

An aerial photograph of a skatepark, showing various ramps, bowls, and flat areas. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green color. The skatepark features several large, curved ramps and a central circular bowl. The ground is a mix of light and dark green, suggesting different materials or lighting effects.

# **SKATEPARK PLANNING AND DESIGN GUIDE**

SEPTEMBER 2025

**CONVIC**

## QUALITY INFORMATION

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# 01

## BACKGROUND

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# I INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

Since its development into mainstream sports, Skateboarding has had various surges in popularity and is currently still on the rise. Skateboarding is now recognised as a legitimate sport, the key indicator being the inclusion in the Tokyo and Paris Olympics.

Historically, many skatepark facilities have been delivered outside of Government strategic planning guidelines, through an ad hoc, reactionary approach. This has resulted in facilities that are often poorly located, unsafe and not adequately serving the needs of the youth and wider community.

The Skateboarding New Zealand 2023 Skateboard Participation Survey had the following key findings regarding New Zealand Skateparks:

- Better provision and management of skateparks and skate spaces were the top items on the minds of the New Zealand skateboard community.
- 34% of participants said that having nowhere to skateboard or that the skatepark or spot was too far away stopped them from skateboarding.
- 13% of people surveyed said they didn't feel safe, fit in, or welcome at their skatepark or skate spot. The number of people was much higher amongst females participants at 36%.
- Overall findings noted New Zealand skaters need better provision and management of skateparks and skate spaces, more events and competitions, and supporting and empowering communities to achieve better outcomes.

Credit: Skateboarding New Zealand 2023 Skateboard Participation Survey.

This document aims to serve as a comprehensive guide for the long-term development of skate and wheeled sports facilities in the Wellington Region, setting a benchmark for other regions in Aotearoa to follow in their planning decisions regarding skate facilities. It will assess the quality of existing skatepark assets and offer recommendations for necessary improvements and redevelopment. The goal is to ensure that the planning and provision of skate facilities effectively address community needs both now and in the future, identify the types of facilities required, and determine the most suitable locations for future developments.

## SCOPE

The scope of this document will be achieved through the following key objectives:

- Assess current provision based on condition and function outcomes, skill level and style analysis.
- Understand usage trends and community demand.
- Determine gaps in provision.
- Provide a framework for new and upgraded facilities based on assessment of current provision, usage trends and demand.
- Develop conceptual designs to guide funding and resources.

## DEFINITIONS

A brief explanation of terms used in this document:

### THE STRATEGY

The Wellington Skate Strategy and wheeled sports approach for the region.

### THE REGION

The extent of the Wellington Council Neighbourhood government areas; Hutt City Council, Upper Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council and Kāpiti Coast District Council.

### AUTHORITY

Any government or government department, municipal, statutory, judicial, public or administrative body, entity, agency or authority.

### SKATE

User groups that utilise a non-motorised wheeled device to roll or ride at skate parks or urban environments. The Strategy recognises the need to consider other wheeled sports, outside of skateboarding, therefore the term 'skate' encompasses activities such as scooters, inline skates, quad skates, longboards, BMX and more.

### FACILITY / PARK / SKATEPARK

Relates to a skatepark, or space that caters to action wheeled sports activities including skateboards, BMX bikes, scooters, inline skates, rollerskates, sports modified wheelchairs.

### TRICKS

A range of specific actions or moves performed by the rider that differ in difficulty, look and style. Often performed on elements/features within a rider's surroundings, such as skate parks, jumps, ledges, rails etc.

### GRIND

A trick performed by a rider where they are to slide along a section of coping or concrete ledge without the use of wheels.

### RIDE

The controlled movement of any action wheeled sports device.

### NODE

A concentration of movement or focal point of activity. For example, a community node would be an area where communities congregate, such as shopping centres etc.

### ACTIVE USER

Someone who is physically riding the facility on a skateboard, bike, scooter or similar.

### INACTIVE USER

Someone who is taking part in the activity, but is waiting for their turn when the active user is finished.

### SPECTATOR / OBSERVER

Someone who is watching the activity on the facility.

### PARTICIPANT

Someone who may be an active user, an inactive user or observer at the facility.

### CPTED

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

### HAZARD

Any item posing an immediate risk to the safety of participants.

### TA

Territorial Authority



# 02

## UNDERSTANDING SKATEPARKS

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## OVERVIEW

It is important to understand the growth and popularity of skate on a global scale. The recent increase of youth in more unstructured sporting activities has meant a large increase in the participation levels wheeled sports worldwide. These are becoming a more popular sporting choice for many as they provide freedom of expression through an easily accessible and affordable outlet.

The term 'skate' has evolved to take on many shapes and forms since its beginning, including skateboarding, scootering, freestyle BMX, rollerblading and rollerskating. These activities all have a different meaning depending on who you ask; they are considered to be forms of recreation, transportation, sport, career paths, art forms, channels for self expression and, for many, a way of life.

Skate has been influenced and shaped by many individuals, organisations and movements over the years with surges in popularity, which to this day, are still on the rise. An indication of this growth would be the inclusion of freestyle BMX and skateboarding in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and the continuation at the 2024 Paris Olympics solidifying them as mainstream and globally recognised activities.

## SKATE USER TYPOLOGIES

It is important to identify that the evolution of skateable spaces encompasses the broader range of wheeled action sports user groups. The term 'skate' within this report refers to any activity that utilises a wheeled, non-motorised device to roll or ride on different surfaces and elements within a skatepark or the urban environment.

This strategy considers all wheeled sports, including activities such as scooters, inline skates, quad skates, longboards, freestyle BMX and more. Each of these user groups has its own identity, culture and associated spatial needs, but share common spaces and ethos.

### SKATEBOARDING

Skateboarding has become a popular and affordable alternative to many structured sports. The growth and popularity of the sport secured it a spot in the 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games. The original style of skateboarding has developed into three distinct disciplines: street, park and transition, each providing the rider with a different set of challenges and way of riding. The associated equipment and fashion industries have a massive worldwide market. A recent report states that the skateboarding industry is worth an estimated \$4.8 billion in annual revenue and there are 11.08 million active skateboarders around the world.

