

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Matt Laird, Assistant Planner

SUBJECT: COTTAGE GROVE SKATEPARK SURVEY RESULTS

DATE: January 19, 2022

Background:

In June of 1999 citizens of Cottage Grove, with support from the Cottage Grove Recreation Association (CGRA), began the conversation with the City of adding a community skatepark to the city. The community originally envisioned two phases to the park. Phase 1 included a 50' x 150' skatepark suitable for beginners and intermediate skaters. Phase 2 was to add an additional 60' south of the skatepark and would include two additional bowls, bathrooms and a picnic area.

In May of 2003, the City committed \$20,000 toward construction of the skatepark and designated the 7500 sq. ft. parcel of land. The park was entirely constructed by the CGRA and local volunteers with phase 1 completed, the skatepark opened in August of 2004. Funding for phase 1 came from a variety of sources, including grants from companies, large foundations, and individual contributions. The Tykeson Foundation contributed a \$30,000 grant, the Ford Foundation pledged \$20,000 and the Woodard Foundation gave another \$19,000. The Oregon community Foundation and Weyerhaeuser each contributed \$5,000 to the project and the Tony Hawk Foundation gave \$1,000. At this time, phase 2 of the project has not completed.

Almost since the beginning, there have been questions regarding who is responsible for the maintenance of the park. The contract with the Cottage Grove Recreation Association stated the CGRA was responsible for the park and its maintenance. The CGRA asked the City to take over the park in October of 2004. Cracked concrete, plugged drains, and pine needles are common at the site. The Cottage Grove Public Works staff provide mowing and weekly garbage service and do unplug the drain periodically, however they do not typically maintain the concrete or sweep off the concrete. A broom used to be provided at the skatepark for users to clean off the concrete but it would frequently go missing soon after its replacement. Periodically over the years, groups have volunteered and organized clean up and maintenance efforts, however they would often only last for a year or two. An agreement with a volunteer user group could still help with some of the issues at the park such as trash pickup, sweeping debris on the concrete and painting over graffiti, with the challenge being trying to sustain the group over time.

The history of the skatepark has not always been positive. Portable toilets used to be located at the site but after the second one was burned to the ground they were no longer replaced. Some in

the community see the skatepark as a black eye with loitering, trash, graffiti and vandalism. Others see it as a positive asset to the community that needs to be updated, repaired and maintained. Skatepark design and construction has evolved over the last 18 years, with smoother concrete and more variety of skating features suitable for multiple skill levels common at most modern skateparks. The Cottage Grove Skatepark was not professionally designed or constructed and was built by volunteers doing their best to try and provide a skating experience for the local youth. While the skatepark does have some design flaws and is now showing its age, they can be fixed, so there is the opportunity to make the park usable. It may be time to take a new look at the old skatepark.

The City Council discussed issues associated with the skatepark in May and June of 2021. Subsequently, Planning Staff began to collect community feedback about the design concerns of the park and to obtain suggestions for improvements. A survey of stakeholders of the Cottage Grove Skatepark was conducted during the summer of 2021.

Methodology:

A Cottage Grove Skatepark Redesign survey was conducted between July and September of 2021. Questions were sourced from various websites on skatepark design and other surveys. There was a total of 126 respondents to 14 questions. The survey was promoted through the use of flyers and posters with a QR code. That people were able to scan and access with their mobile device camera.

Planning staff visited the skatepark on July 23, 2021 and conducted a visual inspection and visioning for improvements. On August 9, 2021, Planning staff conducted site visits to various other skateparks in nearby cities. Factors that were considered during these site visits included park rules, skate elements, similar square footage, amenities, design, inclusivity, safety and more. The following skateparks were included in the site visits: Harrisburg, Washington-Jefferson, Bethel, Emerald Park, Willamalane, and River Road. Staff has also communicated with two skatepark design companies, Dreamland Skateparks out of Lincoln City, Oregon and Evergreen Skateparks from Portland, Oregon.

Findings:

During conversations with skatepark design companies it was mentioned that many skateparks in the Pacific Northwest, that were constructed during this era, are having degradation of the concrete. The primary reason is due to lack of maintenance, specifically lack of annual sealing of the concrete. They also stated that pouring new concrete over the existing concrete is almost as big of a job as building a new one. Other repair options can include cutting out portions of the skate area and replacing with new sections. New skatepark construction costs generally can range from \$35 - \$50 per square foot.

