

Ontario Promoting Safe Inclusive Skateboarding Environment in Thunder Bay

Provincial investment supporting creation of indoor skateboard park

NEWS

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THUNDER BAY – The Ontario government is providing \$58,253 through the [Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation](#) (NOHFC) to the Female Boarder Coalition to build a safe and inclusive space for skateboarding in Thunder Bay. This investment is developing community recreational infrastructure, supporting social connections and improving quality of life for northerners.

“Our government is hard at work making targeted investments that support economic development and growth right here in Thunder Bay,” said Kevin Holland, MPP for Thunder Bay-Atikokan. “These investments demonstrate how, together with our northern partners, we are building strong, vibrant communities and creating real opportunities for the people who live in the north.”

The Female Boarder Coalition is a non-profit that aims to break down barriers in skateboarding and snowboarding with dedicated programs for people who identify as female, non-binary and 2SLGBTQQIA+. The coalition will use NOHFC funding to turn the old Cumberland Cinema into an indoor skateboard park.

The park will allow the coalition to offer year-round skateboard and snowboard programs to all Thunder Bay area residents, as well as partner with local community and Indigenous groups and initiatives such as the Rainbow Collective, Fort William First Nation Youth Centre, and City of Thunder Bay Youth Inclusion Program.

“The construction of the skatepark would not have come together without the support of the province and NOHFC funding,” said Vanessa Bowles, Executive Director, Female Boarder Coalition. “This funding has helped us create a year-round safe space for all, with the intention of breaking cycles of poverty and addiction while promoting healthy active lifestyles. The impact is already being felt by the community and supporting positive change.”

“Our government is focused on investing in communities and creating vibrant recreational facilities that promote physical health and mental wellness,” said Greg Rickford, Minister of Northern Development. “The Female Boarder Coalition is creating an incredible safe and inclusive space for all to have fun and meet others interested in skateboarding and snowboarding.”

The NOHFC promotes economic prosperity across Northern Ontario by providing financial assistance to projects—big and small, rural and urban—that stimulate growth, job creation and skills development. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested more

than \$578 million in 4,935 projects in Northern Ontario, leveraging more than \$1.87 billion in investment and creating or sustaining over 7,870 jobs.

Quick Facts

- In 2021, the Ontario government launched [new and improved NOHFC programs](#) that support more projects in rural northern communities and make it easier for more people and businesses to apply. The programs target existing and emerging markets, provide more work opportunities for Indigenous people and address the skilled labour shortage in the north.

Additional Resources

- The [NOHFC](#), [Northern Development Offices](#) and [Small Business Enterprise Centres](#) are available to support northern communities, businesses and other stakeholders in identifying economic development opportunities and assist in accessing government funding programs.
- The NOHFC's [Community Enhancement Program](#) builds strong and resilient northern communities through investments in important infrastructure projects.

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