

8. SKATEBOARDING IN BURWOOD/PEGASUS

Officer responsible
Parks and Waterways Manager

Author
Kelly Hansen - Parks and Waterways Planner, DDI 941-8688
Marion Morton - Community Recreation Adviser, DDI 941-5333

The purpose of this report is to enable the Board to consider funding options for the previously approved strategy of prioritisation to meet the skateboarding needs in Burwood/Pegasus.

PREVIOUS CONSIDERATION

At the Board meeting on 15 September 2003, two petitions were received requesting skate facilities in South New Brighton, or an upgrading of Thomson Park or new facilities in the New Brighton area. The Board decided to re-consider this report on the prioritisation of skateboarding facilities in Burwood/Pegasus to give further consideration to funding options.

When the report was considered previously at the Board meeting on 3 March 2003, the Board decided:

1. That the Board support the prioritisation of skateboarding provision as outlined in the report.
2. That the Board consider an allocation of \$30,000 from its 2004/05 Project and Discretionary Funding for a half pipe at Thomson Park.
3. That a bid for skate facilities in Burwood/Pegasus be made for 2008/09 from the Parks and Waterways Unit budget.

The Board included a request in its submission on the Council's Draft Financial Plan and Programme 2004 for capital funding for additional skate facilities in Burwood/Pegasus to be programmed in 2008/09 or earlier. The Annual Plan Subcommittee indicated some support for skate facilities at QEII Park but the funding of other skate facilities was seen as the Board's responsibility.

Subsequently the Board included in its 2004/05 Project Proposals requests for provision of :

- Additional skating facilities at Thomson Park or elsewhere.
- Skating facilities at Wainoni Park (included in the current project).
- A fenced or indoor skating venue for Eastside Surf, Snow and Skate.
- A beach inline skating track for Marine Parade from New Brighton to Thomson Park.

The Parks and Waterways and Property Units are still to respond to these requests.

CONTEXT

Various pieces of research and feedback have identified the need for skate facilities at:

- South New Brighton
- Thomson Park (upgrade)
- New Brighton
- The Palms
- QEII
- Parklands
- Aranui.

Issues around skateboarding needs in Burwood/Pegasus were discussed at a Board seminar in May 2002 and reported to the Board in July 2002. Two consultation events have since been held to gather additional input from local skateboarders as to how best to meet the skateboarding needs in the area.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is high demand and limited resources for skateboarding facilities in Burwood/Pegasus. Therefore, skateboarding requirements need to be addressed in a planned and coordinated fashion. Needs that have been identified through research and consultation have been prioritised but metropolitan funding for teenage recreation facilities has been tagged for other projects until 2008/09. It is proposed therefore, that the Board fund a half pipe at Thomson Park in 2004/05.

RELEVANT CURRENT POLICY

It is a strategic objective of the Council to contribute to safe and healthy lifestyles by providing parks, festivals, recreation and leisure services. The provision of skate facilities is supported by the following policies:

- Recreation and Sport Policy
- Youth Strategy
- Children's Policy
- Social Wellbeing Policy

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL

Based on the Draft Skateboarding, Inline Skating and Freestyle BMX Cycling Strategy (1999), consultation with local skateboarders, community research and knowledge of community needs and activities, skateboarding provision in the Burwood/Pegasus wards has been prioritised as follows:

Priority 1: Thomson Park Half Pipe (see picture in Appendix 1)

The existing half pipe is small and of limited appeal. Provision of a bigger half pipe would greatly enhance the value of Thomson Park as a skating venue by catering for a broader range of skills. Improving on the existing facility would be more cost effective than establishing a new facility elsewhere and has the potential to meet the needs of a wider range of users. The venue is already well known and well used, complementary facilities such as toilets, drinking fountain and other recreation activities are on site, additional skate features would broaden the appeal of the facility and better cater for both existing and potential users. A half pipe would cost in the vicinity of \$30,000.