### FREESTYLE BMX

Freestyle BMX has been around since the early 1970s and is very different to BMX racing (its dirt counterpart). Freestyle BMX users focus on individual jumps and tricks. Freestyle BMX has grown to include five distinct disciplines: street, park, vert, dirt, and flatland. These usually involve technical manoeuvres or 'tricks' with the bike in different ways over varied terrain. The majority of BMX use in skateparks is freestyle.

### SCOOTERS

Scooters were created at a similar time to the first skateboards, made of timber boards and an arm with handles to balance. Scooters have taken on various shapes and configurations over time. In the late 1990s 'Razor' brought out an aluminum kick scooter aimed at 8-12-year-olds that has become very popular. Over the last fifteen years, scooters have remained popular with younger users and are often seen at skateparks. Given the size and fragility of scooters, there are not many older users; individuals generally progress to BMX or skateboards. Scooters are a great starting point for younger users to be introduced to wheeled sports and skatepark facilities.

### INLINE SKATING

Freestyle inline skating or rollerblading was first undertaken in the 1980s, and developed from the more initially relaxed pursuit of rollerskating. Over the next fifteen years it grew in interest and in 1995 became a legitimate X-Games sport. Wearing shoes or boots with a line of three to five wheels, inline skaters utilize both the urban environment and skateparks. The sport increased in popularity in the early 2000s but has since dropped off over the last fifteen years.

### QUAD SKATING

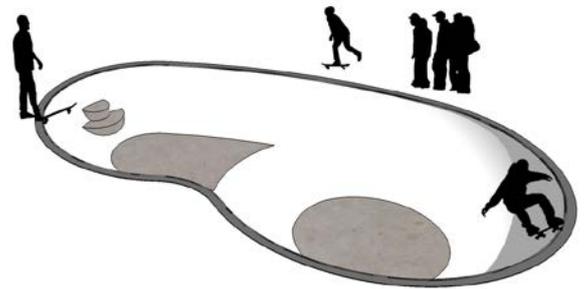
Quad skating or rollerskating developed in 1935 and became popular again in the 60s and 70s with the development of the first polyurethane wheels. Skates can be used as a form of transportation but have been commonly used in recent years on roller derby tracks or for freestyle skating. Roller derby is a contact sport played by two teams with five members skating in the same direction around a track. Points are accrued by lapping the opposing team. Freestyle skating is similar to skateboarding in that tricks are performed on various features throughout the urban environment or within a designated skate space.

## SKATE RIDING STYLES

Once established as a recognised recreation/sport, skate has evolved into various styles, each with their own characteristics and spatial requirements. Four main riding styles are defined below and apply across all the wheeled action sport's disciplines. It is important to note that there is often an overlap between user styles.

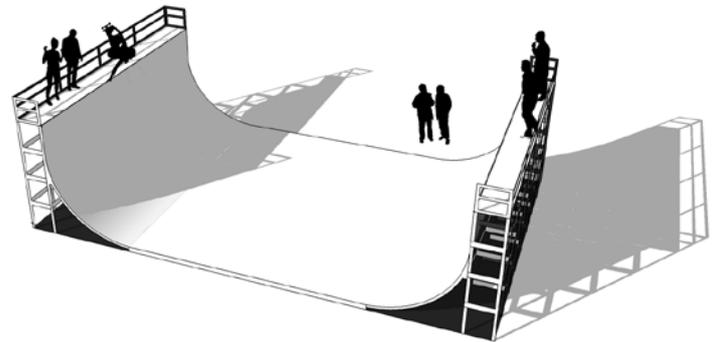
### BOWL, POOL OR TRANSITION SKATING

Bowl skating evolved from the skating of swimming pools in the 60s and 70s when pools were empty due to drought. Made up of continuous transitions and flowing quarter-pipes, it allows users to generate speed to perform tricks on the coping around the top edge or launch out above the coping to execute aerial manoeuvres. Bowls are generally constructed from concrete or timber.



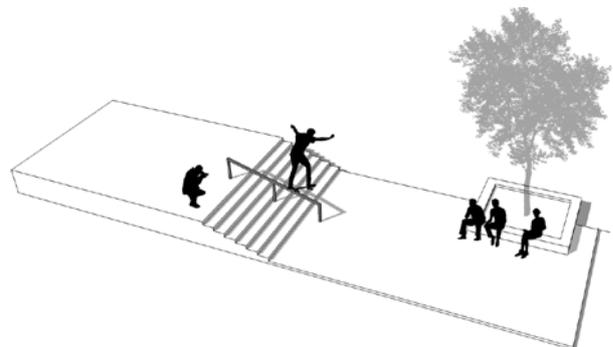
### VERT SKATING

This style of skate also developed from pool skating but rather than being an enclosed bowl it is literally a 'half-pipe' with 'vert' added to either side. Users go back and forth and 'pump' up and down the transition, gaining momentum to perform tricks at the top of either side. The difference between a half-pipe and vert ramp is the inclusion of the vertical section above each quarter pipe, making it more suited to advanced riders. Vert ramps are commonly made from steel, concrete, timber or custom made skate ramp surface such as "skate-lite" or "Gatorskin" with steel coping at the top of the quarters.



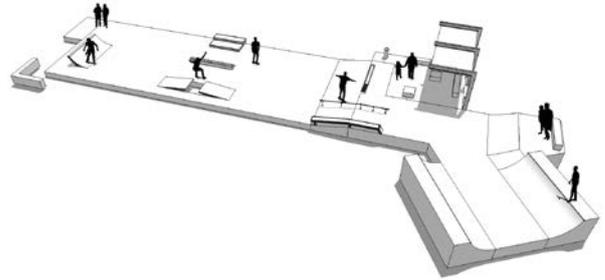
### STREET SKATING

Street skating utilises features found in the urban environment. Examples include stairs, handrails, benches, kerbs and can be as simple as a smooth flat open area to perform 'flat ground' tricks in. It requires smooth, flat spacious areas commonly made up of hard and robust materials such as concrete and granite. Street skaters enjoy exploring the urban environment and being amongst the atmosphere of the city.



