



**CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION:**

ITEM _____

**OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
CITY OF DES MOINES, IOWA**

99-428

SYNOPSIS -

AGENDA:

SEPTEMBER 27, 1999

To receive and file information on the process and recommendations for the Skate Park study and refer to the Park and Recreation Board to develop a conceptual plan for construction at Birdland Park.

SUBJECT:

SKATE PARK
FACILITY STUDY

FISCAL IMPACT -

Approximately \$250,000 through private gifts.

TYPE:

RESOLUTION
ORDINANCE
RECEIVE/FILE

RECOMMENDATION -

Approval to receive and file information.

BACKGROUND -

SUBMITTED BY:

DONALD TRIPP
PARK AND
RECREATION
DIRECTOR

In August of 1998, Dunbar/Jones Partnership received a grant from the Iowa Department of Transportation (IDOT) to conduct a study on the design, feasibility, and location of a skate park in the City of Des Moines. The Skate Park Steering Committee consisted of representatives from the City's Finance (Risk Manager), Legal, Park and Recreation, and Police Departments. Other participants included representatives from the Park and Recreation Board, Youth Advisory Council, and youth and parents who participate in the sport.

The Skate Park Steering Committee developed a process that identified three skate park sites in Des Moines and prepared concepts for each. The Skate Park Steering Committee established the following issues and goals to guide the process toward the selection and design of a skate park facility:

1. Determine location, ownership, and management.
2. Build a quality facility.

3. Build a facility for all ability levels.
4. Involve potential users in the design process.
5. Create a safe place to be with friends and have fun.
6. Use facility to improve public attitudes toward skating.
7. Use facility to attract visitors to Des Moines.

Two design workshops were held with local users to weigh location criteria and review the specific elements for the skate park. The skate park comparison study included: Bismarck, North Dakota; Tualatin, Oregon; and Phoenix, Arizona. The Skate Park Steering Committee chose three locations from an original list of 45 sites. The sites chosen were west of Birdland Pool, Columbus Park, and the northeast corner of Second Avenue and Grand.

The site selection criteria included:

Highly visible - but private	Nocturnal aspects/adolescence
Potential for expansion	Central location
Easy to find	MTA accessible
Some place desirable and pretty	Existing activity
Shelter from Iowa weather	Close to trails
Safe location	Open 24 hours
Flexible design	Parking

Before skate parks, skaters depended on certain street elements and abandoned swimming pools to practice their skating. In today's skate parks, many of these features can be found. For example, some street elements have been redesigned for skate parks to meet the needs and desires of skaters. Some elements include stairs, railings, ramps, curbs, retaining walls, and benches. Bowls, which resemble swimming pools, have been modified for skate parks. These features, among others, have been included in the three conceptual plans for the Metropolitan Skate Park.

The initial study report was received and filed by the Park and Recreation Board on April 27, 1999. The recommended site location for the skate park was the corner of Second and Grand. This parcel is owned by MidAmerican Energy. Park and Recreation Department staff have visited with representatives

from MidAmerican Energy and have abandoned this location due to the complexity of the underground utilities running through this property.

The recommended site location for development is Birdland Park at Sixth and Holcomb. Park and Recreation Department staff, along with Dunbar/Jones staff, presented the concept to the Highland Park Neighborhood Association on August 10, 1999. The Neighborhood Association was very positive toward the recommended improvements.