



# Youth Infrastructure Study

## Draft Report

For Public Exhibition  
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# Contents

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

This study has been prepared by Playce Pty Ltd for the City of Ryde to;

- Assess the need for, and community demand for additional youth recreation spaces and facilities in the City; and
- Identify the design principles, scale, preferred components and most appropriate locations for such facilities.

## What is play for young people?

The first section of this study is essentially looking at what play and recreation is for young people and clarifying that tweens (12-14), teens (15-17) and young adults (18-24) all recreate for different reasons and require different spaces and places.

Tweens are still very much looking for opportunities to play and be active. At an age where they are still not able to travel independently spaces that are local to them is critical. Therefore as part of the study, looking at adapting existing play spaces in key locations is the focus with a range of different active elements including parkour, scooter loops, ball courts and skate could be considered.

Teens are very much moving into an important new stage of adolescence. A key part of this phase is their transition into adulthood. As such, places to socialise are the key focus. Recreation spaces that are accessible and safe in relevant areas such as commercial precincts, libraries and transport nodes are critical.

Young adults are more likely to be interested in traditional sport and fitness in line with broader recommendations of the 2017 City of Ryde Sport & Recreation Strategy 2016-26.

## Demographic Review

The study takes a snapshot of the broader distribution of young people across the City to understand where they live now and where they are forecast to live into the future. Some of the key outcomes include;

*City of Ryde has; A larger percentage of 12-24 year olds born overseas compared to Greater Sydney.*

*Whilst Greater Sydney has just 5.3% of 12-24 year old born in China, City of Ryde has 14.5%.*

*The highest numbers of young people aged 12-24 years in 2016 reside in Eastwood (2,920), Marsfield (2,842) and Macquarie Park (2,454).*

*The areas that are predicted to have the highest number of young people aged 12-24 years for 2041 are Macquarie Park (8,786), Eastwood (3,877) and North Ryde/ Chatswood West (3,541).*

*The suburb predicted to have the greatest increase in 12-24 year olds over the next twenty one years is Macquarie Park (121.4%).*

All of this was considered when preparing the Implementation Plan.

## What do Ryde's young people think?

An intensive community engagement was undertaken to obtain more specific ideas and information from the City's young people. 213 members of the community were engaged and provided insight and information on how they use public space and what they would like to see more of in their City.

# Executive summary continued

The process included an on-line survey, public stakeholder workshop, drop in session at the Meadowbank Skatepark and sessions at three of City of Ryde's Secondary Schools.

With over 200 people engaged, and 77% of these between the age of 12-24, Playce was able to get a good snapshot of what young people are interested in and what types of spaces they want within the City of Ryde.

Overall young people want to hang out and socialise with their peers as well as undertake a range of recreation and community activities. The most requested items included;

*#1 Multipurpose sports courts that include basketball line markings and hoops with backboards.*

*#2 Indoor sports facilities which provide a space for all weather sport.*

*#3 Outdoor community events such as markets, outdoor cinema and festivals to engage with the community.*

*#4 Varied skateable elements/ facilities throughout the City of Ryde, as well as an upgrade to existing skate parks.*

*#5 Social spaces outdoors with adequate shade and seating and surrounding nature.*

Based on the above, and other feedback from young people through the consultation, the new model for provision for new spaces and places for youth needs to vary and be flexible to cater for a range of different needs and interests.

## What can spaces for young people look like?

Given the importance of catering for a diversity of needs - with tweens still interested in play and teens & young adults more interested both in active recreation and social connection - it is important to define the diversity of required spaces.

A hierarchical approach is required that focuses on larger centralised facilities that cater for both tweens and teens at key locations across the City, complemented by infill tween and teen recreation hubs at the local level.

The tween spaces are aligned with existing playspaces in neighbourhood parks and reserves.

The local teen spaces are more appropriately located in urban centres, commercial precincts and close to train stations and libraries.

## Implementing the plan

The resultant plan therefore focuses on two main additional district scale recreational facilities and then complements these with more localised opportunities within residential areas at transport hubs and community spaces.

### High Priority

The City of Ryde has already considered the needs of young people in the master planning of ELS Hall Park and Blenheim Park. This strategy agrees with the suitability of both these locations for high priority district-scale youth infrastructure. These two locations are central, easily accessed by public transport, can service large populations of young people and complements the highly successful Meadowbank Skatepark in the south of the City.

These district facilities are the highest priority as they provide large scale spaces that can provide significant diversity and choice of recreation opportunities for all young people - tween, teen and young adult. The facilities should include active recreation, parkour and challenging play and fitness equipment to provide complementary opportunities for young people who do not skate.

### Mid Priority

For the tween-focused facilities, the strategy proposes a traditional play space model with play facility upgrades at East Ryde and at Ryde (Santa Rosa).

### Mid Priority

For teen-focused facilities, three new recreation spaces are proposed. These are at Eastwood (Eastwood Park), Top Ryde/ Ryde Library and Gladesville-Tennyson Point.

### Low Priority

There are also 8 existing local active recreation hubs (ball courts) across the City. Once the new local recreation spaces are implemented, these existing spaces can also be adapted to include more relevant recreation components to further increase the diversity of youth recreation opportunities across the LGA.

# Introduction

## Purpose

The overall purpose of this study is to provide strategic direction in the potential future provision of outdoor recreation places and spaces for young people throughout the City of Ryde.

## Introduction

This study has been prepared by Playce Pty Ltd for the City of Ryde to;

- Assess the need for, and community demand for additional youth recreation spaces and facilities in the City; and
- Identify the design principles, scale, preferred components and most appropriate locations for such facilities.

It firstly defines the typical play and recreation interests and behaviors of young people, including the specific interests and needs of youth subgroups, including tweens (10-12 years), teenagers (13-18) and young adults (18-24). Each of these age cohorts have different requirements and use public spaces differently.

The study then reviews the distribution and demographic characteristics of young people across the City to understand the geography of youth needs and demands, both now and into the future

Community engagement with young people was undertaken to obtain their specific ideas and information on their recreation interests and activities.

The study also identified the full range of facilities and spaces of relevance to young people, including skateparks and other action sports.

Finally, the study proposes a new youth infrastructure model involving a hierarchy of facilities from regional to local. The model includes key site selection criteria and an implementation plan that outlines the recommended approach for the provision of new spaces and facilities for young people across the City of Ryde.

## Background

The City of Ryde has been reviewing the provision of skate and other youth-specific facilities within the City for many years. The 2012 Integrated Open Space Plan (IOSP) identified a need for youth-specific facilities and youth consultation and recommended that the City:

*Undertake specific consultation with youth groups from a range of backgrounds and youth inter-agencies (to gain a clearer picture of the recreation and leisure needs of the City's youth)*

The 2017 City of Ryde Sport & Recreation Strategy 2016-26 confirmed and expanded on the IOSP directions and recommended that the City:

1. *Undertake specific consultation with youth groups from a range of backgrounds and youth inter-agencies to gain a clearer picture of the recreation and leisure needs of the City's youth*
2. *Prepare an Outdoor Youth Space Strategy for the City of Ryde.*
3. *Progressively develop an Outdoor Youth Space in the Central Ward (High priority); West Ward (Medium priority); and East Ward (Low priority)*
4. *Include the potential for a dedicated youth area linked to outdoor facilities in the feasibility study for a new indoor sport and recreation centre.*

Council has delivered the first stage of the Outdoor Youth Space Strategy recommended in the Sport & Recreation Strategy 2016-26 in recently building and opening the Youth and Family Recreation Space at Meadowbank.

More recently, several of the community and stakeholder engagements undertaken from late February to late March 2019, in conjunction with preparation of Council's draft Social Plan 2019-24, identified a need within the City for additional youth specific spaces. Accordingly, Council resolved in Mid 2019 to investigate the feasibility of additional outdoor youth spaces at other locations within the City for completion by the end of the 2019-2020 financial year. This report constitutes the strategic response to that resolution.

# Strategic Alignment

In preparing this study, as summarized above, existing council policies and documents have been considered to ensure the study outcomes align strategically with Council's broader plans and objectives. These include the;

## Integrated Open Space Plan (IOSP) 2012

This Plan, while having a focus on the wider spectrum of open space and recreation needs across the City, has been an effective catalyst for engaging with and better understanding the recreation requirements of young people in the City.

## City of Ryde Sport & Recreation Strategy 2017

The key relevant recommendations of this Strategy were outlined above. The Strategy was the key trigger for the successful delivery of Council's first regional-scale Outdoor Youth Space in the Central Ward at Meadowbank.

## City of Ryde Draft Social Plan 2019-24

The Social Plan reiterated the importance of investigating the needs for more youth specific spaces and was one of the catalysts for this Youth Infrastructure Study.

## City of Ryde Children's Play Plan 2019

The Children's Play Plan addresses youth recreation and stresses the importance of play for young people. The Plan acknowledges that "few opportunities for youth" are provided in Council's existing play provision (pg 40) and provides the following key strategic directions (Pg 55);

- *Provide young people with easily accessible playgrounds in visible locations.*
- *Ensure playgrounds providing opportunities for youth are easily accessible by public transport, bicycle and walking.*
- *Ensure playgrounds are sited with good passive surveillance and preferably near recreational and sporting hubs, schools or town centres.*

Additionally, the Plan includes a specific section on play provision for young people. Key observations and conclusions include;

- *Youth play opportunities could include obstacle courses, tree top adventures, large social play elements and hang out spaces which are well lit and with wi-fi provided.*

- *It should be noted however, that many young people place a greater focus on recreational and sports facilities (such as multi-purpose half courts, skate parks, outdoor gyms etc) than traditional playgrounds.*
- *As activities for young people should be considered more broadly within open space, it is recommended that a detailed Youth Spaces Strategy is developed. This study should cover a variety of open space types (parks, plazas, playgrounds, skate parks, sports facilities etc.) and provide recommendations for the integration of youth spaces across the City for young people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.*
- *Considering cultural differences in open space activity preferences is also critical in achieving successful youth spaces.*

## Ryde Youth Strategy Discussion Paper 2018-22

The Youth Strategy creates a shared vision for the City and its young people by advocating the importance of participating in civic life and be a voice on issues that affect them. As part of the Vision, Council will;

- *Continue to engage, listen to and consult with our young people on matters that affect them both in the short and long term.*

One of the core priority actions within the Strategy is that;

***Young people are healthy, active and are able to live positive lives.***

As part of this;

- *Young people would like to access more outdoor and open area sporting and recreational facilities as well as have access to workshops and programs on healthy eating, meditation and yoga.*

## Park Masterplans

The park masterplans for Blenheim Park and Whiteside Street Reserve both include proposed youth spaces. The details of these proposals have been reviewed and have played a significant role in shaping the final Implementation Plan.

# Existing recreation provision

Council currently has one district scale youth recreation space- the Meadowbank Skate park- and eight local-scale court focused facilities at various locations across the City - as illustrated at fig.1.

The recently implemented and successful Meadowbank Skatepark and active recreation space is the main district facility. It contains a large skate space, climbing opportunities, table tennis and some social elements. This is located at the south western edge of the City. There is also an existing small skatepark at Shrimptons Creek Park. It is at the end of its lifespan and needs to be upgraded.