## SKATEPARK SKATING

Skatepark skating is defined by using purpose built spaces dedicated to skateboarding and other wheeled sports. Generally, park will encompass many varieties of skate- style obstacles included in one space. Parks can be heavily street or transition orientated or a combination of both, depending on user requirements. They cater for beginner to advanced users and provide a progressive space for skill development. Parks are generally a family friendly space with accompanying amenities such as shade and seating.



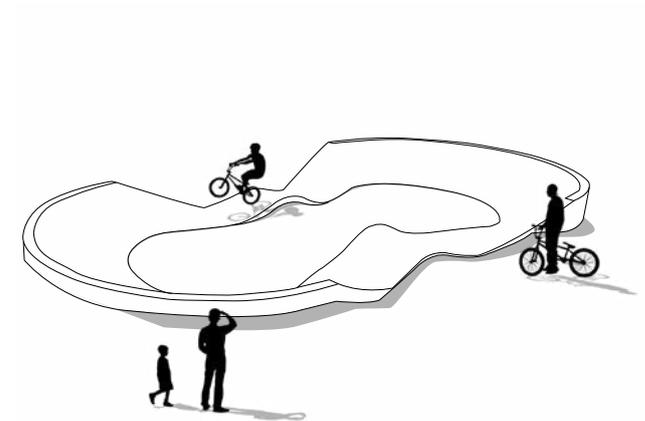
## PUMP TRACK

Pump tracks comprise a circuit consisting of banked turns, bumps and roll over jumps, which riders navigate by simply 'pumping' (creating momentum with up and down body movements), eliminating the need to pedal.

Pump tracks cater to a wide variety of skill levels and a wide range of riding styles. Some pump tracks consist of multiple lines and options that a rider can take but will always link back to the starting point, creating an endless loop.

Pump tracks are traditionally built with asphalt, compacted granitic sand or concrete, meaning they can also cater to skateboarders and scooter riders.

They have become an extremely popular addition to many skatepark facilities in recent years, offering a cost effective solution that allows for community activity of all ages, disciplines and abilities.



## AOTEAROA

The Skateboarding New Zealand 2023 Skateboard Participation Survey had the following key findings regarding New Zealand Skate Styles:

Street skateboarding was by far the most popular discipline at 81%. Mini-ramp is the next favored discipline at 59%. Bowl follows at 44%. Downhill and Vert disciplines have core followings at 17.5% and 14%, respectively. A significant portion (34%) skateboard as a form of transportation.

81%

OF NEW ZEALAND SKATERS IDENTIFY AS STREET SKATEBOARDERS

59%

OF NEW ZEALAND SKATERS IDENTIFY AS RAMP SKATERS

\*2023 Active NZ Survey - Sport New Zealand

## FACILITY CLASSIFICATION

### INCIDENTAL

APPROXIMATE COST \$20K - \$80K

Incidental skate spots are found throughout the urban realm with local skaters using existing urban infrastructure due to their unique skate function. Examples include seats, walls, rails ledges and stairs. With appropriate design and management, incidental skate and spaces can be developed that are significantly safer and more functional to users whilst not impacting significantly on the broader community. Incidental skate spaces are not aimed at any specific level of user.

Any pathway that is used by skateboarders as a thoroughfare has the possibility to have sections of it widened to accommodate skateable items or undulating terrain to create an 'incidental' skate element. Many urban spaces contain infrastructure or sculptural components that can be designed to accommodate skate function and be a cost effective option to provide greater rider diversity in across a territory. While the focus may be on other activities or recreational needs, an incidental skate element can add value and increase overall function or recreational opportunity to an existing space (such as a basketball court or existing urban square).

As incidental spaces are not facility based, there is no set size constraint. So whilst managing activity is still important to avoid conflict with other users, there are opportunities to create these incidental elements in areas previously considered either inappropriate or too small for a facility. Incidental spaces will give users who may not have the chance to access a skate park the opportunity to roll on flat terrain with one or two basic street or transition features.

#### AT A GLANCE...

- Strategically located for youth that may not be able to access traditional skate parks.
- No set size requirement with strategic reuse of existing concrete surfaces / existing infrastructure available + DIY nature.
- Simple minimal features yet highly functional and skill development based. For example: rail, manual pad, mini ramp.
- Service small rural Neighbourhood catchment. Could be Neighbourhood built – avoid big company overheads or built as a secondary to a bigger park nearby
- No allowance for infrastructure / landscape / further recreation / events.
- Located nearby existing recreation.

A manual pad ledge will allow users to learn the basics of how to Ollie, grind and manual and then work their way up to a more technical variety of tricks.



A simple mini ramp such as this one pictured next to the Maclean Skatepark at Paraparaumu beach will allow for a variety of tricks and skill progression on transition. It is highly functional and will maintain interest for even the most advanced users to challenge themselves.



## NEIGHBOURHOOD

APPROXIMATE COST \$300K - \$500K

A level Neighbourhood facility is designed to cater to a smaller community / catchment with a reduced reach compared to a Community or Destination facility. Ideally, a Neighbourhood facility should be located near other complimentary forms of existing recreation which serve the Neighbourhood community.

The function of a Neighbourhood facility aims to provide the essential features for users to learn the basics of riding and progress from beginner to intermediate with less focus on advanced features. It can have mixed skate styles or a focus on one style, however will be restricted to the smaller budgetary confines. A Neighbourhood facility should aim to have at least one unique obstacle so as to maintain user interest and provide a point of difference between other Neighbourhood facilities.

This facility should provide basic amenity with shade and seating areas as well as drinking fountain, rubbish bins and safety signage for a family friendly environment. Provisions such as accessible toilets and walkable connectivity to such provisions, can promote young people and women to inhabit the space for extended periods of time. Ensuring safe path networks around the facility can increase the functionality of the space with careful consideration taken into anti-slip resistant paving for safe walkability.

