Mikey Taylor
Chris Anderson
Anthony Van Engelen
Greg Hunt
Tyler Bledsoe
Torey Pudwill

*This list is not final. Additional professional skateboarders are still being added as travel plans are confirmed.

Confirmed List of Entertainment – June 30 Opening

2:15pm	Skate Demonstration – Steve Berra and Pros
3:00pm	The Rock Band
3:30pm	DJ
4:00pm	The Details
4:30pm	DJ
5:00pm	Johnny Upstairs & the Basements
5:30pm	DJ
6:00pm	Anthems Red
6:30pm	DJ
7:00pm	Mood Ruff
7:30pm	DJ
8:00pm	Burn the 8 Track

Background – The Forks

The Forks (site) - Six thousand years ago, this was a great place to meet. Centuries later, it still is.

Located in the heart of the city, at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, The Forks site has played many roles in its long history: meeting place, site of Forts and trading, an immigration hub and until only 20 years ago an abandoned and forgotten railyard. Today it is an open and inviting expanse of riverside property where lush greenspaces mingle freely with unique shops, restaurants and entertainment.

It is a site for all reasons, a place for all seasons: shopping at The Forks Market and Johnston Terminal, live children's theatre, a luxurious spa and hotel, a children's museum, 8 full service restaurants, dozens of quick service kiosks, stunning and award –winning on-site attractions and non-stop entertainment with over 200 events a year.

The Forks is the quintessential one-stop shop, feeding your body, mind and soul all in one beautiful setting. The Forks is a perfect destination for anyone who lives, works or plays in downtown Winnipeg, offering everyone something to love.

The addition of The Plaza at The Forks is an exciting new element to the site that welcomes nearly 4 million visitors annually.

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Background Information – The Plaza at The Forks Partners

Burns Family Foundation

The Burns Family Foundation is committed exclusively to Manitoba projects. Its Directors are James, Martha, Alan and Heather Burns, Ida Albo and Annitta Stenning. The Burns Family Foundation had two conditions for the Park: “It had to be at the Forks and PCL had to build it. Others contributed notably. It was a great team.”

The Forks North Portage Partnership

The Forks North Portage Partnership is a community development corporation owned by the three levels of government on behalf of the citizens of Canada, Manitoba and Winnipeg.

The mission of The Forks North Portage Partnership is to act as a catalyst, encouraging activities for people in downtown through public and private partnerships and revitalization strategies; and to work to ensure financial self-sufficiency.

North Portage shall be a centre of commerce, culture and living, integrated to form a diverse downtown community through a mixture of public uses including: residential, commercial and institutional, recreational, educational, and entertainment facilities.

The Forks shall be developed as a ‘Meeting Place,’ a special and distinct, all season gathering and recreational place at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, through a mixed use approach including recreational, historical and cultural, residential, and institutional and supportive commercial uses.

CentreVenture Development Corporation

CentreVenture Development Corporation, an arms-length agency of the City of Winnipeg, is an advocate and catalyst for business investment, development and economic growth in downtown Winnipeg.

CentreVenture is charged with fostering the revitalization of downtown Winnipeg through strategic management and financial and other support, where possible, of downtown development.

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van der Zalm + associates inc.

Based in British Columbia, VDZ inc. is Canada's leading design firm for 'Action-Sports' facilities including: skateboard parks, BMX facilities, as well as inline and technical mountain bike terrain parks. VDZ is a full service landscape architecture firm with an enthusiastic, young staff who work with clients across Canada, the USA, and northern Europe. With Public Park projects across the Canada, VDZ has maintained small satellite offices in both Calgary and Toronto respectively. VDZ has enjoyed a strong working relationship and friendship with many communities across Canada and continues to strive for high quality design solutions for public spaces that endure and resonate.

New Line Skateparks inc.

NLS is Canada's foremost skatepark design/build company. Newline enjoys a strong reputation for customer service, innovative design, and quality construction. New Line has been involved in the design and construction of over 100 concrete, wood, and steel skatepark solutions. Currently consulting and building across Canada, New Line's crews are highly sought after. With the explosion of interest in skatepark development, New Line is excited about the opportunities for new and innovative public skateparks in all regions of the country. New Line has built some of the country's most recognized and acclaimed public skateparks. With full-time staff over 25 people, New Line is busy working in British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and the Maritimes.

Scatliff+Miller+Murray

Scatliff+Miller+Murray is an award winning, diversified consulting firm providing services in urban planning and design, commercial and institutional development, waterfront development, community and school planning, park planning and design, bridge architecture, golf course architecture and 3D simulation at an international level.

The principals and staff of Scatliff+Miller+Murray have been involved in many significant assignments throughout Canada, the United States, Bermuda and China. The firm has developed a reputation for innovative, creative design and comprehensive project management.

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As a result of this goal, their diverse client base has identified numerous projects as significant solutions worthy of recognition and award.

Scatliff+Miller+Murray has received numerous awards for projects from the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects Design Awards (most recently for the planning of Waterfront Drive in Winnipeg), the International Downtown Association, and the Top Honor Award at the "Excellence on The Waterfront" International Design Competition, presented in Washington D.C.

PCL

The PCL family of companies is a group of independent construction companies, each one known for its can-do attitude and proven track record. We are construction leaders: we aspire to be your builders of choice. Our work is conducted by independent operating companies, working out of major offices in 27 locations across Canada, United States and the Bahamas. Together, these companies form the PCL family of companies—the largest general contracting organization in Canada and one of the largest in the United States, with an annual construction volume approaching \$5 billion.

Graffiti Art Programming

Graffiti Art Programming Inc. is a not-for-profit community youth outreach centre located in the core area of Winnipeg (109 Higgins Avenue) using art as a tool for community, social, economic and individual growth. Art becomes the foundation for a skill building set that, through a unique mix of innovative programming, can be directed and honed to provide recreational experiences, as well as multiple sustainable employment opportunities.

The gallery was created from a need to provide places where young people could learn and be safe; to provide opportunities to build positive self-images by offering alternate means of expression that are positive and constructive. Our key demographic targets youth between the ages of 15 and 25 years. Programs are always evolving to meet the needs of the neighbourhood; to provide channels of expression that are alternatives to vandalism and violence, as well as more avenues of instruction and hope.

The gallery is a neighbourhood drop-in centre. It also provides tours, with 2500 students and their teachers coming through the door in the last year, including summer camp activities. Focus of the tours includes a history of the gallery and its present day function, as well as some great hands on artwork.

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Many schools in the area use the gallery as a form of art class for their students during regular school hours.

Artists' designs have been sold or shown globally. As well, several young artists have been featured on the CBC National News, the CTV National News, CTV's W5/21C and in the National Post.

SK8 Skates

Sk8 Skates is one Canada's oldest skateshops. For over 15 years, Sk8 has been serving the skateboard community in Winnipeg and across Canada. Our "for skaters by skaters" mentality means that we are actively involved in our community and support local skateboarders, artists, and musicians. Rather than just a shop, Sk8 is a community of people who share this same mentality and love for skateboarding.

Destination Winnipeg Inc.

Destination Winnipeg Inc. is Winnipeg's economic development and tourism services agency, an arm's length organization led by a private sector board with core funding from the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba. Destination Winnipeg Inc. provides key services such as information, marketing, brokering, partnering and project management and support. Information when you need it: work, live or play at www.destinationwinnipeg.ca.

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