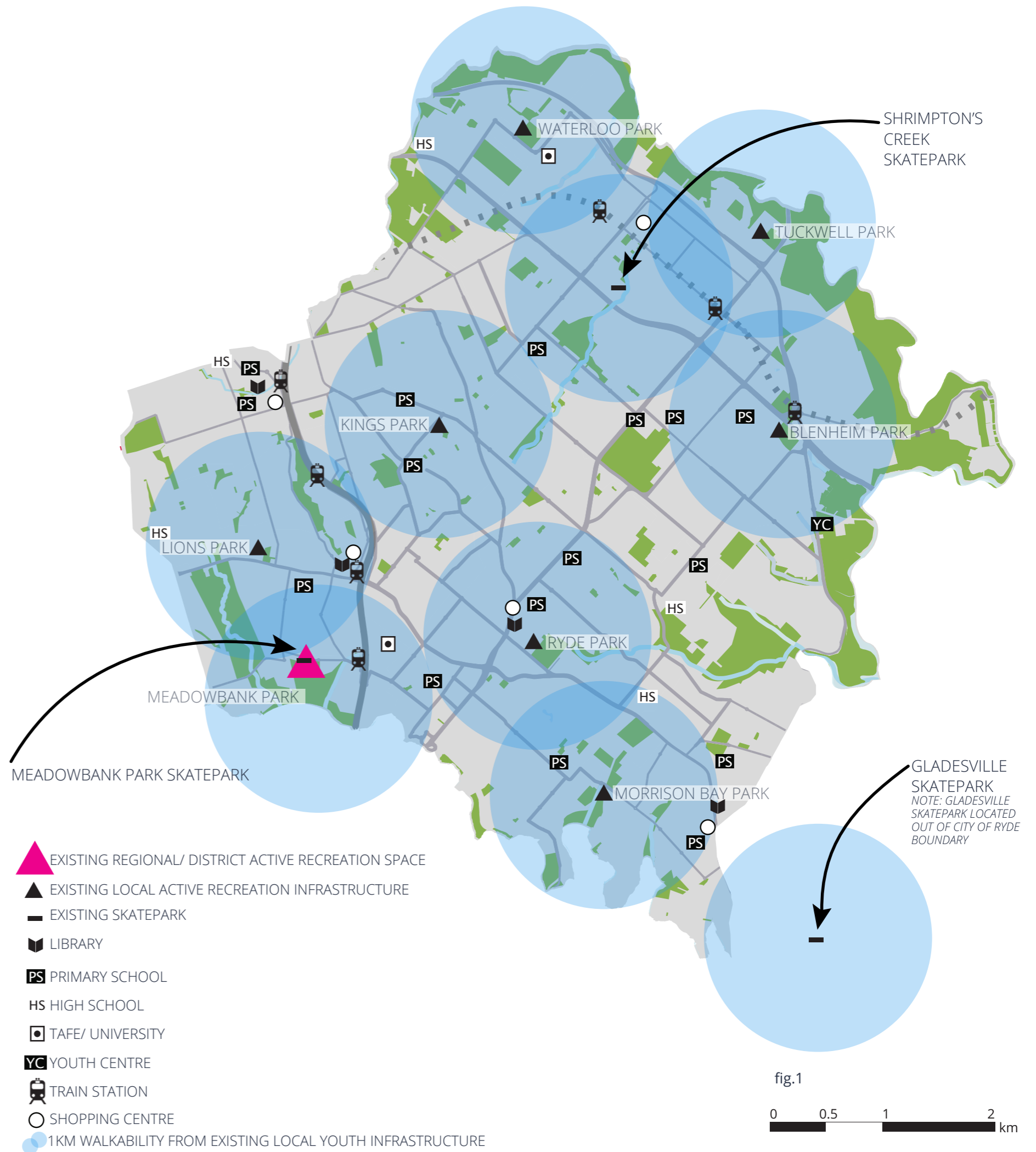
The eight court focused facilities comprise a range of modified and full size ball courts distributed across the City's reserves. They provide informal areas for recreation and social connection and are shown in blue, with a 1km walkability catchment, at fig.1.

There are three 2/3 courts (at Morrison Bay Park, Tuckwell Park and Kings Park), three 1/2 courts (at Lions Park, Meadowbank Park and Blenheim Park) and two full sized courts (at Ryde Park and Waterloo Park).

Whilst overall there is reasonable coverage across the City from a walkability perspective, the existing spaces are essentially providing the same recreation experience as each other, with little diversity of opportunity and little amenity. Because young people congregate and socialise at these facilities, they should provide seating and shade- at a minimum- as outlined in the site selection matrix on page 38 of this report.

Whilst Meadowbank Skatepark provides good opportunity for skating within the southern precincts of the City, the only facility in the north, the run-down facility at Shrimptons Creek does not provide adequate opportunities in that part of the City. As a result, there are significant gaps across the City when it comes to skate provision.

The final section of the report- Implementation Plan- provides some examples of how these existing facilities can be adapted with other recreation elements to improve their diversity, amenity, appeal and usability.



# What is play for young people?

This section touches on current industry thinking about what is teenage & tween play, and play or recreation for young adults. It includes discussion on issues young people face, why play for tweens and teens is so important and a review of existing models of provision. It then highlights a new approach to teen & tween play & recreation space provision.

**“Every child (up to age 18) has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts”**

Article 31 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child.

All children, including tweens and teens, have the right to participate in play and this UN Convention has been ratified by the Australian Government.

Firstly for the purposes of this study;

**Tweens** are considered children from 12-14 years transitioning into adolescence.

**Teens** are defined as 15-17 year olds.

**Young adults** are defined as 18- 24 year olds.

When discussing adolescents more generally it relates to both tweens and teens from 12-17 year olds.

So what is play and why is it important and how does it differ to different ages? The following section aims to provide some answers.

Play is described by some as the universal language of childhood though not only children play<sup>1</sup>. No matter our age, we all play: in different ways, at different times, in different places and with different people. But what is play? It has many descriptions, however enjoyment is the common link between them all:

“To play is to engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose”<sup>2</sup>. “The focus of play is on the actual experience, not on accomplishing any goal. There doesn’t need to be any point to the activity beyond having fun and enjoying yourself”<sup>3</sup>.



## Physical (or active) play

Opportunity for walking, running, balance, coordination, jumping, skipping, hanging, climbing, sliding, rocking and swinging;



## Cognitive play

Opportunity for exploration, manipulating objects, problem solving, imaginative play and building on what already known to interpret new experiences;



## Sensory play

Opportunity for sensory stimulation through sound, sight, touch and smell;



## Emotional play

Opportunity for appropriate risk taking, self-direction and self-regulation;



## Social play

Opportunity for sharing, teamwork, communication, building friendships and support<sup>4</sup>.

## Why is play important?

Providing play opportunities for children of all ages means acknowledging that everyone can, and should play. Most importantly, providing play opportunities is not just about providing play equipment and facilities: play can include public place pop-ups, performance, programs and events or artworks and sculptures that foster fun, inspire imagination or evoke senses and memories. Play is not just physical or active.

All children need to play. All children have the right to play. When children play they are not just filling in time, they are learning to make sense of their world. Play facilitates the learning of life skills and for this reason, the provision of quality outdoor play spaces is vitally important in local communities. Through play, children develop qualities necessary in adulthood, including problem solving, independence, self awareness, creativity, resilience and spatial knowledge.

*Play is about more than just ‘letting off steam’; it can be quiet and contemplative, as well as active and boisterous. All children and young people, including those who are disabled or have specific needs, should have opportunities to experience challenge and take risks while playing. Play is essential to the healthy development of children and young people – not just their physical development, but their social and cognitive development too.*

*‘Design for Play: A guide to creating successful play spaces’, Play England 2008*

## We actually need to play!

Children in Australia are playing less and have fewer community-based areas that facilitate play. As a result, obesity is on the increase. This issue is compounded by the fact that more than 8% of the most vulnerable children in Australia are excluded from play.

- **42% of children are not involved in sport**
- **630,000 children spend 40+ hours of screen time per fortnight**
- **50% drop in children playing in their local neighborhoods within the last generation**
- **65% of families have both parents working**
- **8% of our youth have a disability. 50% of these are either severe or profound with 75% of these disabilities being neurological, not physical**
- **40% increase in childhood obesity between 1995-2005**
- **25% of Australian children are obese or overweight**

*Australian Institute of Health and Wellbeing 2010 Report & Inclusive Play Space 2012*

1 Play Scotland. What is play? <http://www.playscotland.org/what-is-play-playwork/what-is-play>.  
2 Oxford Dictionary. [www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/English/play](http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/English/play).  
3 Helpguide.org. The benefits of play for adults. <http://www.helpguide.org/articles/emotional-health/benefits-of-play-for-adults.htm>: n.d.

## Re-imagining play...



In recent times, playspace design and planning has focused on provision of safe playground equipment (along with associated maintenance and timely replacement), rather than provision of creative, challenging and exciting play environments. We need to re-imagine our approach to play to ensure the needs of people of all ages and abilities are met.

One of the critical components in re-imagining play is to understand that while adults may be arbiters of providing playspaces, the people who use playspaces are rarely the designers and very few people, especially children and young people, have a voice in determining what their play opportunities might look like. If we are to change the status quo, we need to rethink traditional images of play. In too many cases, play is managed and controlled; often simply by the structure of standardised play equipment. If we consider other forms of play that encourage exploration, inspire creativity and offer varying levels of challenge, each time a player returns they can find new ways to engage in play, to use their imagination or stretch their boundaries through adventure and discovery.

We should be imaginative in thinking about how to design play places for people of all ages that provide opportunity for physical challenge, exploration and social interaction.

Increasingly people are seeking vibrant, playful places where they can interact as a whole family, socialise with friends or simply watch other people play.

The challenge is to now incorporate playfulness into all aspects of the public realm, not just parks and playgrounds; to build in flexibility and provide play opportunities that can adapt as community preferences and expectations change.

Our re-imagined places for play need to enable people of all ages and abilities to play independently as much as they need to enable people of all ages and abilities to play together.

## What is teen & tween play?



### The inbe'TWEEN's

So how come playspaces are so focused on the needs of younger children only?

This is particularly important when we talk about the lost age group, our tweens. Too old to enjoy smaller toddler-focused playspaces and too young to travel independently to other forms of recreation spaces, tweens are exactly that, lost in between. Given the importance of play and the developmental role it plays in early childhood, the focus is ensuring there are opportunities for cognitive, sensory and emotional play in many playspaces in both public playgrounds and kindergartens.

Older children's needs also need consideration. Play allows tweens to be creative, use their imagination and develop a stronger sense of self as they mature towards adolescence. It is an extension of traditional play but with a focus on elements that challenge children physically, cognitively and emotionally whilst allowing important social opportunities to be fostered.

Less prescriptive play spaces are also important to allow older children to find their own fun and adapt the space to their requirements.

It is critical that different age groups can make spaces relevant and thus fun for them.



## Adolescence... a time of much change



*“People spend their childhood learning to be like their parents, and their adolescence learning who they are and how they are different from their parents.”*

Dr Miriam Kaufman, 2006

Adolescence is the period following the onset of puberty during which a young person develops from a child into an adult. It is a significant time of change with significant life development changes as outlined to the right.

As part of adolescence, young people are also faced with a significant range of challenging issues such as depression, bullying, poor body image, obesity and weight related disorders.

So what kind of spaces should be created for these young people as they progress into adulthood and how have councils and other authorities approached the task of providing spaces to privilege the needs of young people?

**Independence from parents & other adults**

**Development of a realistic stable positive self-identity**

**Formation of sexual identity**

**Negotiation of peer & intimate relationships**

**Development of realistic body image**

**Formulation of own moral/ value system**

**Acquisition of skills for future economic independence**

<http://headspace.org.au/>

## The skatepark phenomenon

The first spaces created that primarily focused on young people rose to popularity in the late 1990's. There was a major push for the provision of spaces to skate due to a significant level of interest from primarily younger people who skated or rode.

As skateparks were considered active 'recreation', their delivery often fell with recreation departments who were responsible for public open space and parks.

As such over the last 15 years, over 800 skateparks have been implemented across Australia and almost all of these facilities have been located in public parks and open space.



## The rise (and fall) of youth spaces

As part of this significant growth of interest in skatepark provision, it became clear that the majority of participants were adolescent boys.

Across the industry, Councils were seeing that skateparks had a youth focus and started to look at how these spaces could accommodate other young people. A solution for teenage play had been created.

Skateparks began to expand with social areas, seating, ball courts and other recreation facilities to increase diversity of use. This created a significant issue. Rather than understand specifically what interested young people, Councils were adding and creating more recreation spaces that were not necessarily relevant to the majority of young people. The definition below best sums up the focus on minimal social gathering and the provision of sports facilities, primarily with a male focus. Did this attract those not interested in active sport, particularly females? ... No. The model had to change...

*“Youth spaces are defined as free access outdoor activity spaces designed for young people to encourage social and physical activity. These spaces cater to children over the age of 5 years and in the main, people between 10 and 24 years. Typically they will facilitate social gathering, the conduct of one or more action sports and free access social sports facilities, such as: ball courts, hit up walls, goalposts and practice wickets.*

YOUTH SPACES PLAN (undisclosed NSW council, 2012).



## Moving beyond active recreation



For a start, we need to acknowledge that sport is not the only recreation solution. Art, music and dance can also be attractive and relevant to teens, with many undertaking these pursuits as part of their school curriculum. Teens are also highly influenced and enjoy these pursuits socially, in particular both music and dance. Tapping into this interest allows a potential space to become far more relevant to a much larger range of young people.

Most importantly, accommodating these in a space allows it to transform and change as trends change. What is cool and relevant now to one group of teenagers will be daggy and irrelevant to those wanting to use a space in 5 years' time. Art, music and events allow the space to transform with the trends and remain relevant.

*“Maybe more benches and some equipment to mess around on that are bigger in size rather than the kid size slides at the playgrounds”*

*Respondent at City of Ryde Youth Plan Survey 2020*

*“Too focused on outdoor recreation and sport. That is not all that young people do. There are lots of us that this doesn't appeal to at all ”*

*Respondent at City of Ryde Youth Plan Survey 2020*

## So what really is play for teens?



If active recreation and skateparks are not specifically play for teens, what is? The majority of young people throughout Australia spend time with their friends. Friendships are among the most important activities of life. They are important in helping children develop emotionally and socially. By adolescence 80 to 90% of children have key friends, and they spend almost a third of their waking time in the company of friends whereas this drops significantly at adulthood. Young people need to socialise, to “hang out”, to talk, to flirt, to challenge... It's a critical part of the transition to becoming an adult.