When siting a Neighbourhood level facility, reuse and recycling can play a big part in increasing value for money. For example, reusing an existing concrete slab will mean more budget for specialist concrete skate features.

### AT A GLANCE...

- 250 – 600m<sup>2</sup>
- Basic design catering for skill development, simple detail – bang for buck.
- Strategically located to service Neighbourhood community.
- Located next to complimentary activation / recreation.
- Basic infrastructure and landscape provision.
- Located near existing recreation or activation.
- Capable of holding small Neighbourhood level competitions and events.
- Minimal allowance for advanced riders.
- One or two unique obstacle with a focus on features which are conducive to maintaining user interest and skill progression.
- Could reuse / recycle existing infrastructure such as concrete slab to increase 'bang for buck'.

The Bannockburn skatepark in Victoria is a great example of recycling concrete by utilising an old basket ball court and introducing skate features. It has low level obstacles centralised with transition features on the periphery for flow.



The Paekākāriki skatepark is in an iconic location and is a fun facility that adds value to the Kāpiti Coast. It is a small local facility that caters for transition and street style use from beginner to intermediate riders.



## COMMUNITY FACILITY

APPROXIMATE COST \$800K- \$1.5M

A Community level facility will reach a catchment of multiple suburbs within a region, but will primarily service one larger community centre. There may be more than one Community level facility within a municipality. It will form part of the network of complimentary facilities which provide a unique user experience and increase the diversity of choice across the region. Such an approach will assist in minimising overcrowding, as users will travel between specific facilities for a different skate experience.

A Community level facility will cater for a high capacity of users, with multiple zones within the skate area conducive to safe riding at times of high usage such as weekends and school holidays. It will allow for skill progression from a beginner to advanced level, with challenging obstacles that maintain interest. This type of facility can cater for all user styles. For example street and plaza as well as bowls and transition.

A Community facility can have the capacity to host small events, competitions or demonstrations, and should consider providing seating options and viewing areas for a family friendly space. Power and lighting are preferable at this scale of facility. Other elements which can also be included are complimentary youth activation and recreational opportunities, shade and supporting amenities and art. The facility should consider its context and have the necessary landscape design to integrate and compliment its surroundings. Toilets nearby or at the site is preferable.

The Motutawa skatepark services the Lower Hutt and wider Wellington region. It is a Community level facility that caters for transition and street style use from beginner to advanced riders.

The layout has 7 zones of skate within one large flowing layout allowing many users to safely utilise the space at once with lighting for night time activation also.



The St Clair Skatepark in Adelaide compliments surrounding active recreation program. The skatepark forms a vibrant centre piece that responds to the need for youth active recreation.

Consisting of an enclosed bowl, open street plaza, half court, ping pong and multiple seating nodes the skate park provides a youth hub with something for everyone.



### AT A GLANCE...

- Riding area of BMX and Skate: 800 – 1400m<sup>2</sup>
- Strategically located to service a number of communities and provide diversity across the region.
- Located next to complimentary recreation.
- Potential for an iconic design and theme.
- More complex unique obstacles.
- Catering for skill development from beginner to advanced level.
- Capable of holding medium sized competitions + event opportunities.
- Amenity, spectator areas + landscape provision.
- Family friendly + further activation / recreation provision – bouldering, climbing, games, kick about, basketball.

## DESTINATION FACILITY

APPROXIMATE COST \$1.5M - \$3M +

Destination facilities are defined within this needs analysis as a purpose built facility providing recreational and social functions that engage youth and the broader community. Generally within a city/district region there is one Destination facility, and this becomes the main focus of skate that Community and Neighbourhood facilities compliment. It therefore needs to be easily accessible by public transport and vehicles including the provision of parking for passive and active users. A Destination facility also presents the opportunities to create other recreational and social functions to engage the broader community including performance spaces, multimedia, courts, play, bouldering and refuge areas.

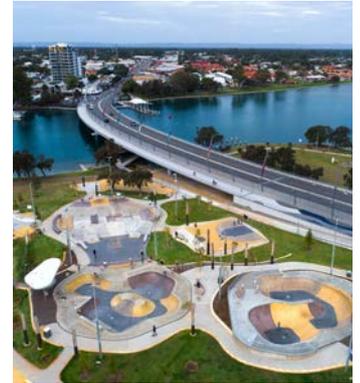
Whilst not area dependent, they need to be large enough to accommodate a significant amount of skateable terrain and infrastructure for a range of skate users. This will ensure that destination facilities cater for beginner through to advanced level users. Within this may be specific zones for different user types to minimise conflict (eg: plaza area, transition zone). The facility should contain adequate event space and infrastructure including seating options, power and lighting for events, programming for competitions and demonstrations. There also needs to be provision for appropriate entry and safety signage, refuge areas, seating and shade, bins, drinking fountains and bike racks. The facility should also consider its context and have the necessary landscape to integrate /compliment its surroundings. Toilets nearby or at the site are also necessary.

### AT A GLANCE...

- Large riding area of BMX and Skate: 1500m<sup>2</sup> +
- Strategically located to service the whole region + tourists, visitors and state wide.
- Iconic location, celebrating and highlighting culture + natural environment - a draw card or destination for the whole community.
- Capable of holding competitions.
- Enables skill development from beginner to advanced.
- Caters to all styles of skate.
- Allows for night time usage.
- Complex, unique and larger advanced obstacles.
- High end amenity, lighting and landscape provision.
- Could be integrated into complimentary recreational activity but functions as a stand alone facility.
- Provides further recreation provision e.g. bouldering, climbing, games, kick about, basketball, play space, etc.

The Mandurah Skatepark in Western Australia has four key zones that terrace down towards the estuary. An advanced competition bowl is at the rear of the site that forms level pedestrian access to the iconic Mandurah Bridge.

An intermediate transition flow area is located centrally, and a low-level street plaza and half basketball court sits at ground level and allows open views through to the estuary.

