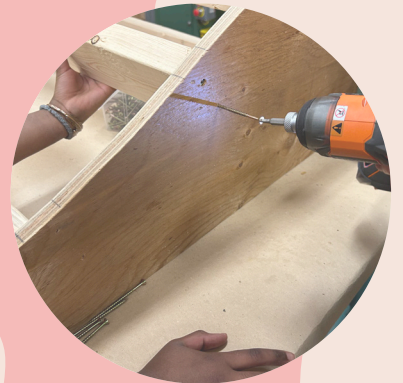
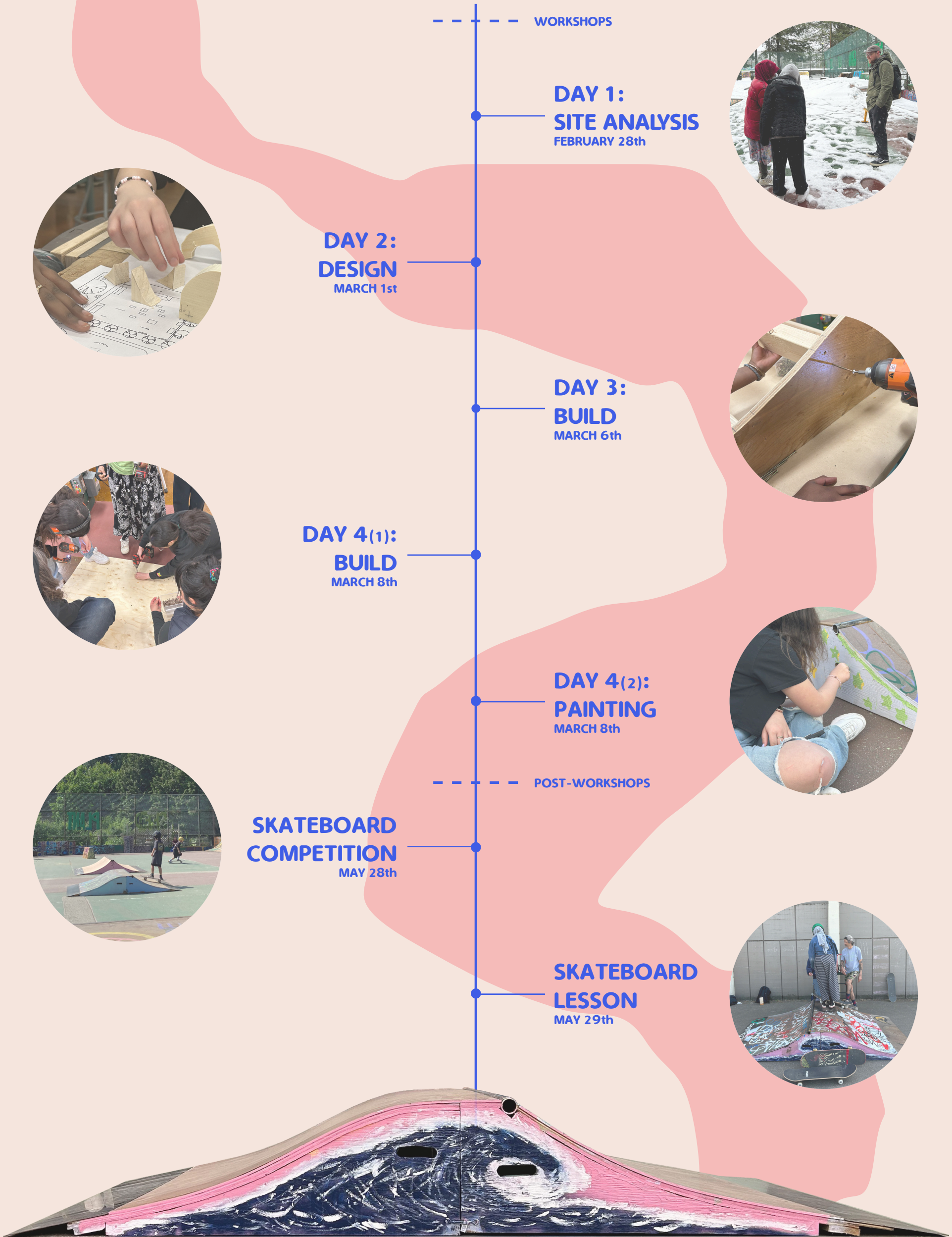