As part of the consultation with young people within the City of Ryde for this study, they were asked about what their favorite pastime or leisure activity was. Of the 177 responses, overwhelmingly the most popular activity was “Hanging Out with friends” at 49%; followed by playing video games and going shopping. As way of comparison, BMX and bike riding was 11th and Skateboarding was 12th on the list at 8%. Reading and listening to music at a park was higher than these more traditional “youth” activities at 11% and 10% respectively.

When asked about what existing facilities and places they currently frequented, the results were similar with shopping centres first; followed by parks and open space second. Skateparks were 8th. This is a small sample of data, but shows that there is a fundamental need and interest in young people just hanging out and socialising. Therefore essentially teenage play is simply providing opportunities for young people to have fun and socialise .

## Relevant spaces?

If young people are most interested in socialising and hanging out with friends, it becomes important to expand on where they want to be to do this. Most young people have lots of ‘free time’, have to use public transport to get around, are attracted to fashion, movies and music and have a high disposable income. All of these are found in town centres and commercial precincts.



There is significant evidence confirming this throughout Australia with most shopping and commercial centres and malls experiencing issues with many young people congregating in these central and accessible locations. Ironically though, this is seen as a negative and a major problem for many commercial centres. Strategies have been put in place to remove teens from “loitering” in these spaces such as employing security guards and even more significant responses such as the “Mosquito” (a high pitched tone that only younger people can hear).

## None of this makes sense?

So we are creating ‘youth’ spaces in parks that are hard to access; not where young people want to be, yet at the same time implementing strategies aimed at preventing young people from using shopping precincts, transport nodes and commercial centres to which they are naturally attracted. So who should then be responsible for designing spaces for young people?

Due to the structure of most local governments within Australia, different departments are responsible for different strategic areas. Recreation departments are traditionally involved in managing parks and open space and the recreation facilities placed within them. Youth services focus more on at risk youth, programs and support. Urban design and city planning are responsible for the implementation and management of more centralised urban centres and transport nodes. Given this demarcation of responsibility, it is essential that cross- Council collaboration take place in the planning and design of spaces specifically for teenagers.

If we accept that young people are naturally attracted to urban centres and shopping precincts, we should look to redevelop these spaces to better accommodate their needs. If areas within a mall or public square were designed with young people in mind, we may actually mitigate a number of the perceived or real social issues of young people ‘loitering’. Active recreation, music, art, events and other social opportunities could all be accommodated in relevant spaces in high profile locations in places young people want to be. Importantly the design of these spaces need to be such that young people’s needs are balanced with the needs of others in the community so any perceived or actual conflict of use is mitigated.

## What about young adults?



The majority of this section has focused on tweens and teens as, by law, these age groups are still defined as children and are going through significant change as they move into adulthood. Spaces that can support them through this transition are so important as demonstrated in this section.

Young adults are also in a transition phase and are whilst some are still requiring support from their family, many have left school, can drive, vote and are moving into tertiary study or other vocations. They are becoming more financially and physically independent and can move freely throughout the suburbs they live.

From a recreation perspective they generally have a far greater capacity to access more diverse recreation spaces and places including privatized options such as gyms. Accordingly young adults’ active recreation needs are addressed in the **2017 City of Ryde Sport & Recreation Strategy 2016-26** and in the forthcoming Open Space Future Provision Plan (in preparation).

Young adults are also potential users for many of the proposed facilities and activities suggested for the younger age groups in this report.

These proposals include social spaces for hanging out. Many young adults also have significant free time (part time work or study) so the ability to meet with friends is still a prime focus. As is the importance of these spaces being located in public transport hubs, commercial centres and near universities or TAFEs. Social recreation hubs at central locations, can be as relevant to young adults as they are for younger teenagers.

# Demographic review

## Introduction

The following section provides a brief snapshot of the broader distribution of where young people live in the City of Ryde, now and where they are forecast to live in 2041. Where possible, facilities should be located close to where young people live.

### Age

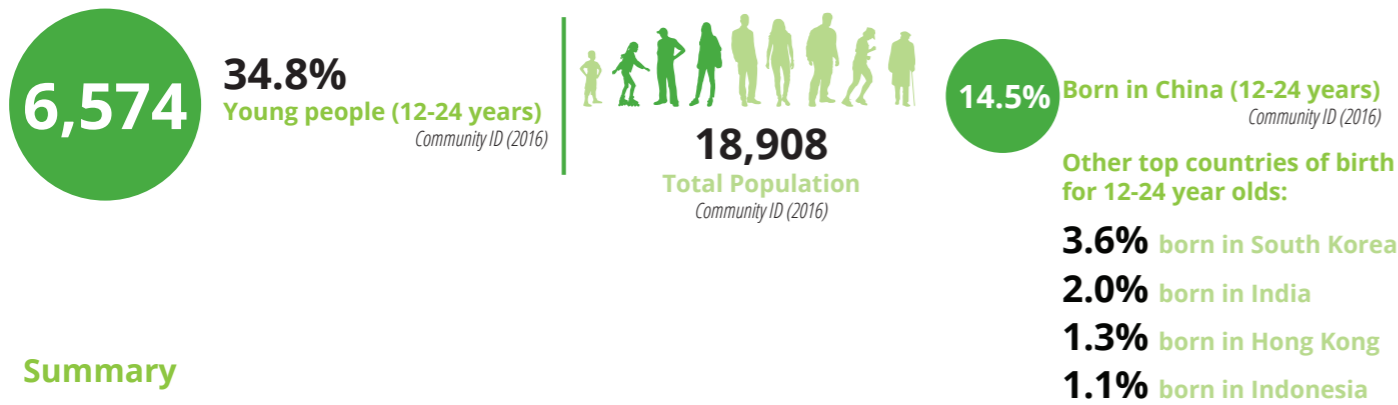


### Cultural Diversity

#### Indigenous



#### Overseas Born



### Summary

The City of Ryde has a larger percentage (34.8%) of 12-24 year olds born overseas than Greater Sydney (24.2%).

Whilst the latter has just 5.3% of 12-24 years born in China, the City of Ryde has 14.5%. This cultural diversity is reflected in the recent Youth Strategy Discussion Paper for the City of Ryde which noted that young people would like to have access to culturally specific workshops and programs on healthy eating, mediation and yoga.<sup>1</sup>

## Youth population distribution

The following maps show the existing distribution of youths across the City of Ryde, as well as the forecast for youth population distribution in 2041.

Youth population distribution: 2016

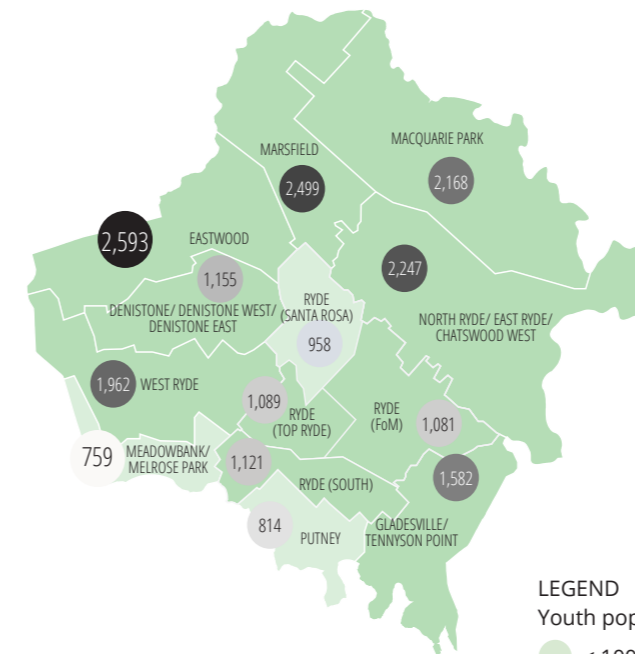


fig. 2

Map showing population distribution (number) of 12-24 years (Community ID 2016) within the City of Ryde in 2016.

Youth population distribution: forecast 2041

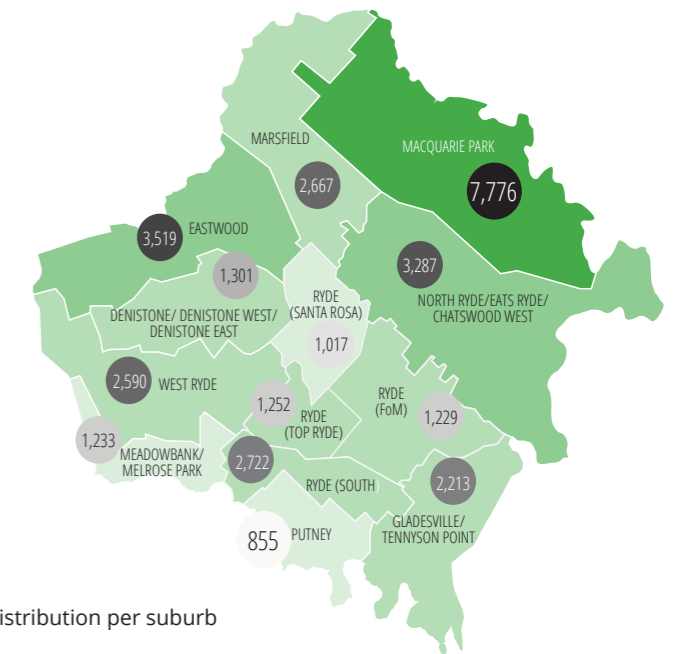


fig. 3

Map showing population distribution forecast (number) of 12-24 years (Community ID 2016) within the City of Ryde in 2041.

#### LEGEND

Youth population distribution per suburb

- < 1000
- 1000-2999
- 3000-4999
- 5000-6999
- 7000+

Number Youth Population

- largest number of youth
- medium number of youth
- smallest number of youth

### Summary

The above maps show that the highest proportion (numbers) of young people aged 12-24 years in 2016 reside in Eastwood (2,593), Marsfield (2,499) and North Ryde/ East Ryde/ Chatswood West (2,247). By 2041, Macquarie Park will have experienced very high growth in its youth population (increasing from 2,168 to 7,776), with Eastwood (3,519), North Ryde/ Chatswood West (3,287) and South Ryde (2,722) also experiencing significant growth. Accordingly, these areas should be a focus for the geographical distribution of any new youth recreation infrastructure.

# What do City of Ryde's young people think?

Playce and the City of Ryde actively engaged with a total of 213 members of the community to gather insight and information to assist in developing a strategic plan that meets young peoples needs.

The process included an online survey, public stakeholder workshop, drop in session at the Meadowbank Skatepark and sessions at three of the City of Ryde's Secondary Schools.