An air photo has been included with this memo, see attachment 1, showing the layout of the skatepark. The survey questions are included as attachment 2 and the responses are included as attachment 3.

Summary of requested improvements to the skatepark:

- Increase the size of the park
- Smooth the concrete
- Smooth the transitions
- Fix the bowl coping
- Fix the drainage
- Remove the pyramid
- Lower the rail
- Fix / Move the fences
- Add bike racks
- Add another garbage can
- Add a sitting area for viewing
- Add a water fountain
- Less crime and graffiti
- Add lighting
- Add a restroom
- Add a roof cover
- Redesign for better flow
- Multiple skill level areas
- More variety of features/obstacles
- A responsible volunteer user group

Some of the requested improvements might easily be added to the park, such as adding a picnic table, a bike rack and another garbage can. Other improvements such as repairing the concrete, transitions, and coping might be an intermediate step to prolong the life of the park. Increasing the size of the skatepark, constructing a full redesign, and/or adding a roof structure, would be larger capital improvement projects that would likely require outside funding sources to complete.


Also of note is by making some of the improvements, it can also take care of other concerns raised in the survey. For example, adding picnic tables and seating would likely make it easier for parents to come sit and watch their kids skate. Having parents at the site would also make it less likely that criminal behavior would happen at the site. Adding a second garbage may reduce trash at the site. Establishing a volunteer user group responsible for maintenance of the park can help pick up trash and cover graffiti, making the park cleaner and more attractive. This same group could be responsible for the annual sealing of the concrete, prolonging the life of the park. Increasing the site 60-100 feet to the south would allow more space between features, reducing the conflicts between more advanced riders and beginners making it safer for all of the users. It would also have the benefit of providing the placement of more features that flow together better.

Some of these ideas have been tried before and were not successful. For example, there previously was a picnic table, portable toilet, and second garbage at the site, all of which were destroyed by vandals. Volunteer groups have also come and gone over the years. These will be challenges that will need to be addressed as part of any future skatepark planning efforts.

Recommendations:

- Group requested improvements into short term, medium term and long term goals.
- Begin discussions with ODOT about acquiring additional public right-of-way to expand the size of the park;
- Continue to reach out to professional skatepark design companies and obtain additional information about design and cost.
- Start a community conversation regarding establishing a volunteer group responsible for maintenance of the park;
- Begin dialogue with companies and foundations regarding grant funding opportunities.

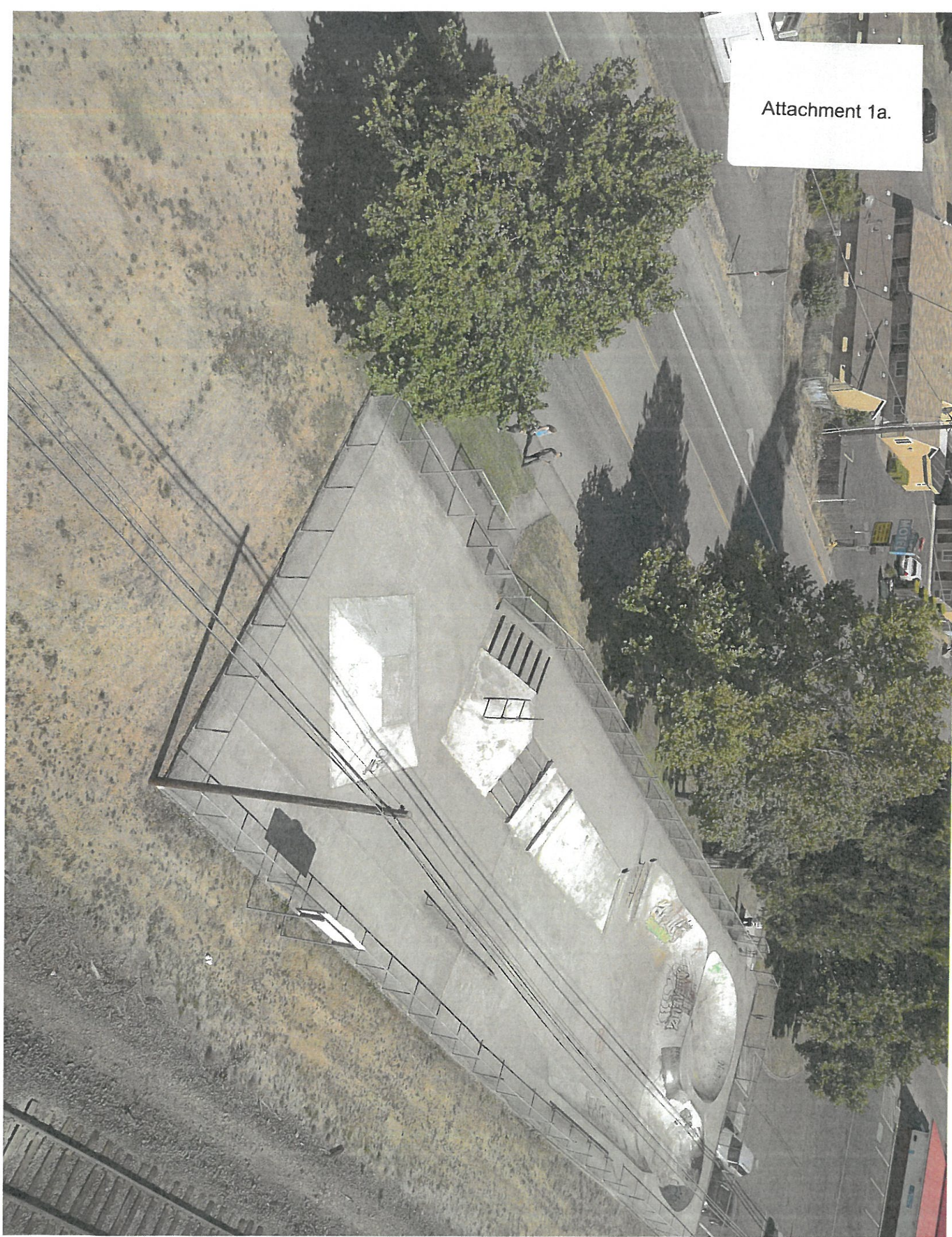
Cost: None at this time.


