

CITY OF SYDNEY YOUTH FACILITY AND SKATE FACILITY NEEDS STUDY

FINAL REPORT JULY 2006



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Young people aged 12 – 24 years make up 20.2% (or 25,819) of the total City of Sydney (the City) population, higher than the Sydney Statistical Division (17.9%). 78% (or 20,389) of young people are aged between 18 – 24¹ showing a need not just for recreation and social programs but for casework services, employment, multimedia, and drug and alcohol programs. The areas with the highest **number** of young people based on 2001 census data are:

1. City Centre CBD – 5,445 young people or 27.3% of the population,
2. Glebe/Camperdown – 5,489 young people or 27.10%, and
3. Central/Surry Hills/Redfern – 5,057 or 15.9% of the total population.

In addition to those young people living in the City, large numbers of young people visit the Sydney CBD for entertainment, to skate, and to hang out, particularly on Friday nights, weekends and School holidays. They value the CBD highly as a meeting point and safe place to be with friends². Many young people from across Sydney also come to the CBD to skate in areas such as Cook and Phillip Park and Martin Place.

By 2021, the youth population is expected to increase to 43,201³. This increase will not only place pressures on indoor youth facilities, but will also lead to an increased need for young people to socialise and recreate in public spaces.

There is a diversity of young people across the LGA. Generalist young people needing access to recreation, multimedia, and cultural facilities and higher needs young people in areas such as Redfern/Waterloo, Glebe, and Millers Point needing more targeted programs. The abolition of voluntary student unionism⁴ is also likely to increase pressures on Council's youth services and facilities from the generalist youth population in the future.

Youth Facilities

The City currently owns nine indoor youth facilities that are mostly single-purpose⁵, old, inflexible buildings (some were previously toilet blocks and club houses). Across the LGA, a further 13 facilities are provided and managed by other government, non-government and private agencies. These currently all target high needs young people.

Most of Council's facilities are not co-located with other community services and activities, and some (such as Millers Point) do not have access to outdoor space.

¹ 2001 Census and internal City of Sydney research

² Identified in focus groups held with young people aged 12-24 April 2006.

³ 2001 Census and internal City of Sydney research

⁴ 30% of all young people in the City of Sydney are tertiary students (or 7,800).

⁵ Single purpose facilities are unsafe for lone staff working on site and do not encourage vibrant community centres.

Between 15 and 30 young people (mostly high needs) attend each of Council's centres daily. However, this number could be significantly increased if youth centres were located in better quality, multipurpose facilities, co-located with other programs and services. The current state of facilities also does not encourage use by generalist young people and local students⁶.

Future facilities need to be multipurpose spaces that address the needs of a diverse range of young people, including generalist youth, for informal, social and recreation programs, access to multi-media services and equipment⁷, free outdoor courts, unsupervised activities in public spaces, and targeted spaces for high needs and at-risk youth.

While young people value private, youth specific spaces, best practice research⁸ has shown that these spaces are most successfully located in multi-purpose facilities, co-located with other programs and services that will attract young people – and in areas that young people like to visit. Recent research has identified that they would prefer to share public space and community facilities than be isolated from them⁹.

Future Youth Facilities

Strategic directions for the City's future youth facilities include:

- Co-locating youth spaces within multipurpose community facilities.
- Providing a range of formal and informal facilities for a diverse range of young people.
- Locating youth spaces in facilities adjacent to free outdoor multipurpose courts.
- Providing an equitable distribution of youth centres for all young people across the LGA including for generalist youth and targeted centres in disadvantaged communities.
- Providing youth facilities in safe, visible locations, near public transport.
- Consulting with young people on future new or augmented youth facilities.

These directions are reflected in the recommendations made below for redevelopment of existing youth centres as multipurpose community facilities in the next 5 to 10 years. These centres will provide for a range of community needs while providing dedicated youth spaces and youth services targeting the needs of local young people (high needs and generalist)¹⁰. These recommendations are detailed in full in Chapter 9. Any changes to existing youth facilities, should occur in partnership with a broad range of local young people.

⁶ Focus groups held in April 2006 with young people aged 12 – 24 identified that generalist young people highly value youth centres and services, free outdoor recreation facilities, and access to computers and information technology.

⁷ For example, Brisbane City Council's Visible Ink Space that provides facilities and resources for young people to meet for organised activities and to plan events and projects.

⁸ Community Builders NSW Urban Design Guidelines with Young People in Mind 2005

⁹ Community Builders NSW Urban Design Guidelines with Young People in Mind 2005

¹⁰ City Projects provided advice on redevelopment, relocation and refurbishment options and costings.