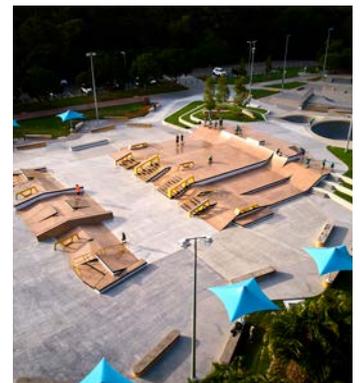


The Ryde Outdoor Youth Space in Sydney is centred around a flowing skate area that includes a competition level kidney bowl, technical mini bowl with unique escalating level changes and an open flow street area that is spacious allowing users to define different paths through the space. Obstacles include granite ledges, rock jumps and garden gaps.



Pizzey Park in Queensland has been developed to be able to host major competitions and events and allow for Olympic level training with large expanses of space for temporary grandstands and judging.

This facility is the largest skatepark in Australia with the design including various competition level 'street style' obstacles with rails, hubbas, kickers and granite ledges that range from low level to extremely advanced.



# FACILITY GUIDE

The following table ranks how critical, preferable, or necessary the various requirements are for each facility type. For example, whilst event space is critical for a Destination it is not necessary for an incidental facility.

	Critical for the facility to function properly
	Preferable for the facility to function properly
	Unnecessary for the facility to function properly

KEY REQUIREMENTS	FACILITY TYPE			
	DESTINATION	COMMUNITY	NEIGHBOURHOOD	INCIDENTAL
Appropriate size to cater for specific functional requirements of each type				
Space for temporary seating & associated infrastructure for events				
Public transport access available				
Emergency vehicle access available				
Adequate car parking /drop off available				
Shelter/shade				
Designated seating and viewing areas				
Toilets (or in close proximity)				
Rubbish bin/s				
Drinking fountain/s				
Appropriate entry and safety signage				
Good natural surveillance				
At least 50m from housing/residential areas				
Close proximity of food/drink outlets				
Functional lighting				
Other recreation/youth infrastructure can be accommodated				
Proximity to youth interest areas (shopping areas, recreation spaces, schools)				
Proximity to major community centre or centralized location?				

# FACILITY CATCHMENTS

- 

**DESTINATION SKATEPARK 40KM +**  
Centrally located provides a destination facility catering to all user groups, riding styles and skill levels.
- 

**COMMUNITY SKATEPARK 10-20KM**  
Compliments the regional facility and provides users a different rider experience.
- 

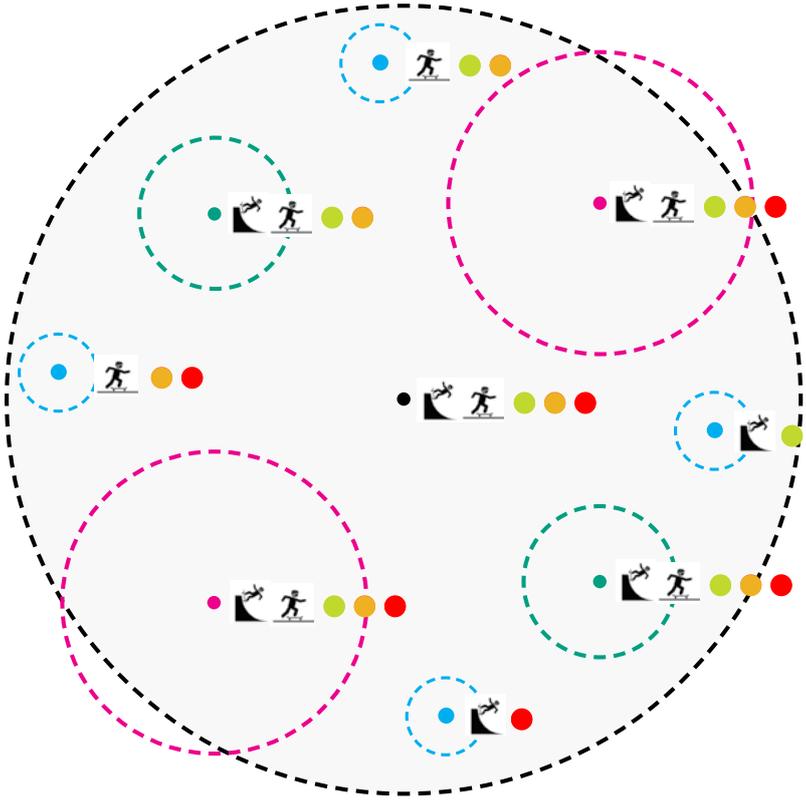
**NEIGHBOURHOOD SKATEPARK 3-5KM**  
Compliment the Community facilities and provides the fundamental building blocks for skate.
- 

**INCIDENTAL FEATURE 1-3KM**  
Fill gaps in provision and provides for local residents who cannot access large facilities.

**LEGEND:**

-  Beginner
-  Beginner, Intermediate
-  Beginner, Intermediate, advanced
-  Transition
-  Street

This diagram depicts a potential distribution model for regional skateparks. A central destination facility serves the entire network, while community, neighborhood, and incidental facilities are strategically placed based on demographic data, geographic location, and access to transportation hubs. Together, these facilities complement one another by accommodating various skill levels and riding styles, resulting in a cohesive and supportive network.



## DESIGN CRITERIA - WHAT MAKES A GOOD SKATEPARK?

While it is critical to consider global and domestic trends within active recreation it is equally as important to understand and address public perceptions about skate facilities. The recommendations for the planning and design of facilities are aimed at challenging these perceptions using an integrated landscape approach that has been tested to the highest level of design rigor and innovation, to ensure a quality community asset is delivered that not only services the active end user but supports the interests of passive end users.

Designs should accommodate the wider community by configuring multi-purpose and shared public space that provides high quality built outcomes and design resolutions that would be expected of any other public realm facility. The landscape design response should be seen as an integral part of the holistic design of an integrated facility and open space outcome. As well as ensuring maximum natural and passive surveillance and inclusivity, locating facilities adjacent to urban centres while creating vibrant and enjoyable spaces to be within provides the impetus to apply good place-making design principles.

