

ITEM 4. YOUTH AND SKATE FACILITY NEEDS STUDY

FILE NO: S040428

SUMMARY

A youth and skate facility needs study for the City of Sydney Local Government Area has been undertaken. The final report provides a comprehensive assessment of the needs of a diverse range of young people and skaters and recommends actions Council can take to address current and future youth and skating facility needs. The findings of this report will inform the development of the Open Space and Recreation Needs Study and Cultural Plan. Final recommendations should be formulated after this additional research has been completed.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that Council:

- (A) note the report entitled "City of Sydney Youth and Skate Facility Needs Study", as shown at Attachment A to the subject report; and
- (B) note that budget provisions have been made for the priority projects in the study, Waterloo Oval Youth Facility and Prince Alfred Park and Sydney Park Skate Facilities.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: City of Sydney Youth and Skate Facility Needs Study May 2006 Executive Summary.

BACKGROUND

1. A Youth and Skate Facility Needs Study has been conducted by the City of Sydney in order to plan for the provision of youth and skate facilities that meet the needs of a broad range of existing and future residents, visitors to the City, and the specific types of youth facilities required in disadvantaged areas.
2. Young people aged 12-24 years make up 20.2% (or 25,819) of the total resident population of the City of Sydney. By 2021 the youth population is expected to increase to 43,201. This will not only place increased pressures on indoor youth facilities but will also lead to an increased need for young people to socialise and recreate in public spaces, particularly as increasing numbers of young people are growing up in flats with no outdoor areas.
3. The need for skate facilities has emerged as increasing numbers of young people are skating in public plazas particularly in the CBD area. The City currently provides two skate facilities at Waterloo Oval and Federal Park, Glebe. In other areas, public spaces are being used as skate facilities due to a lack of other available facilities.
4. Skating has all the typical benefits of other recreation activities (physical, mental and social). There is however, the added bonus that these activities target a population who often feel marginalized by typical recreation provision, and who are at an age where participation in team sports and physical activity may have started to decline. In addition, local and national trends highlight the intergenerational benefits of skating with more parents visiting street skate courses with their children (male and female) and skating with them.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

5. Best practice research shows youth facilities are best located in multipurpose facilities co-located with other programs and services that will attract young people and in areas young people are attracted to visiting. Single purpose youth centres isolated from other services and other community facilities, are no longer considered best practise.
6. Based on the Youth Facilities Needs Analysis and best practice research, recommendations have been made to relocate, maintain, or augment the existing nine City of Sydney youth facilities. The recommended redevelopment of Maybanke Youth Centre in Pyrmont and Abraham Mott Youth Centre in Millers Point will be dependent on the outcomes of the Open Space and Recreation Needs Study and the Aged Services Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan currently being conducted by Council. The Cultural plan will also consider the PACT Youth Theatre site and the cultural needs of young people more fully.
7. Based on the Skating Facilities Needs Analysis and best practice research, recommendations for the augmentation of existing skate facilities and augmentation of existing public space to accommodate skating have been made.
8. The study also includes the recommendation for two new skating facilities to be built at Prince Alfred Park and Sydney Park and consideration of skate facilities for the new public domain at Green Square. The aim is to draw skateboarders out of the CBD into a designated, managed and safe environment.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9. Funds are available in the 2006-2009 Capital Works Program for the Waterloo Oval Youth Facility, Sydney Park Skate Facility and the Urban Skate Park strategy and works.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

10. Local Government Act 1993, Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

11. The recently completed Youth Strategy 2006 involved consultation with young people in regard to both services and facility needs. The Youth Strategy also referred to other consultations completed with young people including the Redfern/Waterloo Safety Plan and consultation undertaken by South Sydney Youth Services.
12. Youth Services were consulted in relation to the facility needs of young people through a consultation at the November 2005 meeting of the City of Sydney Youth Interagency and through telephone interviews with selected services.
13. Consultation was also undertaken with skaters at popular skate spots around the city and with youth workers in regard to skating facilities at the November Youth Interagency meeting.
14. It is a recommendation of the study that a consultation program to consult with community members on the new and augmented sites recommended for City of Sydney skate facilities be developed.

ANN HOBAN

Acting Director Community Living

Amanda Webster, Youth Services Coordinator