Richard Meyers, City Manager
Matt Laird, Assistant Planner

Attachments:

- 1a. July 2021 - Aerial Photo North Facing
- 1b. July 2021 - Aerial Photo South Facing
2. Survey Questions
3. Survey Responses

Attachment 1a.





Cottage Grove Skatepark Re-design Survey.

Survey of current usage and input for improvements to the skatepark.

Please select the option that best describes you. *

- ☐ I am a skateboarder.
- ☐ I know someone who skates.
- ☐ I am the parent/guardian of someone who uses the skatepark.
- ☐ I am a BMX rider
- ☐ I ride with in-line/roller skates
- ☐ Other...

How often do you visit the skatepark (weather permitting)?

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Never

How do you roll?

- ☐ Skateboard
- ☐ BMX (Bicycle Motocross)
- ☐ Scooter
- ☐ Roller skates/rollerblades
- ☐ Other...

On a scale of 1 to 10, (with 1 being a beginner and 10 professional), how would you rate your skateboarding skill level?

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Where does the majority of your skateboarding/riding occur?

- ☐ At home, in the driveway.
- ☐ Nearby streets, parks, school
- ☐ At a designated skate park
- ☐ Other...

What type of skating features would you add to the current skatepark? Please rank.

| | Really want to add | Nice to have, but c... | Neutral | Do not want to add... |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mini ramps | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Flat rail | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Half pipe | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Bowl | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Hand rail | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Wall ride/vertical w... | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Stairs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Roll-ins | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Fun Boxes | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Snake runs | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

...

What other design elements/amenities would you like to see at the skatepark?

☐ Additional Seating

☐ Additional Shade

☐ Bathroom

☐ Water fountain

☐ Trash can

☐ Bike rack

☐ Lighting

☐ Roof

☐ Other...



What do you think makes a great skatepark?

Long answer text

What do you like about the current skatepark?

Long answer text

What would you improve about the current skatepark?

Long answer text

Is the current skate park inclusive in regard to skill level, age, gender, race, ability?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What would make the skatepark more inclusive?

Long answer text

Do you feel comfortable accessing the skatepark using the crosswalk and sidewalks on S 4th Street and Highway 99?