### 1.0 SITE SPECIFIC

The design of a facility should respond directly to existing site characteristics, including meeting the requirements for drainage, earthworks, access etc. A site specific approach to design ensures that each facility is unique and that skaters and BMX riders have options to diversify their skills and explore new territory. A design response should be creative and reflect Neighbourhood culture, environment and history to ensure the space responds to its contextual setting, is meaningful and promotes ownership within the Neighbourhood community. To a great extent the orientation of the facility within the site can aid in the control of noise and direct movement and activity.

The existing topography will determine the fall and arrangement of the skate/BMX facility. It is important to site the facility into the landscape so it is relatively unobtrusive and views are maintained or enhanced where necessary and possible. There are design opportunities in using the topography as a sculptural form for viewing, containment and/or separation. This may be a sculptural retaining wall at changes in level, an elevated refuge/viewing area, split-level skate areas etc. The design of a facility considers adjacencies, Neighbourhood character and existing land use etc. Similar in the approach to landscape architecture and urban design, site constraints may present a number of unique design opportunities for the facility or precinct.

Any new facility development should refer to and embody CPTED principles to ensure user safety and reduce the opportunities for antisocial behavior. These principles have been developed to maximise visibility and foster positive interaction amongst legitimate users of public facilities. This includes maximising passive surveillance opportunities by maintaining sight lines across a facility, having vantage points or refuge spaces that allow for viewing across a facility, encouraging regular pedestrian traffic within and adjacent to facilities and designating specific entry points, or controlling access.

## 2.0 SKILL LEVEL AND CAPACITY

Consideration should be given to the level of ability within a community and opportunities for skill progression. For example, in a community without existing skate/BMX provision, a space should always include the fundamental features required for a beginner to learn the basics. It is also crucial to allow for skill progression for a user to develop from beginner to advanced rider in a safe environment. For example, this could be achieved by integrating a beginner zone adjacent an intermediate to advanced zone creating a safer environment for younger riders away from higher speed areas while still allowing them to be integrated within the same space to observe and learn from the more skilled end users. With regards to a BMX facility this could include providing similar features for different skill levels. An example of this would include providing roll over mounds next to a table top jump, so that once riders are comfortable with the roll over they are able to move on to the more difficult feature.

Capacity is another key consideration for these facilities. As many parks can become overcrowded at peak periods of use such as weekends and holidays, poorly designed spatial arrangement of obstacles can become a collision hazard. High use spaces should consider the separation of beginner and advanced areas to avoid conflict of use, which will in turn minimise risk. The exploration of how these different zones can flow together to be utilised as one facility during the quieter times should be considered throughout the design process.

Motutawa Skatepark in Avalon, New Zealand offers a vast range of obstacles to cater for each skill level. Ranging from beginner friendly to advanced users, the space is expansive enough to have many users inhabiting the space at the same time.



## 3.0 REFUGE AND SOCIAL SPACES

Social and viewing spaces are fundamental to all public spaces. The design of the facility can incorporate refuge areas within or outside the facility. These areas should be made of distinct non-skateable/ride-able materials. Changes in materials, surface levels, leaning rails and ledges can define and protect refuge areas. It is important that non-users, beginner users, parents and the wider community can be in close proximity to the activity while being able to observe in a safe manner.

It is also important to have a range of social spaces integrated across the facility. Similarly, the spaces can be a range of sizes and configurations, including well maintained lawn areas, raised platforms, 'hang out' spaces, terraces and edges etc. A range of social spaces can cater for larger groups as well as more intimate groups or individuals. In New Zealand, the most significant viewing areas should be located to the north/west of the facility to maximise shade and to face spectators away from the afternoon sun. Most facilities, small or large, should have an opportunity in which to hold events. It is important to allow for spectator numbers during peak times. This can be as simple as a grassed area with informal terraced seating steps next to the facility. Robust and appropriately designed drinking fountains, rubbish bins, seating and shelters are essential for a successful facility that allow for minimised ongoing maintenance costs.

Prahran Skatepark, Melbourne is a vibrant hub which integrates active youth spaces whilst supplying surrounding seating assemblages to cater for spectators and providing relaxation spaces for user.



## 4.0 MULTI-USE SPACES

Skateparks can also be designed to accommodate a range of youth related activities. These may be art and performance related or other unstructured active recreation program including half-court basketball, multi-purpose sports courts, bouldering (climbing) walls, kick-about nets, parkour features, play features and hit up walls etc.

Incorporating a mix of recreation program and social spaces within these facilities encourages broader use by the wider community, including increased female participation and use by those who do not want to participate in traditional organised sports. The materials and details incorporated into multi-use spaces can relate to relevant existing and adjacent urban realm.

Similarly, there are opportunities to overlay youth related graphics or contextual theming, images and text on surfaces, steps, walls etc. to create a unique space that responds to its contextual setting. Services and infrastructure for small and large events can be designed into the multi-use facility including three phase power, cable trenches, footings to receive poles and frames for grandstand seating, rigging, exhibitions and temporary fencing. There are additional opportunities to include built-in audio and projected media within proposed built from within a facility. Access to adjacent grassed or hard-stand areas can cater for temporary services, generators, ablution blocks, retail, food and beverage marquees etc

Rathmines Youth Precinct, Newcastle offers a range of active recreation program including a pump track, skatepark, half basketball court and climbing features to ensure the facility appeals to a wider demographic of end users.



## 5.0 FUNCTIONAL LIGHTING

Lighting at skateparks is an important element for safety, visibility, and deterring undesirable behavior, particularly during evening hours or in areas with limited natural light. Adequate illumination allows skaters to see obstacles, judge distances and speeds, and navigate the park safely, reducing the risk of accidents and injuries. It also enhances the overall user experience and can make the park more accessible and enjoyable for longer periods.

**Safety:** Skateparks are inherently risky environments, with ramps, rails, and other obstacles that can be dangerous if not clearly visible. Proper lighting ensures skaters can see these features and avoid collisions or falls.

