

4. SKATEBOARDING UPDATE

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Greenspace Manager

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The purpose of this report is to present an updated Skateboarding, Inline Skating, and Freestyle BMX Cycling Strategy, and to present the results of a preliminary investigation into the merits of a metropolitan facility for skating.

CONTEXT

At its meeting on 10 March 2003, an overview of skating activity in the city was presented to the Parks, Gardens and Waterways Committee and it was decided:

1. That staff update the present draft strategy noting existing and proposed facilities.
2. That staff carry out a preliminary investigation of the merits of a metropolitan facility for skateboarding.

At its meeting on 25 March 2004, the Council resolved that the Committee's report be received, subject to clause 2 of the decision being amended to provide "That staff carry out a preliminary investigation of the merits of a metropolitan facility for skating facilities other than skateboarding".

SKATEBOARDING, INLINE SKATING AND FREESTYLE BMX CYCLING STRATEGY

A copy of the updated strategy is attached. Information has been added to the former strategy about facilities that have been constructed since the strategy was prepared, upcoming facilities, and the results of recent research relevant to skateboarding.

INVESTIGATION INTO THE MERITS OF A METROPOLITAN FACILITY

Christchurch currently has one large, central skate facility at Washington Reserve. It is well used and offers a variety of ramps and street style skating facilities that cater for a range of abilities. It is ideal as a metropolitan facility because it is centrally located and is easily accessible by public transport. It is located in close proximity to other youth recreation facilities and there is minimal disturbance to neighbours as well as being highly visible and well known. The central city has one of the highest proportions in the city of young people aged 15-24 years. Following extensive research and consultation, the Skateboarding, Inline Skating and Freestyle BMX Cycling Strategy (2000) identified the completion of Washington Reserve skate facility as the top priority. Stage two of the facility is now complete and a third stage is due to be added to the facility in 2007/08. Upon completion of stage three, Washington Reserve will be a significant metropolitan facility.

In addition to Washington Reserve there are 13 local skate facilities distributed fairly evenly around the city. These facilities mostly cater for beginner to intermediate level. Street style elements, such as grinding rails, have been added to many of the facilities but some are in need of further upgrading.

Research has identified a need for some additional small-scale, local, beginner facilities where young skateboarders, who may be unable to travel to other facilities, can safely develop basic skateboarding skills close to home. (See the Ward based Leisure, Parks, and Waterways studies and the Papanui Community Needs Analysis, 2004).

There is no identified need for an additional metropolitan facility, which would cost an estimated \$500,000. The Greenspace Unit has approximately \$120 000 - \$170 000 allocated annually to youth recreation facilities. This funding is for all youth facilities across the whole city, not just skateboarding, and has been earmarked for identified projects for the next five years. Skateboarding, skating and BMX facilities must therefore be balanced alongside other youth recreation needs.

CONCLUSION

Completion of Washington Reserve will meet the need for a metropolitan facility. Future priorities are to continue implementing the Strategy by upgrading existing facilities, constructing new facilities where there is an identified need, and to provide additional local facilities for beginners where appropriate. There is no merit in constructing another metropolitan facility.

Staff**Recommendation:**

1. That the information be received.
2. That the updated Skateboarding, Inline Skating, and Freestyle BMX Cycling Strategy be adopted.

Chairman's**Recommendation:**

1. That the above recommendation be adopted.
2. That funding be requested at the next Annual Plan to bring forward the identified allocations for 2007/08 and 2008/09 for completion in the 2005/06 financial year.