☐ Yes

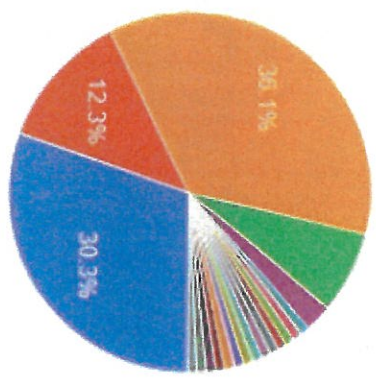
☐ No

What other suggestions or concerns do you have that would help inform the design process for the Cottage Grove skate park?

Long answer text

Please select the option that best describes you.

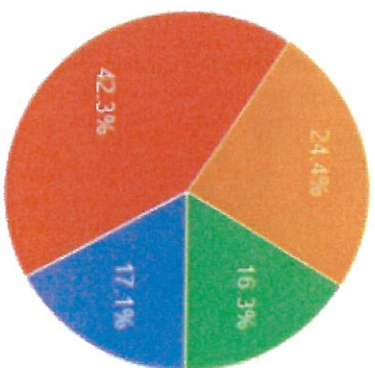
122 responses



- I am a skateboarder.
- I know someone who skates.
- I am the parent/guardian of someone...
- I am a BMX rider
- I ride with in-line/roller skates
- I am an inline skater
- Family and I use the park
- I ride bmx

How often do you visit the skatepark (weather permitting)?

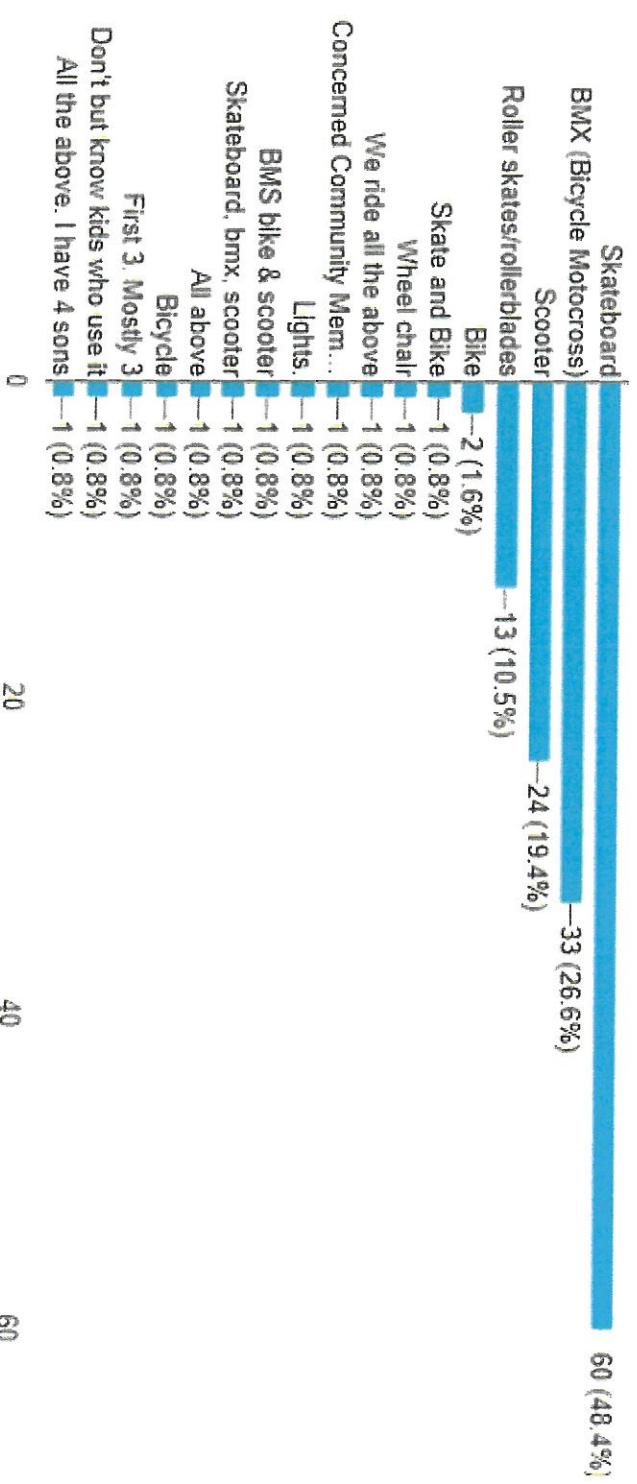
123 responses



- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly
- Never

How do you roll?