**Visibility:** Well-placed lights eliminate shadows and blind spots, allowing skaters to better judge distances, speeds, and the

terrain of the park, which is essential for performing tricks and maneuvers.

**Extended Use:** By providing adequate lighting, skateparks can be used for longer periods, including evenings and darker months, making them more accessible to the wider community.

**Deterrent to Antisocial Behavior:**

Bright and well-maintained lighting can deter vandalism, graffiti, and other undesirable behaviors in and around the skatepark.

**Aesthetics and Community:**

Good lighting can enhance the overall aesthetic of the skatepark, making it a more welcoming and enjoyable space for the community. It can also contribute to a sense of safety and security.

Pizzey Park Skatepark, Gold Coast provides functional lighting for active night time use.



## 6.0 PROXIMITY TO RESIDENTIAL AREAS

With competing pressures placed on urban public space and the necessity to locate skateparks and BMX facilities close to urban centres, it is important to determine an appropriate buffer between residential areas. Generally 50m is considered an adequate distance to guide future facilities. However the individual site and the facility scale should be assessed and adapted accordingly. The materials, style, orientation and elevation of a facility will determine the impact of noise on adjacent residential areas. Strategic placement of low walls, screens and low planting can help to reduce noise if required. The location and design of social spaces will affect the distribution of noise within the precinct. Typically spaces of this nature are often delivered in land zoned for recreation or open space use to minimise noise attenuation, group similar recreation program together and minimise the need for development approvals.

## 7.0 CIRCULATION AND ACCESS

Controlled entries are important to protect both users and pedestrians alike. They prevent activity from spilling onto adjacent footpaths and roads. Distinct materials with colours and/or textured surfaces, indirect entry, sculptural barriers and feature signage are all used to control entry points. Safety signage located at primary entry points should be integrated within the design and the material selection of skate and BMX parks. Separated and aligned pedestrian access and viewing areas allows broader community involvement. These paths can connect with the broader path network creating links into the wider urban realm.

## 8.0 CONSTRUCTION OF FACILITIES

The high quality construction of facilities of this nature requires specialist skills, tradesmen and knowledge. New facilities, upgrades, extensions and repairs should be undertaken by contractors with a proven track record in the delivery of similar spaces to a high quality through using contemporary construction methodologies and to tight construction tolerances. Quality control measures should be used when preparing and assessing tenders and contracts. Critically, if quality control measures are not met during construction, the contractor should be held accountable in order to meet the approved tender/contract requirements.

## 9.0 INSPECTION AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES

Ongoing inspections and maintenance assists in ensuring the longevity, safety and success of a facility. A well maintained facility increases the sense of pride held by users and the community which in turn decreases the likelihood of acts of vandalism and graffiti. The popularity and outdoor location of facilities make them subject to high levels of impact and subsequent wear and tear.

Regardless of the size of a facility, an inspection and maintenance plan must be developed and budgeted for as part of the project and ongoing lifecycle costs. This should include a maintenance schedule and graffiti removal plan to provide clear direction for the upkeep of the facility. This is critical to prolonging the design life, and the reduction of significant maintenance or refurbishment costs for the facility.

Local councils are recommended to allocate 5-10% of a concrete skatepark's build value to an annual maintenance and inspection budget, especially for the first 5-10 years. Weekly inspections for the first two months, then monthly structural checks aligned with 'PlaySafe NZ' standard EN 14974. This is a comprehensive inspection and safety audit managed and maintained by staff which can be budgeted into inspection and maintenance plans.

Although not directly funding maintenance, ACC's core contribution is in injury prevention. Providing frameworks, data and partnerships that support safer skate environments. These partnerships are with local governments and recreational agencies (e.g. Sport NZ) which typically rely on council asset management regimes to reduce injury whilst promoting community safety. These partnerships help ensure that skatepark infrastructure is designed and maintained with safety at the forefront.

- Inspect the riding surface for cracks, movement or deterioration.
- Clean mud/debris/water.
- Graffiti control.
- Inspect for vandalism.
- Rubbish removal.
- Removal of 'found' objects.
- Inspect lighting, signage, street furniture, access paths, landscaped areas and refuge areas.



# APPENDICES

SKATEPARK AUDITS - REMEDIATION SPECIFICATION		
ITEM DESCRIPTION	REQUIRED ACTION	RECOMMENDED MONITORING REQUIREMENTS
CHIPS IN CONCRETE (GREATER THAN 20mm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chase and infill chip with Mega epoxy high strength concrete repair. (Equivalent performance product maybe used subject to Council approval).</li> <li>Allow product to harden and sand back to leave a smooth flush finish with existing concrete surface.</li> </ul>	6 MONTHLY
MAJOR CRACKS (WIDER THAN 2mm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chase and infill chip with Mega epoxy high strength concrete repair. (Equivalent performance product maybe used subject to Council approval).</li> <li>Allow product to harden and sand back to leave a smooth flush finish with existing concrete surface.</li> </ul> <p>*Applies to cracks on horizontal, vertical and transition surfaces.</p>	6 MONTHLY
MINOR CRACKS (LESS THAN 2mm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fine crack infill with Avista crack repair high viscosity purpose made fine crack repair product. (Equivalent performance product maybe used subject to Council approval).</li> </ul>	6 MONTHLY
CAULKING OF JOINTS (SAW CUTS AND CONSTRUCTION JOINTS LESS THAN 5mm WIDTH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clean out old caulking and old repairs to joints.</li> <li>Re-caulk flush with existing concrete surface level. Parchem Emerseal PU40 Grey Colour (Equivalent performance product maybe used subject to Council approval).</li> </ul>	YEARLY
LANDSCAPE EROSION AND SPILL INTO CONCRETE SKATE SURFACE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove debris from skatepark surface</li> <li>Lawn areas around skatepark to be cut back and earth surface dug down to ensure the earth surface level is below skatepark slab level. Install turf lawn on exposed earth surfaces.</li> </ul>	6 MONTHLY
SEALER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High pressure wash all concrete surfaces and apply 2 coats of dulux avista extended wear plus sealer (Equivalent performance product maybe used subject to Council approval).</li> </ul>	YEARLY
SAFETY SIGNAGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install robust sign in clear line of site at entry to facility. Ensure to cover conditions of use, safety gear and warnings, contact information for Council and emergency services.</li> </ul>	YEARLY
ROUGH SKATE SURFACE / DIFFERENTIAL SETTLEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grind back all areas, ensure grinded areas are feathered evenly to meet surrounding surface levels to ensure no kinks or bumps in riding surface. Pressure wash surface to clean off all debris.</li> </ul> <p>Apply 2 coats of 'dulux avista extended wear plus' concrete sealer (Equivalent performance product maybe used subject to Council approval).</p>	YEARLY