The following pages present a brief summary of the results of this consultation;

## Survey total =213

\*(including 123 that did not attend sessions shown to right)

## Age Summary

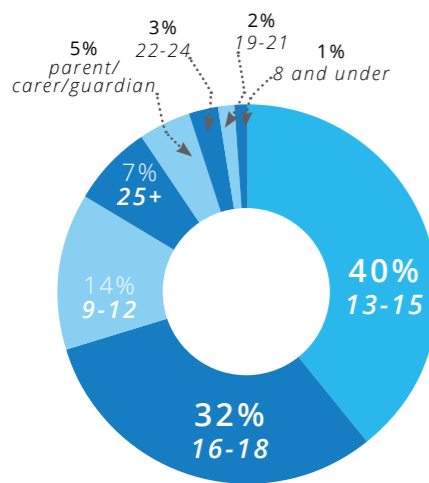


fig. 4

77% aged between 12-24

## Gender

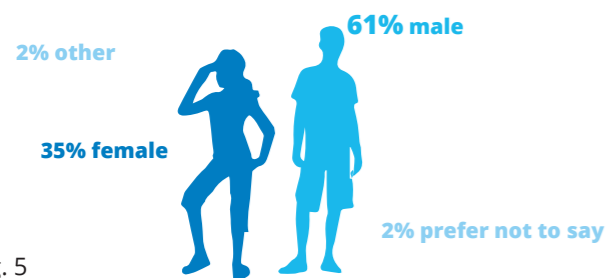


fig. 5

Total number engaged = **213**

People engaged face to face = **90**

Marsden High School:  
19 participants



Ryde Secondary College:  
32 participants



Holy Cross College:  
15 participants



Youth Drop-in session:  
4 participants

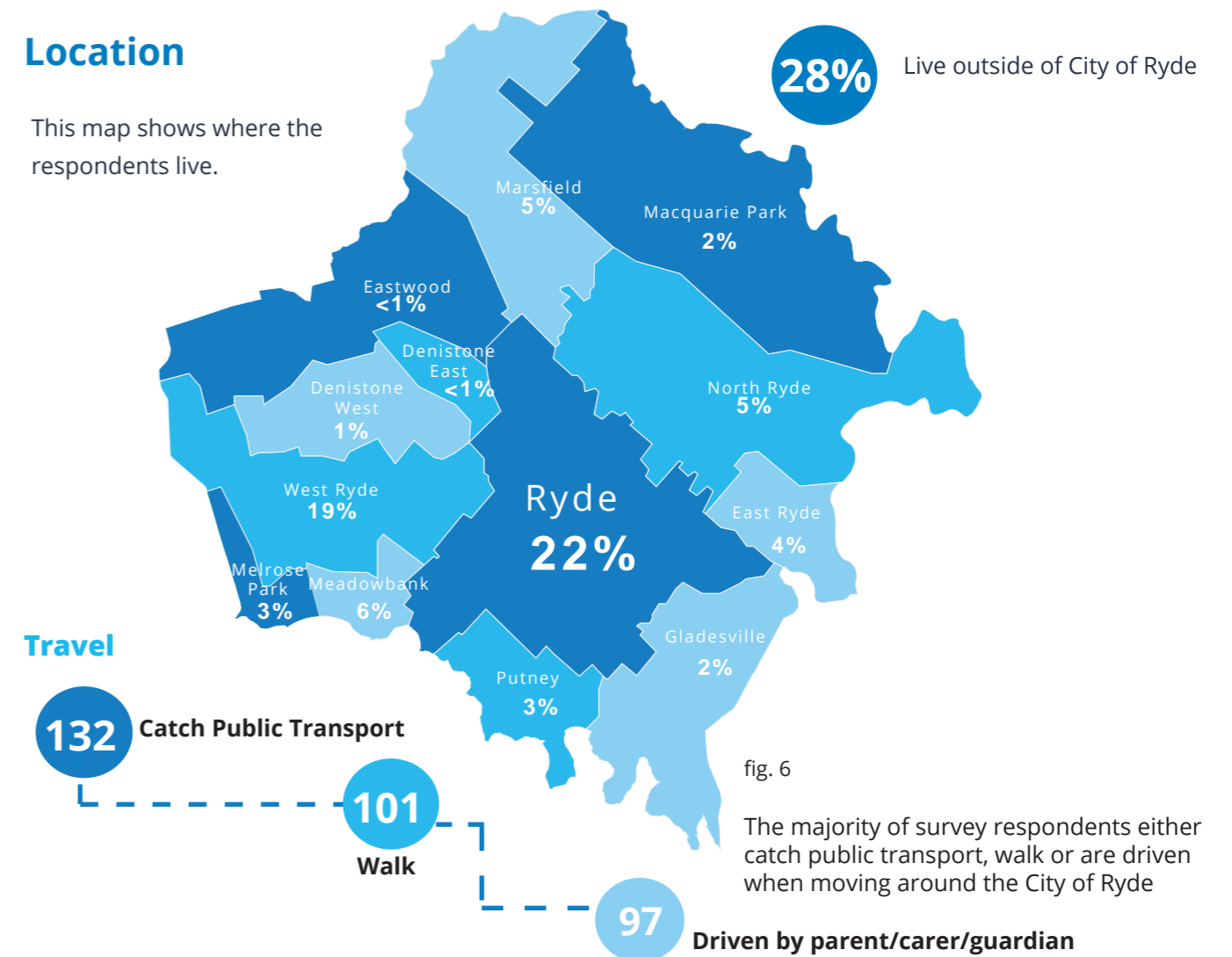


Meadowbank pop-up:  
20 participants



## Location

This map shows where the respondents live.



## Travel

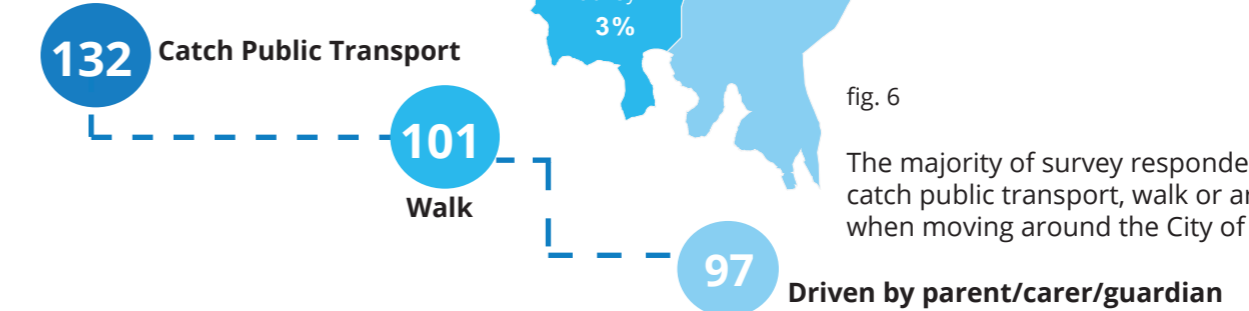


fig. 6

The majority of survey respondents either catch public transport, walk or are driven when moving around the City of Ryde

## Some of the great feedback

"The area has lots of people interested in playing basketball, however there are very limited courts and the council do not maintain them (no permanent metal nets like other councils have"

"Expand the basketball courts on Blenheim Park and outdoor gym equipment in North Ryde"

"I would like to see some smaller 'satellite' skate facilities around the Ryde area to ease congestion at Meadowbank during popular hours for the youth"

"Indoor sporting facility, I strongly believe indoor sporting facilities are needed as there is a strong increase in youth physical activity" Kyle, 17. Holy Cross College

"Outdoor seating areas (with shade) and more accessible to public transport. More nature features in public places" Shanata, 15. Ryde Secondary college

"I would like to see more community spaces and activities such as outdoor cinemas, games and local groups"

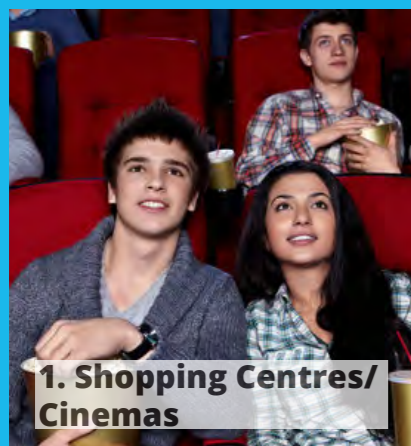
"More interactive festivals" Anushua, 14. Ryde Secondary College

"More general areas to sit in, to relax in, as opposed to sporting areas" Hayden, 15. Ryde Secondary College

We need to consider multi-purpose indoor and outdoor youth spaces. Outdoor is not for everyone!

The following is a snapshot of the top 3 responses for a number of questions asked as part of the survey

## What facilities do you use in the City of Ryde?



**1. Shopping Centres/ Cinemas**

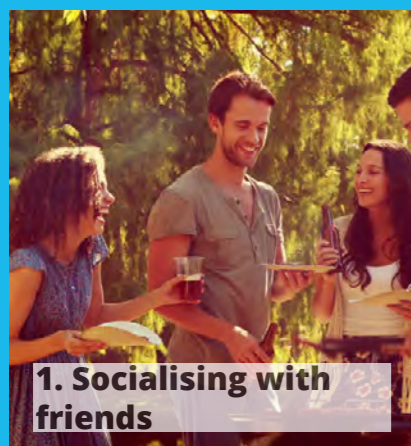


**2. Parks/ Open Spaces (Playgrounds etc)**



**3. Libraries/ Community Centres**

## What activities do you enjoy the most?



**1. Socialising with friends**



**2. Playing video games**



**3. Shopping centres, restaurants, cafes**

## What stops you from being able to do the things you enjoy?

**1. Too far from home/ hard to get to**

**2. No one to go with**

**3. Lack of free time**

## What activities do you enjoy the most?



**1. Multi-use Ball Courts**



**2. Quiet Social Areas with seating/shade**



**3. Community events & markets**

## Dotmocracy: a snapshot of favourite images!

SCHOOL VOTES

Active and Skate



**1. High Ropes Play**

2. Multi-purpose Courts
3. Athletics Track

Social and Play



**1. Nightmarkets**

2. Hangout/ Social Space
3. Night Lighting/ Activation

Creative and Art



**1. Maze**

2. Light Installations
3. Study/ Gaming Space

DROP- IN VOTES

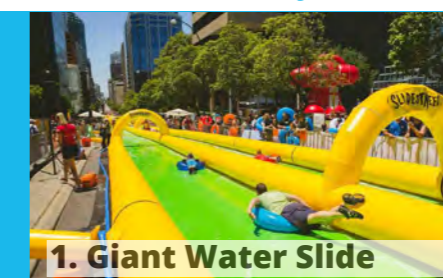
Active and Skate



**1. Skateable Elements**

2. Skate Bowl
3. Pumps Track

Social and Play



**1. Giant Water Slide**

2. Food Trucks
3. Pop up mini golf

Creative and Art



**1. Makers Hub**

2. Maze
3. Art Walls

## Discussion

Overall the consultation confirmed broader trends in the preferences of young people for facilities and activities within public space. With over 200 people engaged, and 77% of these aged 12-24 years, Playce was able to get an excellent snapshot of what young people are interested in and the spaces they would like to see within the City of Ryde. The general themes focus on creating places to socialise with their peers as well as undertake a range of recreation and community activities. The engagement highlighted the following expressed needs:

- #1 Multipurpose sports courts that include basketball line markings and hoops with backboards.
- #2 Indoor sports facilities which provide a space for all weather sport.
- #3 Outdoor community events such as markets, outdoor cinema and festivals to engage with the community.
- #4 Varied skateable elements/ facilities throughout the City of Ryde, as well as an upgrade to existing skate parks
- #5 Social spaces outdoors with adequate shade and seating and surrounding nature.

Based on youth recreation trends, and the feedback from young people in the consultation, the existing model for provision for spaces and places for youth needs to be more varied and flexible to cater for the full range of different needs and interests.

The next section will discuss the proposed approach in detail and will focus on;

- Catering for tweens and younger children still interested in play;
- Teens & young adults more interested in social connection and undertaking more cultural interests (art, music, markets) and;
- Teens and young adults more interested in being active and enjoying recreational and sporting pursuits such as skate and ball sports.

# What can spaces for young people look like?

Based on the outcomes of previous Council studies, youth recreation trends, the youth engagements undertaken for this study and the forecast significant growth in the youth population, there is a need for new spaces within the City of Ryde. This Section describes what these spaces could look like and where they would be best located. It defines the model of provision to assist the City in effectively implementing new youth spaces over the next 20 years.

## Firstly tweens

There are two clear requirements for tween play.

1. Local opportunities within smaller parks and public spaces (to complement other existing playspaces) and;
2. District play spaces which include play elements and recreation opportunities suitable for this age group.

The following provides a description of each requirement;

### Local Recreation Hub (tween)

Whilst the City of Ryde already has a range of local playspaces, many focus on younger children and toddlers (0-12) and many are similar in the play value they provide. Some of these existing playspaces can be adapted to become more localized recreation hubs.

Elements could include more challenging play equipment such as climbing walls or parkour elements, skateable elements or obstacles and hard paved area for informal ball sports.

### District Playspace

District playspaces should incorporate the play/recreation needs of tweens (as well as the older age groups). They require more adventurous and challenging play elements which may include a larger collection of the play/recreation modules outlined for the local recreation hub. This is in line with the Children's Play Plan which proposes district and regional facilities should cater for "Youth" within their provision.



**Scooter loop added to district playspace in Whittlesea, VIC**



**Half ball court and skate elements in Werribee, VIC**



**Parkour elements in Croydon playspace, VIC**

## Our teens needs

As with tweens, the needs of teenagers (and young adults) are best accommodated across two main facility types.

Specifically, they require larger district size spaces (District Recreation Plazas) that attract large groups of young people to congregate and enjoy as a destination space complemented by smaller localized spaces (Local Recreation Hubs) to hang out at during times when there is less free time or access to public transport. The following provides a brief description of each;

### Local recreation hub (teen)

A local recreation hub is essentially a freely accessed public area within a local catchment that has a shelter where possible, seating, social spaces, art or some minor sporting infrastructure relevant to young people. It may be within a local park, along a street or at a local shopping precinct. The focus is the provision of opportunities to 'hang out' and socialise within the local neighbourhood. The main difference with these spaces and tween spaces is their location. They need to be in more central accessible locations where young people prefer to be.

There are also opportunities for co-locating the hubs near youth services facilities or other City community service buildings. This facilitates the effective management and programming of spaces, running of events and enhances opportunities to provide assistance to at-risk youth in locations that youth are already appropriating freely.

