

Youth Venture

BEMIDJI SKATE AND BIKE PARK VENTURE TEAM



In the summer of 2008, a team of high school youth in Bemidji received a grant from Youth Venture in conjunction with Burton Snowboards to launch their efforts to build a local skate and bike park. Now, only months later, they have raised almost \$300,000 through grants and city funding and are only \$100,000 more away from reaching their goal!

Bemidji Skate and Bike Park is a fundraising Venture that aims to raise enough money through grants and donations to build a free park for youth in the community, providing a safe, free, and fun outlet for young people after school.

The team of youth noticed that there was a large skate and biking community in the area, and yet many youth hours away to Grand Rapids or Fargo, ND to enjoy the benefits of a free skate park. The team decided there was enough interest and passion in the community to build a skate park in their very own backyard! They started with the support of Youth Venture-Burton, and quickly earned the approval of the City of Bemidji, in the form of \$150,000, to really get started.

The team hopes that the skate park will provide an outlet for young people to practice their sports safely without breaking city regulations that prohibit skating and biking on the sidewalks. The park will also provide an environment for young people to congregate productively afterschool, whether they are actively skating or just watching their friends. A skate park is not only a fun place for youth, but a healthy one as well. The team hopes that the skate park will encourage more and more area young people to exercise on a regular basis, curbing childhood obesity and promoting healthy lifestyles.

THE IDEA

- Provide youth in the Bemidji area with a safe and fun recreational area by building a skate and bike park.
- Promote an active lifestyle and combat childhood obesity through a fun, free space to skate and bike.
- Spread a positive image of skaters and bikers within the community by encouraging local skate community to respect city rules.

IMPACT

- Raised over \$280,000 so far, including grants from the Tony Hawk Foundation and the George W. Neilson Foundation.
- Received approval and support from the City of Bemidji, with construction slated to begin in early 2010.



“WE ARE ON A MISSION TO BUILD A FREE PUBLIC SKATE AND BIKE PARK IN BEMIDJI, MN. WE STILL HAVE A LOT OF WORK TO DO!”