**\*Specification is a reference guide only, works to be quoted from onsite review and carried out by experienced skatepark contractor.**

# APPENDICES

INSPECTION CHECKLIST				
<b>SITE:</b>				
<b>SITE VISIT DATE:</b>				
<b>SITE VISIT TIME:</b>				
<b>WEATHER:</b>				
<b>ALL CHECKLIST ITEMS MUST BE COMPLETED</b>		<b>INSPECTED</b>		
<b>ITEM:</b>	<b>INSPECTION FREQUENCY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>ACTION REQUIRED</b>
<b>CONCRETE SURFACES</b>				
Chips and cracks	Monthly			
Surface and sealing	Monthly			
Granite coping	Monthly			
Previous concrete repairs	Monthly			
<b>STEEL ELEMENTS</b>				
Steel coping	Weekly			
EA, CHS, RHS, and SHS Coping	Weekly			
Rails	Weekly			
<b>DRAINAGE</b>				
Skate pits/lids	Weekly			
Drainage Pits/lids	Weekly			
Surface Water	Weekly			
Drainage Outlets	Weekly			
Swales	Weekly			
<b>FURNITURE</b>				
Signage	Weekly			
Seating	Weekly			
Rubbish bin Enclosures	Weekly			
Drinking Fountain	Weekly			
<b>STRUCTURAL ELEMENTS</b>				
Shade structures and roof	Weekly			
<b>PAVEMENTS</b>				
Paths/concrete/asphalt	Weekly			
<b>DEBRIS &amp; LITTER</b>				
Debris and extraneous material	Weekly			
Sand/dirt/mud/organic matter	Weekly			
Litter	Weekly			
Foreign objects	Weekly			
<b>LANDSCAPING</b>				
Turf/Grassed areas	Monthly			
<b>IMMEDIATELY REPORT ANY ISSUE THAT MAY POSE A DANGER TO THE SAFETY OF FACILITY USERS</b>				
<b>NOTE THE GENERAL CONDITION OF FACILITY:</b>				
.....				
.....				
List issued for referral and provide name of person referred to:				
<b>SIGN:</b>			<b>NAME:</b>	

# APPENDICES

## STANDARDS + GUIDELINES

There are several guidelines developed by various organisations on the design and construction of action wheeled sports facilities. These guidelines are useful for providing general knowledge about these facilities, but they are not regulatory or absolute.

AS 14974:2021 'Skateparks - Safety requirements and test methods' is the most relevant document for Australian practise. It is however based on pre-fabricated facilities, and to be used as a guideline in conjunction with various playground and urban design documents for outdoor skateparks.

CONVIC, through industry and professional experience, judgement and expertise in facility design and construction, ensure appropriate standards and guidelines are used to minimise risk and increase safety within facilities.

Specific to the sport of skating; some elements do not conform to Australian standards for access and fall heights. The Australian Standards are referred to where a risk is identified at the interface between skate elements and pedestrian/viewing areas. This may be within or at the periphery of the facility.

For example, a 1000mm high drop could be designed as a feature of a facility that skaters would perform tricks over. This is acceptable, given the context. However, if the platform of a quarter pipe is 1000mm high and has an uninterrupted fall to the ground; the handrail and balustrade requirements of the Building Code may still apply and be adopted,

Standards and Guidelines that have been referred to in compiling this document include:

- AS 14974 - 2021: Skateparks - Safety requirements and test methods
- AS 4685.1 - 2004: Playground Equipment - General Safety Requirements and Test Methods
- AS 4486.1 - 1997: Playgrounds and Playground Equipment - Development, Installation, Inspection, Maintenance and Operation
- Department for Community development - "Urban Design Guidelines for Creating Youth Friendly Spaces"
- Design Standards for Urban Infrastructure Part 15: Playgrounds and Playground Equipment
- The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents - Play Safety Information Sheet No: 27 - Skateboarding Safety and Play Safety: Skateboarding: Skate park Maintenance Costs
- British Standard BS EN 14974:2006 - Facilities for Users of Roller Sports Equipment - Safety Requirements and Test Methods

A facility assessment is an important step in reducing risk, however, risk management as per AS 4360 - 2004: "Risk Management" and HB 246 - 2004: "Guidelines for Managing Risk in Sport and Recreation" is beyond the scope of this document. All Australian standards and guidelines should be reviewed in addition to this document by a suitable qualified Risk Manager for Council. The scope of this document does not include an assessment of the facility's compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act.

## DISCLAIMER

CONVIC, it's employees, agents, directors and other entities shall not be liable for any loss, damage, claim or costs that may arise from any damage or injury of any kind whatsoever in relation to this document or the maintenance and use of skate and BMX facilities generally.

While all due care and consideration has been undertaken in the preparation of this document, CONVIC do advise that all recommendations, actions and information provided in this document is based upon our experience in the field of skate and BMX facility design and construction.

CONVIC and its employees are not qualified to provide legal, medical, financial or risk management advice. Suitably qualified experts in these fields should be consulted to provide further information.

All cost estimates are provided as a guide only. Confirmation of approach is to be established through consultation with Council and the community.

The estimates are based on currently available industry prices. Facility construction is a specialised trade and CONVIC have based costs on recently tendered projects. This is an estimate of probable costs only, all components of which are subject to design complexity, escalation in construction, labour and material costs.

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