### District recreation plaza/hub

A district recreation plaza is a public space with designated areas and opportunities to facilitate young people (and others in the community) to congregate, socialise and engage in passive and active recreation pursuits. Importantly, whilst not size specific, it is designed to be large enough to cater for a diverse range of programs and activities that will attract a diverse range of young people across the City.

As such, it will become a focus for youth events and activities at a city-wide level. The plaza may have areas for skateboarding and other action sports but cultural and social activities for which it requires an adequate provision of seating and shade, is the focus to provide art exhibition spaces, music and performance opportunities. It may also include sporting spaces such as climbing, parkour or ball courts.




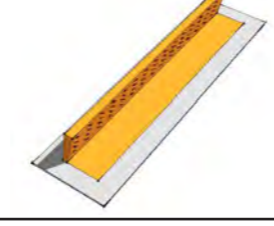
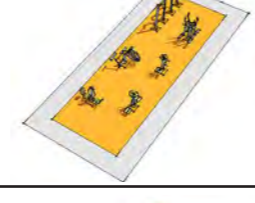
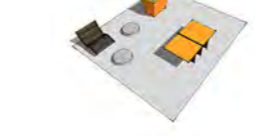
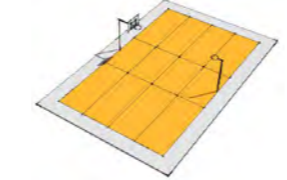

The key to the success of a district recreation plaza/hub is location. It needs to be in a high profile central location attractive and accessible to young people. Therefore town centres, major shopping precincts and transport interchanges are potential key locations.


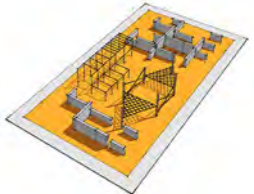
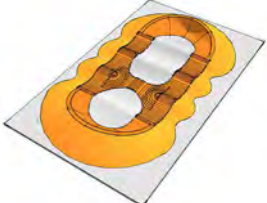

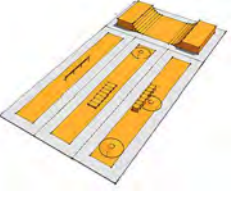
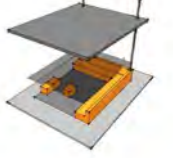
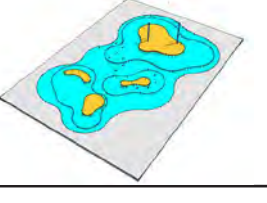



**Municipal Recreation Plaza at Geelong CBD, VIC with music stage and skateable elements**

# Tween & teen play components

This Section illustrates the potential elements for inclusion in tween and teen spaces. They are all indicative but provide an approximate idea of size. Smaller spaces will typically include 2-3 elements, whereas larger spaces can include several elements or larger versions of individual elements (eg: full court rather than half court).

Element	Preferred Age Group focus	Indicative example
<p><b>Adventure play</b> Focus on range of more challenging elements incl swings/flying foxes, slides and climbing elements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens	
<p><b>Beach volleyball courts</b> Sand courts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approx 8x6m for Full Size Court. Requires additional run off area.</li> <li>Requires drainage, sand min 40mm depth</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>BMX Jumps,race &amp; MTB Tracks</b> Allows for more advanced challenging bumps and MTB track for freestyle BMX and mountain bike use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Bouldering/climbing walls</b> Either insitu or blockwork. Can also be used as rebound wall if combined with courts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally concrete/blockwork.</li> <li>Any length but preferable for 10m min</li> <li>Can also be art walls</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Fitness/warm up stations</b> Allows for all age outdoor fitness options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Fusball/ping pong tables</b> Small scale informal recreation opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide informal social activities in small areas.</li> <li>Combine with social seating spaces</li> </ul>	Teens	
<p><b>Multipurpose courts</b> Mix of options with linemarking, nets, rings etc. (Basketball, volleyball, tennis, netball, four square)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally Plexipave finish.</li> <li>Approx 28x15m for Full Size Court.</li> <li>Bookable for competitions, social games, other events such as markets, music, film nights.</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Music/stage/event space</b> Focus on open but sheltered spaces for events and classes to complement indoor spaces</p> <p>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</p>	Teens Young Adults	

Element	Preferred Age Group focus	Indicative example
<p><b>Obstacle/ninja warrior courses</b> Allows for all age outdoor fitness options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens	
<p><b>Parkour/fitness bars</b> Focus on fitness and training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Pumps tracks</b> Allows for all age wheeled play (scooters, skateboards, bikes etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens	
<p><b>Scooter loops</b> Allows for junior wheeled play (scooters, bikes etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens	
<p><b>Skate &amp; BMX spaces</b> Focus on range of different elements to cater for diverse users include Vert Ramps, Bowls, Parks and Plaza elements</p> <p>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Catalyst for other programs such as youth services</li> </ul>	Tweens Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Social spaces</b> Focus on small shaded spaces to hang out around other active recreation spaces or relevant spaces for young people to congregate such as urban malls and transit hubs.</p> <p>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</p>	Teens Young Adults	
<p><b>Splash pads</b> Zero depth water play opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</li> </ul>	Tweens	
<p><b>Structured shaded flexible spaces</b> Focus on open but sheltered spaces for events and classes to complement indoor spaces</p> <p>Size and extent variable to meet client needs.</p>	Teens Young Adults	

# An integrated approach

The following examples show how a combination of components can be created that include a range of different recreation options and different scale facilities from district to local.

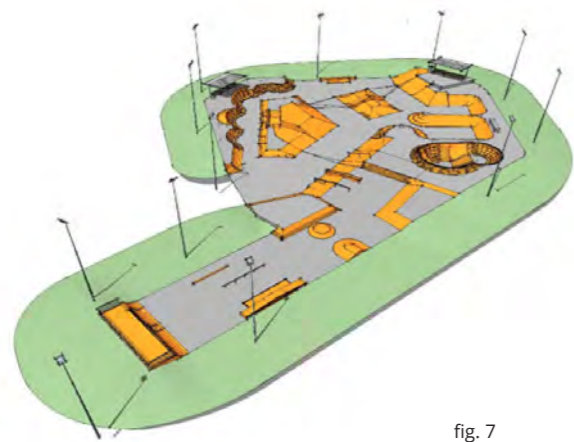


fig. 7

## District recreation example 1

This concept shows a large skatepark (2500sq.m) with social areas and lighting. The budget for such a facility would be approximately \$2 million.

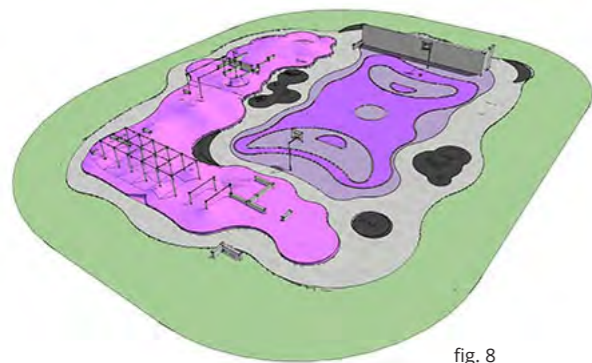


fig. 8

## District recreation example 2

This includes a mix of a multipurpose court, climbing/rebound wall, scooter loop, parkour and fitness space. Budget would be approximately \$1.2 million as a guide

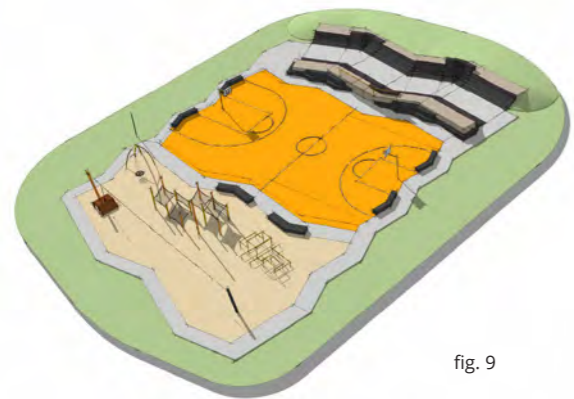
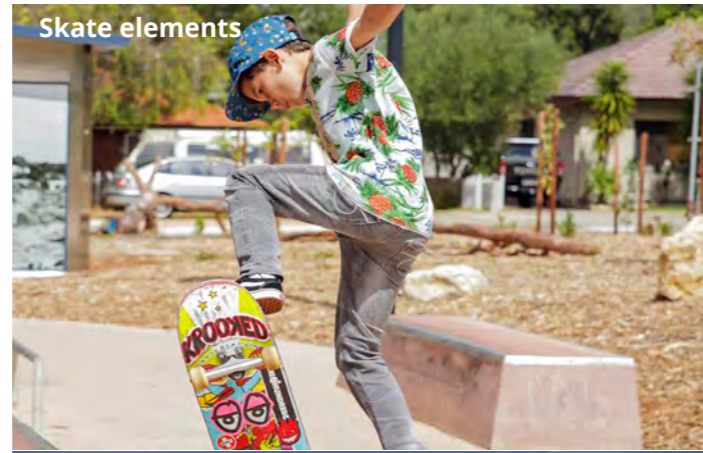


fig. 9

## District recreation example 3

This example combines a multipurpose court, scooter loop, skate bowl, play zone and fitness space. The budget for this combination would be approximately \$1 million



Skate elements



Ball sports



Parkour



Climbing spaces



fig. 10

## District recreation example 4

This example combines a multipurpose court, scooter loop, skate bowl, play zone and fitness space in a different configuration to example 3. The budget is approximately \$1 million



fig. 11

## District recreation example 5

This includes a mix of a multipurpose 1/2 court, climbing/rebound wall, scooter loop, adventure play and fitness space. The budget would be approximately \$700k

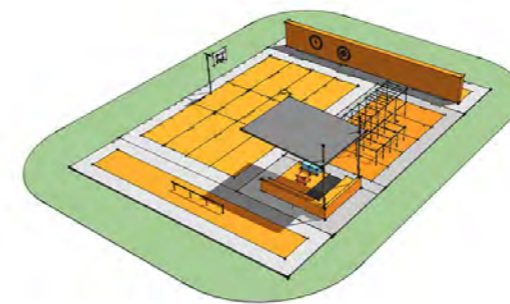


fig. 12

## District recreation example 6

This concept example shows a combination of multipurpose 1/2 court, climbing/rebound wall, skate and parkour space and social space with seating and shelter. The budget would be approximately \$800k

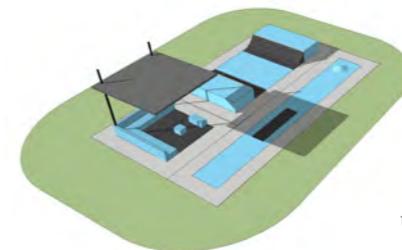


fig. 13

## Local recreation example

An example of a local recreation facility includes a small skate space and social space with seating and shelter. The budget would be approximately \$250k



Active play/fitness



Ping Pong



Event spaces



Social/hangout spaces



## But where do Skateparks fit in?

But what about skateparks? Where do they fit in? Over the last 20 years there has been a significant growth in the interest and participation of action sports including skateboarding and BMX. Skateparks have been created to meet this need. If they are not youth spaces or tween recreation spaces, what are they? Where do they fit in?

Given they are facilities specifically created to allow participants to enjoy their chosen activity, this study sees them in a more formal sporting model sense. They need to be considered as designated sporting spaces, much like a basketball court and be implemented accordingly. One of the big challenges though is the hierarchy model of sporting skate provision. Whilst district skate facilities cater for BMX, skate, scootering and allow for a diverse range of users, most smaller skateparks cannot.

Because of the need to cater for park, plaza and transition skate as well as BMX, scootering, etc it is difficult to accommodate all needs in a single space. It is therefore recommended that the City aim to create two or three major skateparks across the city that are all of a district scale to enable events, training and allow for long-stay use. Smaller skate opportunities can be provided at the tween and teen recreation spaces outlined previously. By combining skate at the local level with other recreation and play options, it is possible to create more multipurpose and relevant spaces for more young people.

### A range of users.... a range of needs...

When discussing skateboarding and freestyle BMX and skatepark provision, it is important to acknowledge that there is no single model that meets all needs. People ride and skate for different reasons, using different terrain and at different levels of expertise. It can be a form of transport, an opportunity to appropriate urban spaces in the street or it can be undertaken for sports competition such as the Olympic Games.

For younger children, skate and scootering may be about free play. Unlike many sporting pursuits there are no set court dimensions and rules.



Skateboarding, scootering and freestyle BMX, have no specific set facility type. It is, rather, the difference in spaces that provides the diversity and interest in use. There are so many different types of activity that one single space or model can not cater appropriately for everyone. Street skaters rarely use skateparks, preferring to find urban spots. Bowl skaters however will organize road trips and travel hundreds of kilometres to use a new bowl at a skatepark.

