



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 22, 2015

## **Charles River Conservancy Begins Skatepark Construction with Brownfield Remediation**

*Lynch Family Skatepark will be first under state park management*

CAMBRIDGE - Wednesday, April 22, 2015 - [The Charles River Conservancy](#) is pleased to announce that construction on the 40,000-square-foot [Lynch Family Skatepark](#) is now underway. The \$4.5 million skatepark will be built in East Cambridge, next to the Zakim Bridge under the I-93 off-ramp in North Point State Park.

"The Conservancy is focused on making the Charles River Parklands more active, attractive and accessible for all of us. The effort to build such a monumental recreational facility along the Charles accomplishes each of those goals," said [Renata von Tscharnier](#), founder and president of the Charles River Conservancy. "The Lynch Family Skatepark remediates a brownfield creating more attractive and accessible parklands while simultaneously providing unprecedented recreational opportunities for athletes of all ages in our community."

With the snow melted, the Conservancy's General Contractor [ValleyCrest](#) has begun an anticipated 6-month construction process. As the site is now an active construction area, the best place to watch construction is from the adjacent [North Bank Bridge](#), which connects North Point Park to Charlestown.

"The construction of this skatepark is the culmination of more than a decade of working together with Charles River Conservancy and other partners in the community," said Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) [Commissioner Jack Murray](#). "We thank the Conservancy for their support and look forward to this unique skatepark opening, which will provide a wonderful family friendly destination for decades to come."

Previously held by the [Massachusetts Department of Transportation \(MassDOT\)](#), the land identified for the skatepark was transferred to [DCR](#) as part of the Central Artery/Tunnel Project. The skatepark site is considered a [brownfield](#) due to years of industrial use. Air monitoring and ongoing safety oversight measures are in place to ensure the safety of the construction workers, neighbors and park users during the process of remediating this brownfield. Once the skatepark is completed the site will be remediated and safe for users and observers.

The skatepark project will thus accomplish the remediation of a brownfield as well as providing unprecedented recreational opportunities for athletes in the Greater Boston area.

"When completed, the Lynch Family Skatepark will be a creative public recreation space that will serve skaters and riders from around the region. This project has received significant support from the City of Cambridge and from private donors like Vans and the Lynch Foundation, and without their generosity construction of the skatepark would not be possible," said [State Representative Timothy Toomey](#). "I'm confident that the Lynch Family Skatepark will be a positive addition to our community."

Bio-retention swales incorporated into the skatepark's design will absorb and reduce storm water run-off into the Charles. The inclusion of these swales demonstrates the Conservancy's commitment to the health of the river. The apron of planted areas around the skate-able areas will also further act as a natural filtration and retention system.

Once the soil is sufficiently settled and stable and the drainage system is completed, the foundation for the bowls and streetscape can be built. A team of skatepark master builders from [California Skateparks](#) will form the complex contours, add the metal edges and pour the concrete, which will be the framework for first world class 21st Century skatepark to be built in Massachusetts.

For more than a decade, the Conservancy has worked with DCR and supporters toward the creation of an urban skatepark that will cater to athletes of all levels, including skateboarders, BMX riders, in-line skaters, scooter riders and athletes in wheelchairs, while also serving as a venue for professional skating events.

"I am thrilled to see this skate park become a part of our community after such a thoughtful public process," said [Cambridge Mayor David Maher](#). "The Lynch Family Skate Park will add to the vitality and excitement of North Point and is another crucial step in the continued evolution of this new Cambridge neighbourhood. This will be an exciting and unique destination for generations of Cambridge residents and for many of our area neighbors for decades to come."

The skatepark's skateable area was designed by the engineering, architecture and design firm [Stantec](#), while the apron of green landscaping around the skateable surface was designed by landscape architecture firm [Halvorson Design Partnership, Inc.](#) [Mike McIntyre of Stantec's Action Sport Group](#) played an instrumental role in designing the park. McIntyre is a former professional skateboarder who has built more than 150 skate parks around the country and overseas.

The Conservancy received a leadership commitment of \$1.5M from sneaker and skateboarding giant [Vans, Inc](#) to construct the skatepark. Vans will also provide \$25,000 each year for seven years to the DCR for ongoing maintenance of the skatepark.

"Vans is very excited to be back in Boston decades after my father began his career in the footwear business," said [Steve Van Doren](#), Vans vice president of events and promotions and son of Vans founder Paul Van Doren. "Nearly 50 years ago, skateboarders and BMX riders adopted Vans as their shoe of choice and it's an honor to return to my family's roots to help support the creation of a skatepark that will be open to all."

[The Lynch Foundation's](#) early and continued support has also been critical to the skatepark's development.

"We supported the Conservancy for this skatepark because Boston's youth need a place to practice and showcase their athletic skills," said [Carolyn Lynch](#) of the Lynch Foundation. "We applaud the Conservancy for working with the State in this public - private endeavor on this challenging site."

The Conservancy raised over \$3 million for the skatepark prior to the commitment from Vans. Other generous contributors to the skatepark include the Lynch Foundation, for which the park will be named, as well as the City of Cambridge, [the Barr Foundation](#), the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority. A seed grant of \$5,000 from the foundation of famed skateboarder [Tony Hawk](#) helped to get the fundraising going in 2003. The project has also received support from more than 400 skaters and their parents who helped design the park and gave whatever they could to support its development--some giving \$5 and some giving over \$5,000.

Upon completion, the Conservancy will gift the skatepark to DCR, who will operate it as the first skatepark in their portfolio of recreational state parks.

To follow the skatepark's long-awaited progress, please visit the Conservancy's website [thecharles.com](http://thecharles.com) or follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/CharlesRiverConservancy](https://facebook.com/CharlesRiverConservancy), or via twitter [@CharlesRiverCRC](https://twitter.com/CharlesRiverCRC). Updates will be posted every Wednesday afternoon using #skateboston.

###

### **About the Charles River Conservancy**

Founded in 2000, The Conservancy has over 25,000 supporters and volunteers, The Conservancy's programs include returning swimming to the River, employing 2,000 landscape volunteers annually, improving the river paths, advocating for underpasses, illuminating bridges, and offering the Sunday Parkland Games The Conservancy, with the help of private donors, often partners with DCR and MassDOT to implement civic projects and programs. [www.thecharles.org](http://www.thecharles.org) / [facebook.com/charlesriverconservancy/](https://facebook.com/charlesriverconservancy/) [twitter.com/charlesrivercrc](https://twitter.com/charlesrivercrc)

### **Media Contact**

#### **S.J. Port**

o: 617-300-8172

c: 781-752-5341

[sjport@thecharles.org](mailto:sjport@thecharles.org)