CONNECT TO COMMUNITY GRANT

THE STREET WAVE SKATEBOARD FEATURE

PROJECT SUMMARY



Reflections

With the funding (\$1,493) and additional resources provided by the Centre for Community Engaged Learning through the Connect to Community grant, the Britannia Skateboard Committee (BSC) and Britannia Secondary School (BSS) community were brought together to design and build a set of modular skateboard features for Britannia Courts - a DIY skatepark in East Vancouver. In doing so, this project aimed to relay knowledge and skills from the skateboard community to secondary students, encouraging them to take agency over spaces they use and hopefully establish an ongoing relationship with the two adjacent communities. Reflecting on this project personally, I became much better at communicating with different individuals and found that I was able to coordinate between many groups without getting overwhelmed. The amount of support I received from the BSC, BSS, and the Britannia Community Centre to run the workshops helped to make coordination much easier. There is an impressive strength within these communities to turn an idea into reality. Without the support and woodshop space provided by the school, the volunteers from the BSC who dedicated a significant amount of time, and the community centre that provided honorariums for the participants, the workshops would not have been made possible.

Community Impact

There has already been a notable impact within the community as a result of the workshops. Everyday the skateboard feature, known as 'The Streetwave', is used by the skateboard community and it was recently a main feature in a youth skateboard competition. Moreover, now that there is better communication between the BSC and BSS, I was able to organize a skateboard lesson where students learned to skateboard on the feature they built. BSS is very interested to continue skateboard-related programming next school year and even bought skateboard equipment for students to use.

Student Learning

The original learning objectives for this project were:

- To learn to plan a project that engages different communities, managing time, resources, and relationships effectively and meaningfully.
- To learn how to relay valuable knowledge from one community to another, empowering both along the way.
- To gain valuable experience in hands-on community building through a design-focused project.

Reflecting back on these objectives, I feel that I was able to achieve all three. I successfully coordinated the workshops by effectively managing time, resources, and relationships, which has led to interest in running more workshops in the future. Both communities were empowered through the exchange of knowledge of the workshops, where the BSC exemplified the value they hold within the community while the students were empowered by developing their own idea and turning it into reality. I was recently told by a staff member at BSS that the students who took part in the workshops are still talking about it, signifying that this knowledge exchange was successful. This was reflected in the responses I received in the surveys I handed out at the end of the workshops, in which students expressed their new interest in building objects to improve their community. Lastly, I personally gained a significant amount of experience with hands-on design and engagement. After explaining this project to one of my professors, he equated the skills I was learning to project management - a valuable skillset in the field of landscape architecture.

The biggest challenge I faced with this project was scheduling. For myself, it was difficult to balance the workshops while completing my graduate project for my Master's of Landscape Architecture degree. Since I did not have the adequate knowledge to run the workshops on my own, I had to also coordinate with a few individuals from the BSC who also had busy schedules. The best time for us turned out to be during Spring Break, which did not work for the BSS staff and students. We decided to run two workshops a week for two weeks in order to accommodate everyone's schedule, which was less ideal than the original plan to run one a week for four weeks yet still worked well. Many other challenges were fortunately avoided by running the workshops as an afterschool program, which covered issues of liability and also reduced costs for equipment.

This project has enabled me to get very involved with the Britannia Courts community and I have become close with those involved. It has made me interested in other opportunities for DIY community building and has opened my eyes to the power of grants. Surprisingly, this project helped me to get a job with a landscape architecture firm that has recently started to work with Britannia Courts to secure a space within the renewal of the community centre. The skills I gained from bringing an idea into reality is something I will carry forward into my career. Similar to the student participants, I also feel empowered to continually improve the world throughout my life.