It is therefore critical to understand the various styles of skateboarding, scootering and BMX summarized below.

## A diverse range of types...

The following describes the main styles of skateboarding and BMX and the types of terrain required for them.

### VERT SKATING

Vert skateboarding and BMX requires large ramps (generally 3m+ in height with at least 30cm vertical face at tops of ramp) for doing vertical tricks. Popular in the early 2000's and a mainstay for events such as X Games, the broader interest and number of ramps appears to be waning.



### TRANSITION SKATEBOARDING & RIDING

Transition skateboarding is essentially riding curved bowls and pools. Generally the transition or curved surfaces are a re-creation of the empty pools utilized in California in the 1970's. Popular over the world, these facilities can come in all shapes & sizes and include snake runs, single and combination bowls. Generally each bowl is unique and riders often travel to enjoy their individual characters. Larger bowls can accommodate vert skaters who previously focused more on vert ramp use. Bowls can be designed to provide greater value for either BMX or skate by including spines, street spines, pool coping etc.



### 'PARK' STYLE SKATEBOARDING & RIDING

Often confused with street skating, 'park' style is using contrived elements created to partially replicate real urban items. Designed to give users a safe alternative to skate, 'parks' were first created in the late 1990's and are still popular today. Elements created over this time have now become standard features. These include fun boxes, ledges, spines, banks, quarter pipes, jump boxes and hips. They can be used for both BMX and skate. The Olympic skateboarding event at Tokyo will be held on a 'park' style course.

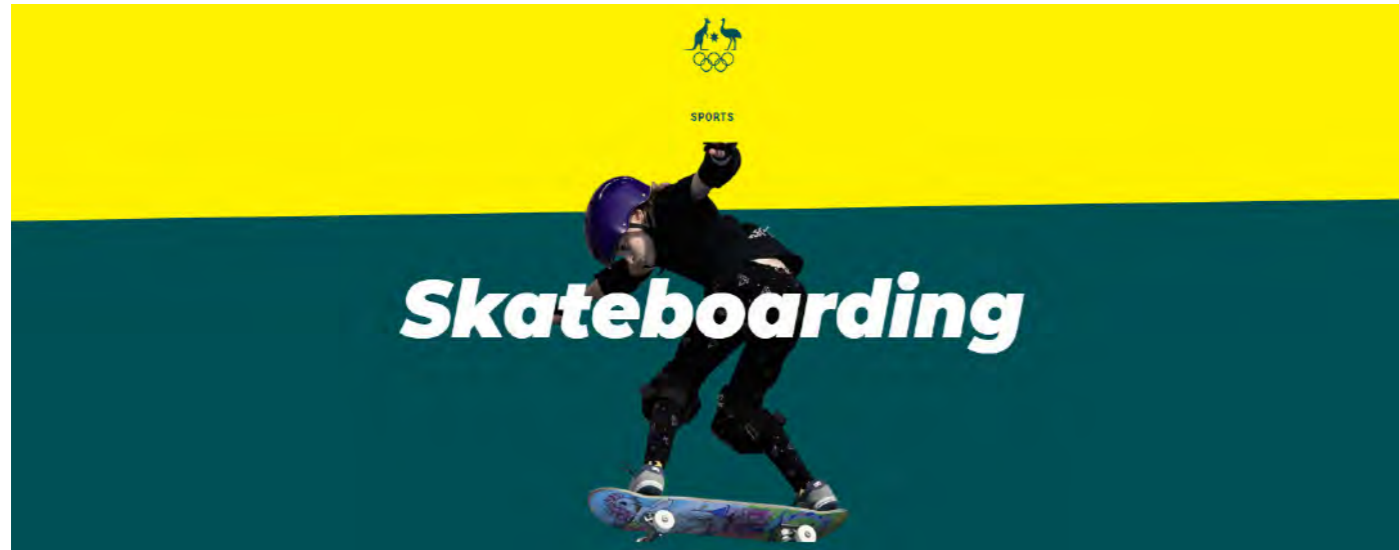


### PLAZA SKATEBOARDING & RIDING

The final typology is plaza or street skating. This generally utilises existing urban spaces, streets and spots to skate or ride. Typically they include open plazas, a set of stairs or seating. As this use can impact others using the plaza or street, designated skate spots are now being created in urban centres around the world. Importantly, these spaces do not include 'park' style contrived elements that are contained at skateparks but try to more a replicate real urban spaces.



# Skateboarding at the Olympics



There will be two skateboarding events at the 2021 Olympics. There will be a 'street' competition for males and females based on competitors using a street/plaza course with obstacles found in most skateparks, such as rails, ledges, hubbas, stairs etc. There will also be a 'park' competition for male and females with a focus on transition skateboarding and contain large open bowls, hips and curved transitions.

It is one of five sports added specifically for 2021 and there is no guarantee it will return to the program in later years. However given the unstructured nature of skateboarding and its cultural resistance to organized competitions, actually being part of the Olympics at this time signifies an important step in its evolution as a sport.

Many skateboarders enjoy skateboarding more as a recreation pursuit and being with friends and don't see it as a sport. This will always be a critical part of its culture and history and should always be promoted and fostered when considering places and spaces for skate activity. There is however now also a pathway to elite competition for those that want to pursue this more specific sporting side of skateboarding. Councils and other providers of public recreation spaces need to acknowledge that the provision of new skate facilities needs to be of a high standard and to consider these competition requirements as well as their traditional less structured use.

## Celebrate the diversity

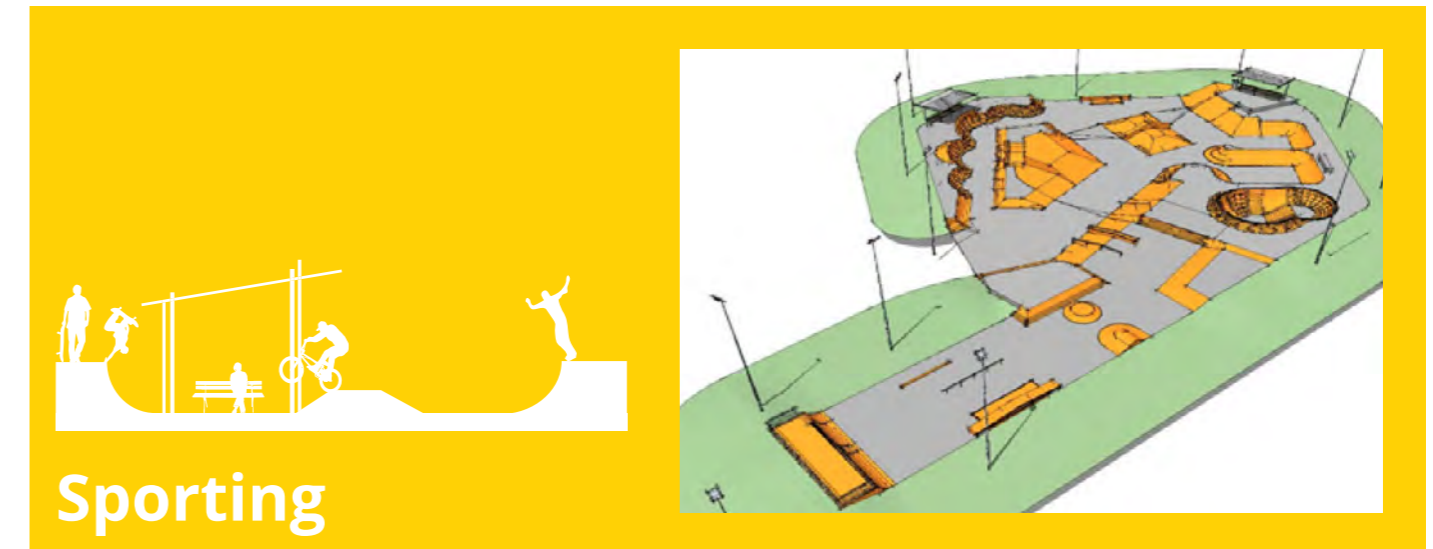
Given the diversity of different user types and the mix of those that skate for competition and those that just skate for fun, skateparks cannot necessarily cater for all needs in a single space. This has been one of the biggest single issues with existing skatepark provision across Australia and is particularly prevalent within the Sydney region. There is a proliferation of similar types of smaller skateparks. The reasons for this are varied but generally result from budget and size limitations (easier to fund smaller facilities and less broader community backlash). Generally, the expectation is also to ensure these facilities provide for all different levels of use (from beginner through to advanced) and all types of user.

The resultant skatepark is often built to cater for too many different users with conflicting requirements and, as such, can result in a compromised outcome where no specific user group is adequately catered for. Another major issue is the inevitable conflict and clashing of different user types and different skill levels given the limited space that is trying to cater for so many different needs. Finally, this process also creates another significant problem, a sameness of the facilities. By trying to cater for so many different needs, the parks created invariably have similar components and obstacles that provide the most flexibility and satisfy the most number of participants.

Invariably most skateparks of this scale and typology are therefore very similar and do not provide unique or challenging elements that can progress the sport and satisfy more advanced user interests.

# A new approach to skate provision

As outlined previously, people skate and ride for so many different reasons and the traditional hierarchical skatepark model has created some significant issues. To overcome this and provide direction for the successful future of skatepark provision, a new approach is suggested that focuses on three key options.



This first model is existing 'skatepark' provision which we are defining as a traditional sporting model. The key change with this model is the scale of facilities. It is important for skate facilities to be large enough to cater for all user types and all levels of proficiency in central accessible locations. A large facility will provide a centre for action sports which reduces the need for other neighborhood facilities. Small facilities/spaces can then be implemented across the city to provide for local use.

What these smaller facilities could be are outlined below and catered for within the tween/teen models. The additional benefit of this approach means that the single district facility can accommodate the major needs for those participants in the sport at one time. There is also not a staggered approach to providing facilities in different areas thus impacting on users who may have to wait for future planned facilities.

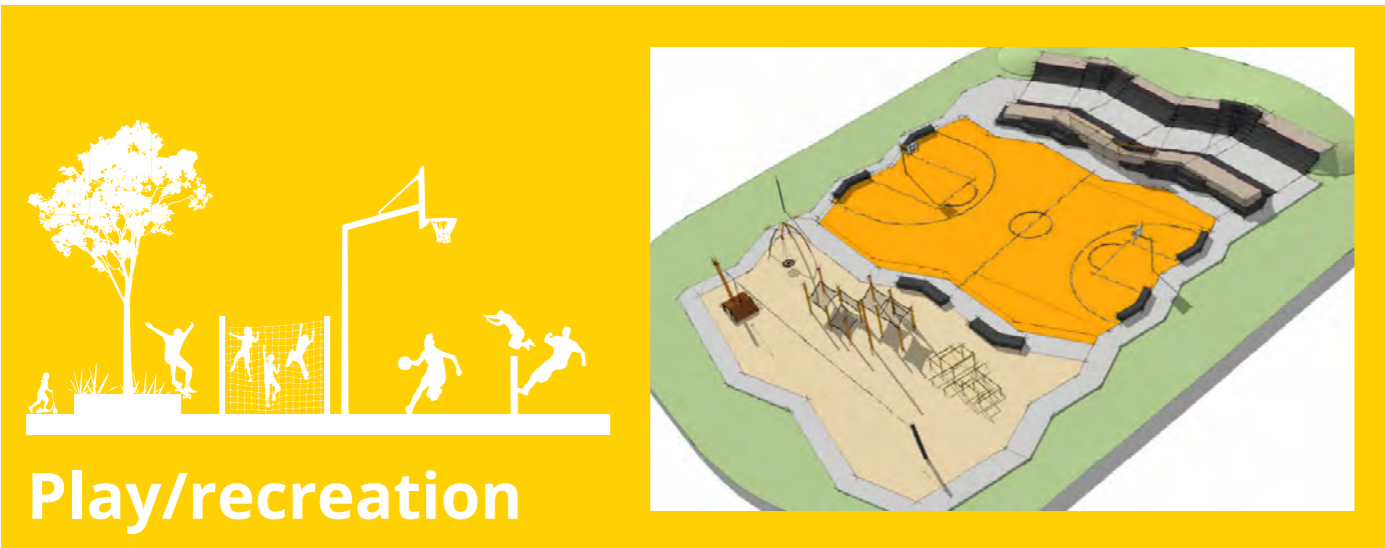
Also given the district park caters for all of the major events and activities for these sports, the capital and maintenance expenditure for local and incidental parks can be significantly less.

