



**DOWNTOWN
MINNEAPOLIS
NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION**

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The Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association (DMNA) exists to promote the common good and general welfare of the residents, businesses, and employees of Downtown Minneapolis.

March 15, 2021

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association to endorse the effort led by the Midwest Skateboarding Alliance (MSA) to build a pocket park with a state-of-the-art skatepark in the Downtown West Neighborhood in Minneapolis.

The Downtown West neighborhood has some of the most highly visited destinations in the region. However, for people who live and work in the area an essential feature is lacking: park space!

The proposed site for this park, a vacant lot at 2nd Avenue North and North 4th Street, is ideal for meeting this need. The lot is highly visible and accessible, at a common access point for the millions of visitors that stream into downtown for entertainment and special events. Currently, the lot is empty, unprogrammed, and vegetated by volunteer plants, conditions that lead to the area becoming unsafe at night.

As an organization invested in the vitality of downtown Minneapolis, we support the objectives of this effort to:

- Transform a neglected, unwelcoming space into a vibrant community asset
- Provide workers and residents with an outdoor area to relax and enjoy an alternative place for meals and meetings
- Encourage more foot-traffic in the area in order to activate the space, and thereby increase safety.
- Provide a space for vulnerable youth to access information on where to obtain safe housing and crisis support
- Contribute to downtown innovations in green infrastructure with the addition of rain gardens, shade trees, and progressive stormwater management
- Create a top tier skatepark that will fuel physical activity for youth and adult skaters and attract visitors that will patronize local restaurants and businesses
- Offer an alternative place for skateboarders to enjoy their sport as a means of proactively reducing nuisance complaints or property damage elsewhere downtown.
- Foster displays of public art and citizen athleticism
- Expand downtown pollinator and bird habitat and promote sustainable, native plantings in the downtown area
- Visually communicate to visitors and prospective residents that the Downtown West neighborhood is trend-setting, inclusive, and engaged

Downtown skateparks in other U.S. cities have demonstrated their ability to provide more opportunity for people across race, class, gender, and age to be in community with one another. The creation of this type of amenity is a small but very important step in an urban environment that is far from inclusive.

MSA has shown their passion in their efforts to achieve a skatepark by working diligently to gather research alongside city staff and elected officials and coordinate outreach to the public. We appreciate their commitment to advancing safety and vitality of the heart of Minneapolis.

We hope you and your organization will join us in supporting this exciting development project.

Sincerely,

Christie Rock Hantge
DMNA Neighborhood Coordinator