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Seneca Nation Awarded Two “Built to Play” Skatepark Grants

Cattaraugus Territory, Seneca Nation – The Seneca Nation announced it will soon be home to two new concrete skateparks as the result of two distinct grant awards from the Built to Play Skatepark Grant fund. These awards, secured by the Seneca Nation Department of Transportation (SNIDOT) in cooperation with the Community Planning & Development Department (CPDD), will provide for permanent concrete skateparks on the Allegany and Cattaraugus Territories of the Seneca Nation. The newly funded parks will be located at the Cattaraugus Community Center in Irving, NY, while a second park location will be determined through community meetings and fundraising efforts on the Allegany Territory.

“As a Nation focused on our seventh generation, we put a tremendous amount of our heart and soul into our Seneca youth. We can all easily recognize the importance of access to engaging outdoor activities. Since 2019, community members have been pursuing a Built to Play Skatepark Grant from The Skatepark Project. Today’s announcement is a win-win for skateboarders and BMX riders in our communities, as well as our leaders here today. This administration is thrilled to see this vision come to fruition,” said Seneca Nation President Matthew Pagels.

“For the past four years, we at The Skatepark Project have been working alongside the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation to help communities throughout southeast Michigan and Western New York. This partnership with the Seneca Nation is the Built to Play program’s first sovereign government project. The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation has seen the need for public skateparks in the region, and routinely provides funding for those communities that wish to work to develop them,” said Trevor Staples, Built to Play Skatepark Manager.

Following this announcement, fundraising will begin immediately to reach the \$250,000 goal set for the Seneca Skatepark located on the Allegany Territory in Salamanca, NY. These funds must be finalized by January 10, 2023 in order to proceed. Funds allocated for the Seneca Skatepark on the Cattaraugus Territory will fully cover the cost of construction. Construction is anticipated to be complete by the Fall of 2022 at the Cattaraugus Territory Seneca Skatepark, while construction will wrap up in the Fall 2023 at the Allegany location.

“We are committed to creating a fun and safe place where our youth can get involved with skateboarding and help build healthy and active lifestyles. These skateparks will be an exciting addition to our communities,” said Seneca Nation Tribal Councillor William “Billy” Canella.

In order to move this project from concept to reality, the Seneca Nation will host two community input meetings in May 2022. The first meeting will be held on May 17 at the Allegany Community Center (ACC) on the Allegany Territory at 6:00 p.m. The second will be held the following evening, May 18, at the Cattaraugus Community Center (CCC) in Irving, NY, also at 6:00 p.m.

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