Summary of sporting model:

- Generally sited in recreation reserves with other sporting infrastructure
- Designed primarily for a sport focus (action sports & associated amenity)
- Accessible by public transport,
- Configuration and layout often consider training and competition requirements
- Little attraction for those that don't participate in action sports

Requirements to include as a minimum:

- A skatepark should be designed by a specialist professional skatepark designer and built by an experienced skatepark contractor. This includes input/involvement of those responsible for its operation being involved in the design/construction process
- Generally as large as possible to enable appropriate use. Minimum 1,000sq.m, preferable 2,000sqm +
- Appropriate safety signage
- Good natural surveillance
- Emergency vehicle access available
- Shelter/shade required
- Designated seating and viewing areas
- Rubbish bins/drinking fountains critical
- Sport level lighting preferred where possible



## Play/recreation

The second model has basically grown from the need to accommodate more beginner scooterers and skaters and assist in creating localized spaces in residential neighborhoods. If traditional smaller neighborhood skate facilities are repetitive in design and use, and district facilities are now replacing them, this allows for skate and scooter to be accommodated in other play and recreation spaces at a local level as outlined previously in tween and teen recreation hubs. Small areas to hit up a ledge or have fun on a pumps track or scooter loop can easily be accommodated in existing recreation spaces (ball courts etc) or play spaces.

Providing for scooters and skateboards will reduce potential conflicts between younger riders and in a more play focused environment will reduce potential conflicts between younger riders and older users at larger purpose built skateparks. Tweens in particular, who are often not considered in playspace provision, have opportunities to practice as beginners (particularly girls) at these multipurpose spaces before moving to the larger skate spaces.

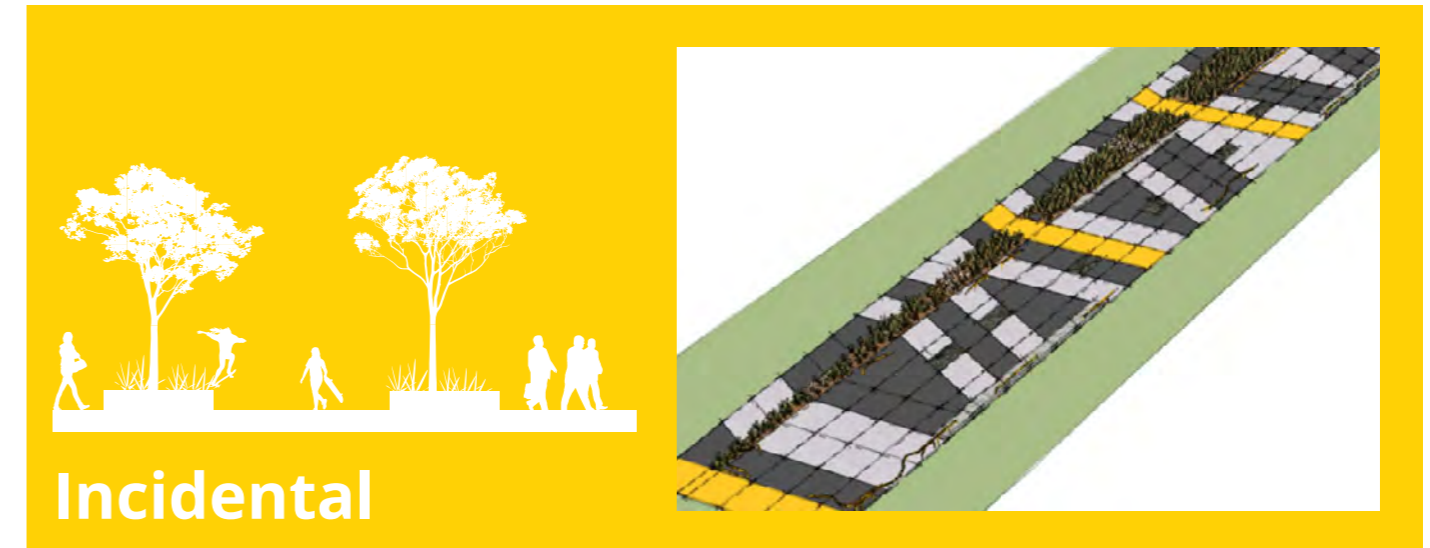
Small incidental skate spaces can also be considered at a local level, much like a local playspace. A single rail or ledge at the side of a footpath provides minimal impact to surrounding users and residents, is cost effective and allows for a small space to practice in between more formal visits to a skatepark. This is similar to a small park with a single swing or slide, small half court ball court or fitness station, where local users can enjoy easily accessed incidental local use at a small scale.

Summary of play/recreation model:

- Tween elements as part of an existing playspace or recreation space
- Located in local neighborhood parks
- Can be small incidental spaces or a single ramp or pumps track
- Focus on beginner/entry level use or for practice
- Skate can occur but is not focus of space

Requirements to include as a minimum:

- A multipurpose skate space should be designed by a specialist professional skatepark designer with experience in play/recreation to ensure an integrated approach
- Generally small (approx. 200-300 sq/m+)
- Appropriate safety signage
- Good natural surveillance



## Incidental

Many urban spaces contain infrastructure or sculptural components that can be designed to accommodate skate function. Any pathway that is used by skateboarders/cyclists as a thoroughfare has the possibility to have sections of it widened to accommodate skateable items or undulating terrain to create an 'incidental' skate space. Whilst the focus may be on other activities or recreational needs, an incidental skate element can add value and increase overall function or recreational opportunity to an existing space (such as a basketball court or existing urban square). Given the incidental skate element is not facility based, there is no set size constraint so whilst managing activity is still important to avoid conflict with other users, there are opportunities to create these incidental elements in areas previously considered either inappropriate or too small for a skate facility.

Incidental skate spaces are already occurring across local government areas with local skaters appropriating existing urban infrastructure due to their unique skate function. Examples include seats, walls and stairs.

With appropriate design and management, incidental skate spots can be developed that are significantly safer and more functional to users whilst not impacting significantly on the broader community. Incidental skate spaces are not aimed at any specific level of user per se, rather elements located at appropriate scales depending on their broader context for informal appropriation. Incidental skate elements are focused more on places where young people move through or like to be so that a recreational opportunity is added to existing interest areas. Access, public transport and ancillary requirements will already be available in most instances given the potential centralised location of these elements.

Summary of incidental model:

- Urban spaces sited adjacent to youth services, major public transport and town centres and commercial precincts
- Very easily accessed by public transport
- High natural surveillance
- Attractive to other young people that don't participate in action sports with additional facilities and spaces to encourage greater youth participation (particularly girls etc.)
- Participation opportunities by broader community
- Consideration of art, music and other activities that are not just sport focused
- Skate can occur but is not focus of space and generally of a street/plaza focus as appropriation of the existing urban infrastructure

Requirements include as a minimum:

- An incidental skate space should be designed by a specialist professional skatepark designer or the design assessed independently by one prior to construction
- Generally very small but requirements for a linear space of approx. 20m in length to accommodate run ups and run off (approx. 40sq/m +)
- Proximity to youth interest areas (shopping areas, other recreation spaces, schools)
- Proximity to major community centre or centralized location
- Appropriate safety signage
- Good natural surveillance

# A summary of the model

The following table summarizes the model for tween/teen recreation including the integration of skate as a key consideration where applicable.

Type	Target Age group	Description	Skate Model	Catchment	Length of Stay based on	Area (m2)	Connected Use	Specific types of elements to Consider
Local Recreation Space	Tweens specific or Teens specific	<p>Nodes/hubs usually consist of low impact elements which integrate within open spaces including seating areas, thoroughfares or playing fields.</p> <p>These spaces should be well-located and highly visible.</p> <p>Nodes should be situated in locations with good pedestrian networks in central areas of neighbourhoods.</p> <p>Typically, these nodes should be integrated with other community focal points as local playspaces to encourage cross-generational interaction and ensuring a greater age range for play opportunities.</p> <p>They can also be additions to an existing shopping centre or transport node to provide opportunities for young people at places that they are already naturally attracted to.</p> <p>Opportunities to also provide these nodes at community centres, libraries and youth centres is highly beneficial, in particular social spaces and event and performance spaces that can be managed/activated by the centres they are connected to.</p>	Play/ recreation  Incidental	0.8- 2km	Short Stay based on more localised use of the minor elements provided	50-300 sq.m	Library, transport node, urban plaza Sports precinct Local playspace	<p>Adventure play elements</p> <p>Art spaces (opportunities for public art exhibitions)</p> <p>Casual informal sport opportunities</p> <p>Climbing wall or space</p> <p>Hangout and social seating spaces</p> <p>Multi-Use Games Area</p> <p>Outdoor fitness equipment</p> <p>Parkour bars or fitness elements</p> <p>Parkour space</p> <p>Ping Pong or Futsal table</p> <p>Scooter track or loop</p> <p>Skateable elements (street, plaza or transition)</p>
District Recreation Space	All	<p>District recreation spaces should cater for a diverse array of activities which cater for a broad range of young people.</p> <p>These spaces should be a focal point for neighbourhoods that do not contain a regional space and should be located with other uses such as young children's play spaces, playing fields, community centres, schools or activity centres. These spaces must be located nearby public transport and well connected by pedestrian networks and active transport networks.</p> <p>A district recreation space has the ability to cater for large numbers of users and the capacity to host small events such as competitions, demonstrations and youth events. If it is determined that BMX or skate elements will be included in a district recreation space, a specific type of activity should be catered for at a more significant level as opposed to a small number of various BMX or skate elements.</p>	Sporting  Play/ recreation  Incidental	2-4km	Medium to Long Stay  Short Stay based on more diverse use of the mix of elements provided	1000-3000 sq.m	Community Centre Transport node District Skatepark	<p>Adventure play elements</p> <p>Art spaces (opportunities for public art exhibitions)</p> <p>Casual informal sport opportunities</p> <p>Climbing wall or space</p> <p>Hangout and social seating spaces</p> <p>Hybrid skate parks</p> <p>Multi-Use Games Area</p> <p>Nature spaces &amp; Quiet spaces</p> <p>Outdoor fitness equipment</p> <p>Parkour space</p> <p>Performance and music spaces</p> <p>Ping Pong or Futsal table</p> <p>Scooter track or loop, BMX jump trail or pump track</p> <p>Skateable elements (street, plaza or transition)</p> <p>Street style skate park</p> <p>Transition skate park</p> <p>Urban playground</p>
Regional Recreation Space	All	<p>A regional recreation space can serve a number of different purposes. It can be either a purpose-built dedicated recreation facility such as a major skate park or it can be a combination of active recreation elements that provides a diverse range of opportunity for everyone in the community to enjoy.</p> <p>They need to be central and will attract people not only from the neighbouring suburbs, but also attract young people and adults from the wider metropolitan area.</p> <p>A regional recreation space is generally located within a major activity centre and has convenient access to public transport. These spaces should be integrated with other community focal points to encourage cross-generational interactions. Regional spaces must provide a range of functions to engage the broader community. The facility should include adequate event space and infrastructure including seating options; power and lighting for large scale events.</p>	Sporting  Play/ recreation	Serves the region	Long Stay based on the space having a range of diverse elements to provide significant recreation opportunity	3000 sq.m+	Regional Events Plaza Active and public transport node	<p>Art spaces (opportunities for public art exhibitions)</p> <p>Casual informal sport opportunities</p> <p>Climbing wall or space</p> <p>Hangout and social seating spaces</p> <p>Hybrid skate parks</p> <p>Multi-Use Games Area</p> <p>Nature spaces &amp; Quiet spaces</p> <p>Outdoor fitness equipment</p> <p>Parkour space</p> <p>Performance and music spaces</p> <p>Ping Pong or Futsal table</p> <p>Scooter track or loop, BMX jump trail or pump track</p> <p>Street style skate park</p> <p>Transition skate park</p> <p>Urban playground</p>

# Site selection matrix

## Introduction





This section describes the site selection criteria that are applied when siting tween and teen recreation hubs across the City and outlines how recreation and play provision for tweens and teens play should be distributed.

## Finding the best locations

All spaces designed to accommodate tweens and teens should be in accessible and highly visible locations and close to shops and public transport.

To assist in determining the best locations for these tween and teen spaces, a broad level site selection matrix has been created that indicates the key requirements for choosing the best possible sites for local recreation hubs and larger city wide recreation plazas. Existing locations for regional playspaces should also contain opportunities for older play for tweens so whilst this framework discusses the types of play that should be considered for these spaces it doesn't duplicate the site selection criteria outlined in the Children's Play Plan.

The selection criteria are outlined in the table according to the following rating.

