

# SKATE PARKS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What parks are being considered for a skate park?**

*Sites in a total of 29 parks throughout Minneapolis were assessed for their suitability as a skate park. Approximately a third of them met the criteria and six were chosen – Armatage, Creekview, Elliot, Brackett, Morris and Bottineau.*

### **What factors are taken into account in assessing a suitable skate park location?**

*Available space, safety and surveillance, proximity to residents, accessibility, demographics, amenities such as restrooms, compatibility with other park uses, likelihood of community support and current use of proposed site.*

### **What skate equipment has been / will be installed?**

*We are installing high quality structures made of high grade, weather resistant materials that sit on a concrete or asphalt surface, such as ramps, grind rails, ¼ pipes, funboxes, etc.*

### **Who designs the park and selects the equipment?**

*Park Board staff, after consultation with likely skate park users from the neighborhood, design the park and select the equipment.*

### **What is the profile of a typical skater?**

*The average age is 13.2 years and approximately 80% are boys. They are typically passionate about their sport and focus on self-improvement and learning and mastering 'tricks.' They encourage and compliment each other's skills.*

### **What amenities, such as bathrooms, are required and will be provided?**

*One of the criteria for a suitable site was its proximity to amenities such as rest rooms. Each of the new skate parks sites is near a restroom, drinking water and has adequate parking.*

### **What is the cost?**

*The cost varies depending on the size and scope of the skate park. In 2005, a skate park established on a slab about the size of a single tennis court costs approximately \$35,000 for equipment and \$35,000 for site preparation (slab, fencing, seating, signage).*

### **Have any legal proceedings resulted from injuries at skate parks?**

*Research suggests that the legal risk factor for skate parks is quite low, lower in fact than for other playground equipment like swings and slides. A study of 48 California skate parks showed that only two claims have been filed, and none won. Statistically, a basketball player is three times more likely to sustain a major injury, a football player five times more likely. (Recreation Management Jan/Feb 2002). Skate parks have been categorized as Tier 1, 2 or 3 according to their legal risk factor. At this time, the MPRB is developing only Tier 1 skate parks, which have equipment no higher than 48 inches and attract no more liability than other park facilities such as playgrounds, ball fields, or wading pools.*

**What are the crime statistics in neighborhoods where other skate parks are located?**

*Reports from other areas in the Twin Cities with a skate park state there is no increase in crime and anti-social activity associated with the skate parks.*

**Who will manage the skate park?**

*The skate parks will be located in parks where passive supervision can be provided by the staff of the recreation center. The Park Police will provide regular surveillance and it is anticipated that parents of skateboard users and other park users will also play a role in monitoring use.*

**Would the skate parks be gated and closed at a certain time?**

*Though Tier 1 skate parks are not required to be fenced, where necessary, a four-foot high safety chain link fence will surround the skate park with the purpose of keeping small children out and flying skateboards in. Skate park hours will follow park hours.*

**Will skaters be required to wear helmets and safety gear?**

*A sign will be posted strongly recommending that safety equipment be worn at all times, however, it will not be the responsibility of recreation center staff to enforce this.*

**What will the noise level be?**

*The skate park equipment is made from sound dampening materials to have a minimal noise impact. The sound of laughter and playful shouting can be expected.*

**Will the skate park be for skate boarders only?**

*Skate parks are used primarily by skate boarders, however, they are also used by in-line bladers and BMXers. Experience has shown that these users co-exist without conflict.*

**What is an appropriate size and scope for a skate park that will meet demand?**

*The Park Board anticipates that a Tier 1 skate park will serve the needs of children and young people in the neighborhood. The size of the skate parks will be approximately 6,000 sq ft (the size of a single tennis court).*

**Will a Tier 1 skate park provide sufficient challenge?**

*It is appropriate that neighborhood parks have Tier 1 skate parks at which children and young people can develop their skill base and practice 'tricks.' A Tier 1 skate park offers a variety of challenges, and skaters from a range of ages and skill levels can be observed using the new Tier 1 skate parks in the Minneapolis parks system. More challenging skate parks are available elsewhere in the Twin Cities.*

**What are the demographic trends of the target group?**

*While the population of young people aged 11-18 years is predicted to decline in the future, it is anticipated that numbers of participants in this sport will increase, especially as new skate parks are provided and the sport continues to get exposure on television and video.*

**What happens if we don't provide skate parks?**

*A great number of young people and their families will be disappointed. We will have missed an opportunity to provide a positive recreation opportunity for a population group that is traditionally neglected. Further, we will have missed an opportunity to encourage physical activity in an age group that is bombarded with ads showing food as gratification, not physical play. These young people are the future supporters of parks.*