Priority 2: South Brighton Area Skate Park

A small scale facility is required to cater mainly for local people. Suggested features include rails and ramps (similar to the Burwood/Pegasus portable ramps), pyramid, boxes and possibly a half pipe. Many skateboarders in the South New Brighton/Southshore area are mobile, but others are reliant on parents for transport or supervision. There is a need for a local facility where skateboarders can practise and develop their skills. Potential sites include Te Karoro Reserve or South New Brighton Domain. About \$40,000 would be required.

Priority 3: Thomson Park Additional Features

Box, rails, bowl and stairs were popular requests and would increase the variety of features available to cater for a broader range of skills at this well established skate park. This would cost an estimated \$25-30,000.

Priority 4: QEII Park

The consistent demand for skate facilities at QEII could be best served by a half pipe and/or bowl and some grinding rails. Co-location with the leisure centre also presents opportunities for a larger, metropolitan facility, or a supervised indoor venue. Given the close proximity of Thomson Park, careful consideration needs to be given as to whether or not QEII is the best location for another skate park, and what its design should be.

Priority 5: The Palms and Parklands

Unresolved issues in both these areas mean that skate facilities are unable to proceed at present.

Specific consultation with potential users would be required for each of the above facilities to ensure their design best meets the needs of potential users.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Funding

The Parks and Waterways Unit has no funding currently available for the proposed skate parks as funding for teenage recreation facilities has been tagged for other projects for the next five years, including youth recreation facilities at Wainoni Park. No funding will be available for these skateboarding projects before 2008/09. Burwood/Pegasus skateboarding needs must then be balanced with other youth needs from the rest of the City and will need to be considered alongside other requests.

If the Board considers the need for additional skateboarding facilities to be of high priority and is unwilling to wait until 2008/09 for possible funding from the metropolitan budget, the Board may wish to allocate funding from the Project and Discretionary funds for a half pipe at Thomson Park in 2004/05.

Large Vert Ramp

A local skateboarding group has shown some interest in managing a large, privately owned vert ramp as a club facility within the Burwood/Pegasus area. The vert ramp is quite extreme and only highly skilled skateboarders would be able to use it. Such a facility does not rank highly amongst local needs and is not considered suitable as a public facility without full supervision.

The Draft Skateboarding, Inline Skating and Freestyle BMX Cycling Strategy (1999) identifies Washington Reserve as a potential venue for a vert ramp. This could then be a metropolitan facility.

Wainoni Park

The first stage of the skate path in Wainoni Park is complete. This is a small scale facility designed to meet local needs in the Wainoni/Aranui area. Further input will be gathered from skateboarders before embarking on the second stage.

RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

Two skateboarding events were organised to gather input from local skateboarders as to priorities for skateboarding facilities. These were held at Thomson Park in June 2002 and at South New Brighton Domain in October 2002. Participants came mainly from New Brighton, South New Brighton, Wainoni/Aranui, and North New Brighton.

The greatest demand appears to be for a bigger half pipe at Thomson Park. Many participants thought this would greatly enhance the value of Thomson Park. Other improvements were also suggested such as a box, rails, bowl, and stairs.

The majority of participants would like to have a local facility close to where they live. There is high local demand for a skate facility in South New Brighton. Such a facility could be kept at quite a small scale with some low key street skating elements such as rails and ramps (similar to the portable ramps available), a pyramid, and boxes. A half pipe was also a popular request.

QEII is consistently identified in research and consultation as a potential venue for a skate park and would cater for people in the northeast of the city. Co-located with other recreation facilities, it has the potential to be a metropolitan facility.

CONCLUSION

Based on research and consultation, the identified skateboarding needs have been prioritised. However, the need for skateboarding facilities in Burwood/Pegasus exceeds the resources available and metropolitan funding is unlikely to be available before 2008/09. If the need for skate facilities is considered more urgent the Board may wish to allocate funding towards a half pipe in Thomson Park from its 2004/05 Project and Discretionary funds.

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairperson's

Recommendations:

1. That the information be received.
2. That, in response to the emerging need for further skateboard facilities in Burwood/Pegasus, the Board ask the Council to fund the Thomson Park project in 2004/05.