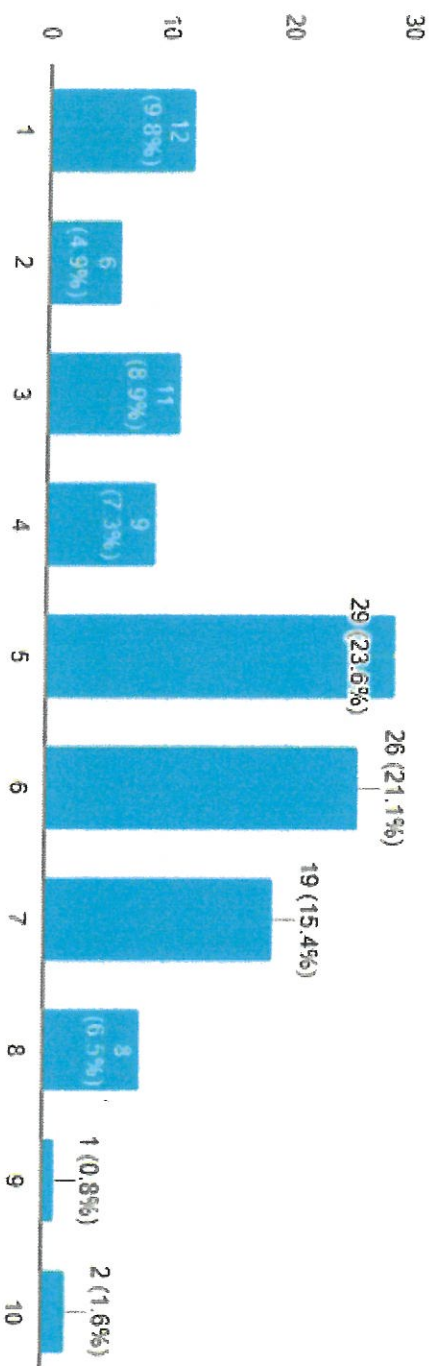
124 responses



On a scale of 1 to 10, (with 1 being a beginner and 10 professional), how would you rate your skateboarding skill level?

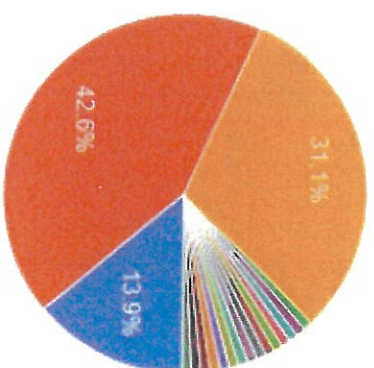


123 responses



Where does the majority of your skateboarding/riding occur?

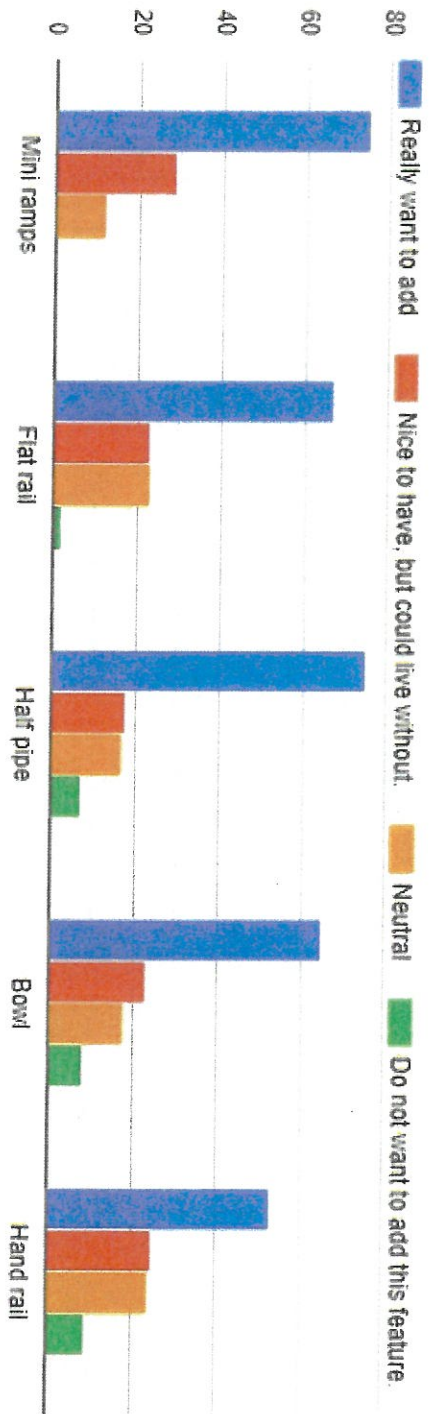
122 responses



- At home, in the driveway.
- Nearby streets, parks, school
- At a designated skate park
- At home and on nearby streets
- Mostly streets because our park is out...
- Skatepark, and street spots around th...
- N/A
- Store rails behind stores on crates. Al...