Rank	Existing Facility	Recommended Needs	Commencement	Funding
1.	Waterloo Youth Facility (South Sydney Youth Services), Waterloo Oval	Redesign and Refurbish existing youth facility to multipurpose youth space.	06/07	Section 94 and Council
2.	Jo Sargent Centre (Erskineville Youth Program)	Stage 1 - 06/07 Paint and maintenance Investigate multipurpose Community Facility with Youth Space for this area (refer to Open Space and Recreation Needs Study).	06/07	Council
3.	Maybanke Youth/Community Centre	Stage 1 - 06/07 Basic Office Upgrade. Redevelop as multipurpose Community Facility for Pymont area with youth space. Dependent on outcomes of the Open Space and Recreation Needs Study.¹¹	06/07	Council
4.	Abraham Mott Community Centre/Millers Point Youth Program	Stage 1 – 06/07 Minor Refurbishment Youth Centre. In future, undertake a feasibility study for redevelopment as Multipurpose Community Facility with youth space. Future redevelopment will depend on outcomes of Aged Services Needs Assessment and Facilities Plan and Open Space and Recreation Needs Study	To be determined	Council
5.	Ted McDermott Community Centre Beaconsfield Park	Small community centre with meet room and youth & program delivery space. Interior upgrade, site work and façade improvement.	06/07	Council
6.	Redfern Youth Program (Redfern Community Centre)	Minor refurbishment to make space safe for young people.	To be determined	Council
7.	Woolloomooloo Youth Program	Minor refurbishment	To be determined	Council
8.	PACT Youth Theatre, Erskineville	Stage 1 - Feasibility study to investigate redevelopment options as youth/cultural precinct. Possible co-location of Erskineville Youth Program in	To be determined	Council

¹¹ The need for additional community space for meetings and community office space in Pymont has been identified through community consultations conducted by Council. The redevelopment of Maybanke provides an opportunity for and improved youth space and general community space.

		longer term. <i>Pending outcomes of the Open Space and Recreation Needs Study.</i>		
9.	Glebe Youth Program (Peter Forsyth Auditorium), Glebe	Youth and Recreation Facility. Targeting local young people including students. Augment existing facility to include youth centre with program delivery space, office space and youth hang out space. ¹² <i>Pending outcomes of Open Space and Recreation Needs Study.</i>	To be determined	S94 & Council

Table B. Summary Recommendations- New Youth Facilities

Facility	Recommendation	Funding
Green Square Youth Centre	Youth space as part of Green Square Multipurpose Aquatic Centre	Section 94 Funding ¹³

It is recommended that Council also considers the future service and facility needs of increased numbers of young people hanging out and living in the CBD area.

Skate Facilities

The City currently owns two formal skate facilities. One currently being developed adjacent to the Waterloo Youth Facility (South Sydney Youth Services) in Waterloo Oval, and one in Federal Park Glebe. Users range from young people to children as young as 5 skating with their parents. There are also a number of informal skate facilities in the City's CBD (open plazas such as Cook and Phillip Park and Martin Place). A large number of skaters from across Sydney (up to 40 or 50 at Cook and Phillip) aged from 10 to 30 years, use these spaces for street skating due to a lack of other options. Council has identified that unplanned street skating may cause hazards for pedestrians and also damage to assets that have not been built with durable materials (that can withstand skating). Best practice research has shown that street skating can be managed through cooperative measures such as Shared Zones and No Go Zones¹⁴, traffic rules, introducing skate elements (such as purpose built rails and stairs) into new public spaces, and working with skaters.

Future Skate Facilities

The need for skate facilities, particularly in the central CBD and Newtown areas, has emerged as increasing numbers of young people, children, and adults, are skating in public places. Skate facilities that are provided in visible and safe

¹² Council has the option to either build new addition to existing facility or purchase vacant warehouse adjacent.

¹³ Council approved this facility as part of the Green Square Section 94 Community Facilities Plan 2002

¹⁴ City of Melbourne

locations, designed to meet skaters needs and, where possible, co-located with other community facilities. The following is an indicative needs analysis for Council's future skate facilities.

Table C. Recommendations – Skate Facilities 2016

	Facility	Rec.	Options	Facility Type
1.	Prince Alfred Park – southern CBD	New	Prince Alfred Park	Small skate plaza located near Central Station.
2.	Sydney Park	New	Sydney Park	Large regional facility in visible location near street and lights.
3.	Waterloo Oval Skate Park	Retain	Existing Site	Skate Plaza/Street Course
4.	Glebe Skate Park	Augment	Existing Site	Half-pipe/street course.
5.	CBD	New	Investigate CBD options	Skate plaza
6.	Green Square	New	Located adjacent to Green Square Aquatic Centre.	To be determined