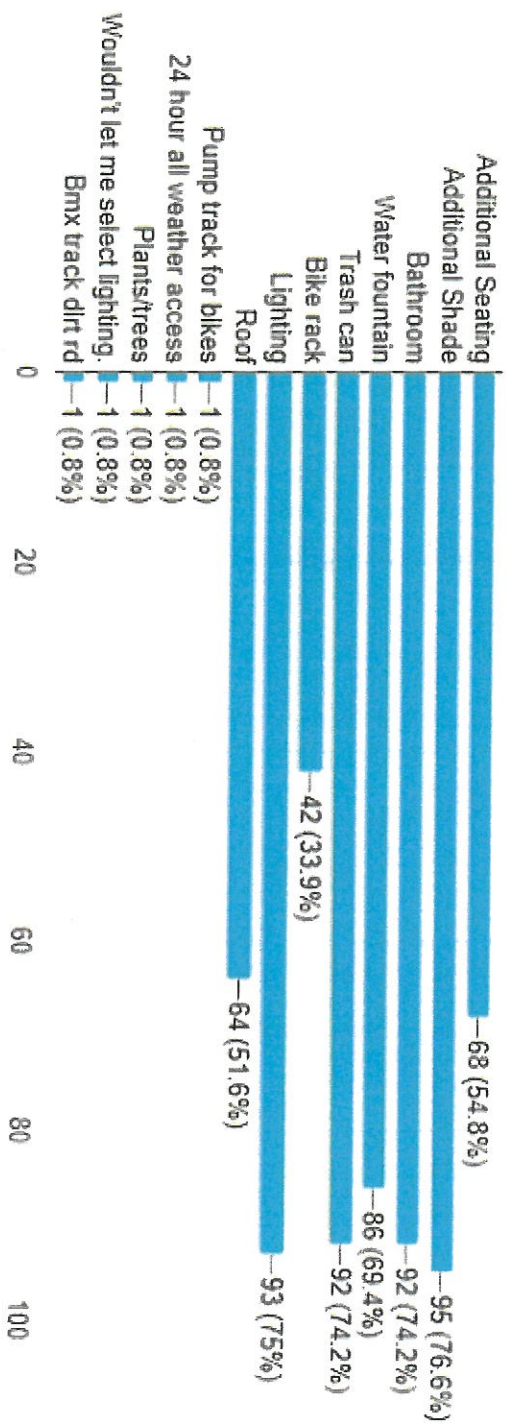
▲ 1/3 ▼

What type of skating features would you add to the current skatepark? Please rank.



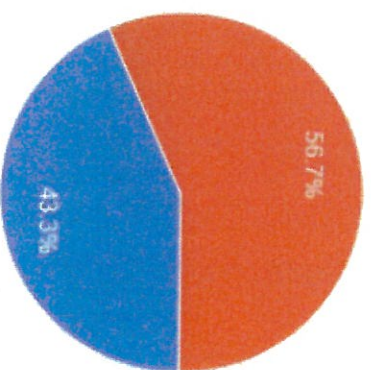
What other design elements/amenities would you like to see at the skatepark?

124 responses



Is the current skate park inclusive in regard to skill level, age, gender, race, ability?

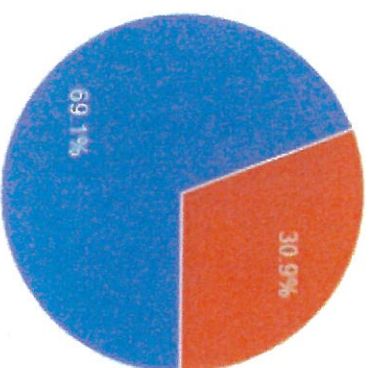
120 responses



● Yes
● No

Do you feel comfortable accessing the skatepark using the crosswalk and sidewalks on S 4th Street and Highway 99?

123 responses



Yes
No