-  Critically important to function appropriately
-  Highly preferable to function appropriately
-  Preferable to function appropriately
-  Unnecessary to function appropriately

	Regional Recreation Space	District Recreation Space	Neighbourhood/ Local Recreation Space
<b>Site condition &amp; scale</b>			
Ability to accommodate space for youth events	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Ability to accommodate space for broader community events	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Considers context and landscaping to integrate/complement surroundings	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately
Opportunity to contain a mix of social seating - passive and active recreation opportunities (music, sport, art, multimedia, skate) to ensure locally relevant	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately
<b>Location / access to transport</b>			
Close proximity to commercial/community centre	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Close proximity to public transport/access	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Proximity to youth interest areas (shopping areas, schools, other recreation)	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Close proximity to community/service based organisation that can actively assist in programming the space	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
<b>Safety / security</b>			
Good natural surveillance	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately
Appropriate safety & entry signage	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately
Emergency vehicle access	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Adequate car parking/drop-off	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
<b>Amenities</b>			
Shelter/shade	Critically important to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately
Drinking fountain	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Rubbish bins	Critically important to function appropriately	Critically important to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately
Toilets (close proximity)	Preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately	
Designated seating and viewing areas	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Highly preferable to function appropriately	Preferable to function appropriately

# Implementation Plan

## Introduction

This Section describes the proposed strategy for the provision of places and spaces for young people within the City of Ryde - including the provision and distribution of new spaces and the enhancement of existing. It is based on the findings of the study, including the community engagement, broad trends in youth recreation, the distribution of the City's youth population (both now and to 2041) and the best practice models of youth infrastructure provision (including hierarchy and site selection criteria).

### Proposals for new youth spaces

In accordance with the key findings of this study, a three-tier hierarchy of youth facilities is proposed- regional, district and local- with the core attributes of each outlined below.

#### Regional facilities

Regional facilities have a diversity of unique and popular facilities and attributes capable of attracting users from a wide catchment beyond the City's boundaries. While there are no regional facilities in the City at this stage, the Meadowbank Skatepark will become part of a regional level facility when the regional playground and multi-court area are constructed adjacent to it.

#### District facilities

District facilities also provide a broad range of spaces and opportunities but are smaller than regional facilities and generally attract users from a City-wide or smaller catchment. Two new district scale facilities are proposed to meet higher level youth recreation needs in the north and north-east of the City. The proposal is consistent with the finding in this study that a focus on fewer larger facilities, particularly with skatepark provision, ensures that these larger spaces can support more users with diverse needs and skill levels. They also allow for centralized locations for events and youth programming as required.

#### Local facilities

At the local level, the required facilities are closer to home for the less mobile tweens and younger teens and are smaller with less diversity than the district facilities. They will generally attract users from the surrounding suburb. There are some differences in the requirements for tweens and teens, as summarised below.

##### Tween recreation spaces

Additional small scale opportunities for tweens are considered at a local walkable level (approx 800m) at currently under-serviced parts of the City. This distribution is focused more on proximity to primary schools and ensuring local neighborhoods each have some kind of localised tween focused recreation options. Two new tween spaces are proposed, as detailed on page 42

##### Teen recreation spaces

Additional spaces are also required for older teenagers. These are developed with 1.2km walkability catchment at more central, hub locations within suburbs, where desirably, they are co-located with high schools, libraries and/ or train stations. Three new teen facilities are recommended, as detailed on page 42.

Whilst tween and teen spaces are usually considered local, in some instances, the distribution of local recreation spaces may overlap and schools may be in relative close proximity. This provides an opportunity to consolidate local spaces and provide greater recreation diversity for young people within the area, resulting in larger local (or 'neighbourhood') facilities.

## Existing facility enhancements

The City of Ryde currently has eight informal ball courts, which have been included on the existing recreation provision map in fig. 1 (page 8) and in the Implementation Priority Plan (page 47) as low priority upgrades within the hierarchical model. Whilst these provide opportunities for unstructured active recreation, the diversity of recreation opportunity is limited. With the addition of recreational components as outlined on pages 27 and 28, more opportunities for diverse active recreation can be provided at these locations. Examples of the possible enhancements are shown in fig.18 and fig. 19 on page 45.

## Implementation Priorities

Finally, as part of this implementations plan, facilities and places are prioritized over time (high, medium and low) with a focus on the provision of the district facilities first and then infilling with local spaces over time.



Parkour elements in Croydon park, VIC  
Image: Playce

# Regional and District recreation provision

District facilities are the 'flagship' elements of the proposed strategy and combine a broad range of youth infrastructure at the one accessible location. Council has already undertaken the master planning of two major reserves which are suitable for district scale youth facilities, namely the Whiteside Street Reserve component of the ELS Hall Park masterplan and Blenheim Park. A designated youth space/recreation facility is a key component of each of these masterplans.

These two locations have been reviewed against the site selection matrix outlined on page 38, above. Each of the sites ranked highly against the criteria for district scale facilities and are well distributed across the City (to the north and north east), respectively. They complement the existing district facility at Meadowbank in the south west and are both considered appropriate locations for district- scale youth recreation plazas/hubs.

As outlined in the table below, both Blenheim Park and Whiteside Street are large spaces that can accommodate a district scale facility. They are also close to significant public transport routes and major shopping precincts.

Importantly, these proposed district facilities should be designed to complement and not duplicate the existing district space at Meadowbank. For example, there is a high-level feature competition bowl at the Meadowbank Skatepark which is sufficient for the whole LGA. A similar bowl at either of the proposed locations is not required. This allows for alternate key components to be considered for these sites and a suite of facilities across the three sites that work together rather than replicating each other.

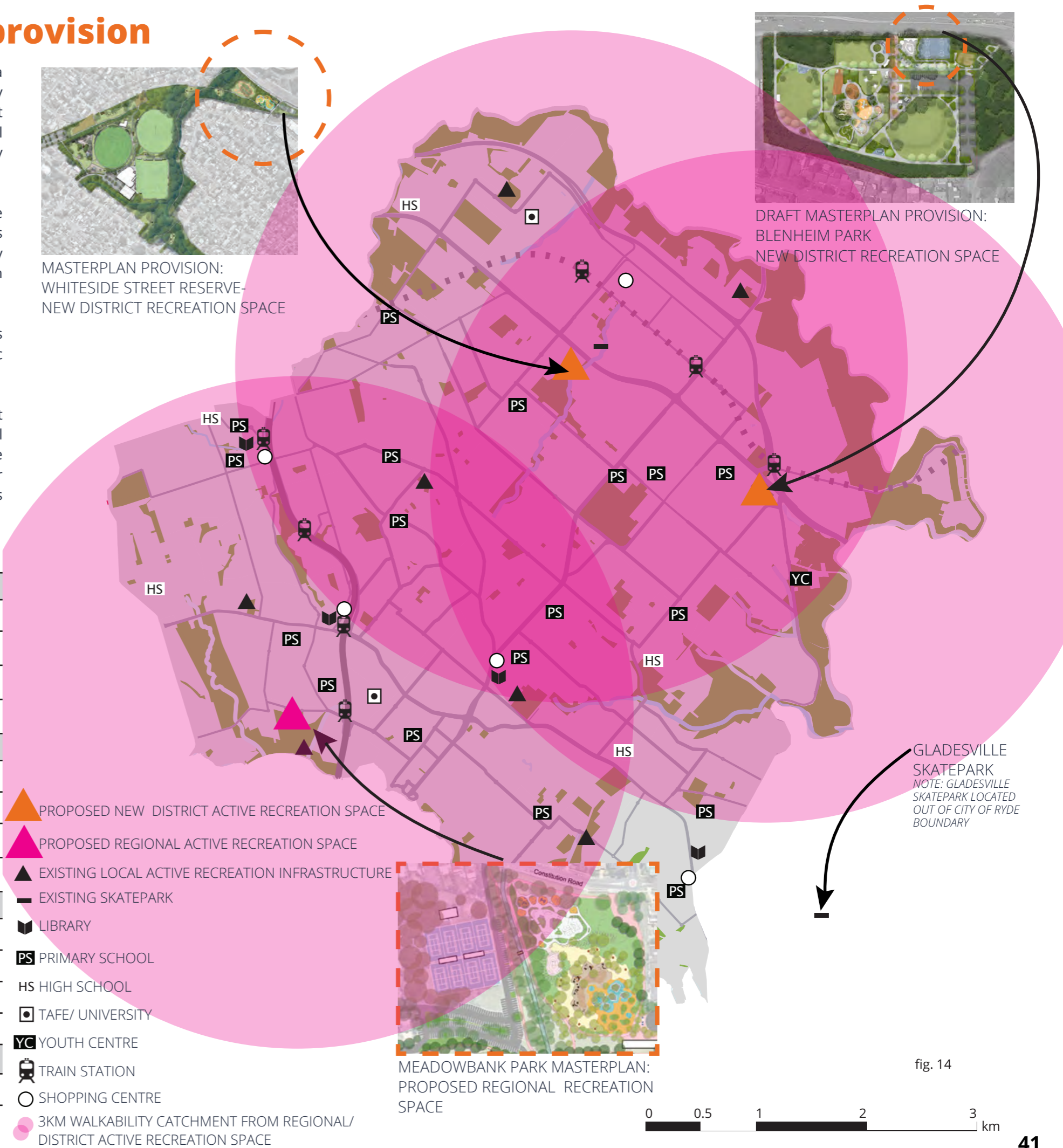
	Blenheim Park	Whiteside Street Reserve
<b>Site condition &amp; scale</b>		
Ability to accommodate space for youth events	✓	✓
Ability to accommodate space for broader community events	✓	✓
Considers context and landscaping to integrate/complement surroundings	✓	✓
Contain a mix of social seating - passive and active recreation opportunities	✓	✓
<b>Location / access to transport</b>		
Close proximity to commercial/community centre	✓	✓
Close proximity to public transport/acceSS	✓	✓
Proximity to youth interest areas (shopping areas, schools, other recreation)	✓	✓
Close proximity to community/service based organization that can actively assist in programming the space	✓	✓
<b>Safety / security</b>		
Good natural surveillance	✓	✓
Appropriate safety & entry signage	✓	✓
Emergency vehicle access	✓	✓
Adequate car parking/drop-off	✓	✓
<b>Amenities</b>		
Toilets (or close proximity)	✓	✓
Designated seating and viewing areas	✓	✓



MASTERPLAN PROVISION: WHITESIDE STREET RESERVE- NEW DISTRICT RECREATION SPACE



DRAFT MASTERPLAN PROVISION: BLENHEIM PARK NEW DISTRICT RECREATION SPACE



MEADOWBANK PARK MASTERPLAN: PROPOSED REGIONAL RECREATION SPACE

GLADESVILLE SKATEPARK  
NOTE: GLADESVILLE SKATEPARK LOCATED OUT OF CITY OF RYDE BOUNDARY

fig. 14



# Local tween and teen recreation provision

## Tween recreation provision

The focus of local tween recreation provision is to ensure that more relevant and challenging play/recreation elements are available and accessible for older children and young teens (12-14 years). The main requirement is to add new age-appropriate play elements for these older children who still wish to play and have fun at local and accessible residential locations.

The proposed initial focus is to identify new local tween recreation hubs within the orange areas on the map. The intent is to ensure walkability access (800m) for all residential areas. These new spaces have also been placed, where possible, proximate to existing primary schools.

The proposed locations are indicative. Choosing the most appropriate specific location for this tween infrastructure within each of the proposed catchments will require further site analysis and masterplanning.

Given the existing distribution of local recreation spaces across the City; the two key new locational priorities for local tween facilities are;

- Region 1: East Ryde eg. Sager Place
- Region 2: Ryde (Santa Rosa) eg. Santa Rosa Park

## Teen recreation provision

A local teen recreation hub is a sheltered public area within a local catchment, desirably with seating, social spaces and some minor sporting infrastructure relevant to young people.

The hub may be within a local park, along a street or at a local shopping precinct.

The focus is on spaces that provide young people with the opportunity to 'hang out' and socialise within their local neighbourhoods, rather than on major events or activities.

The main difference between these spaces and tween spaces is their location. They need to be in more central accessible locations attractive to older teens. With that in mind, whilst the existing tween recreation hubs (ball courts) have been retained on the map overleaf as they can still provide opportunities also for teen recreation, there are a range of other new local teen recreation spaces suggested.

Several new teen hubs are proposed to complement the existing ball court locations and the regional and district scale facilities. As with the tween mapping, the proposed locations (shown purple on the map) are indicative and will require more detailed planning prior to specific site identification.

The nominated areas have 1.2km walkability from existing high schools, train stations or libraries. As these are all hot spots for teens, gathering spaces close to these facilities is preferred. Proximity to commercial precincts is also preferable.

Once again to ensure there is appropriate distribution across the City, three new locations are proposed for local teen hubs to complement the existing provision. They are;

- Region 1: Eastwood eg. Eastwood Park
- Region 2: Top Ryde/ Ryde Library
- Region 3: Gladesville-Tennyson Point eg. Proposed Town Centre Park

The following page provides examples of how these local tween and teen recreation hubs could be implemented in the suggested locations.

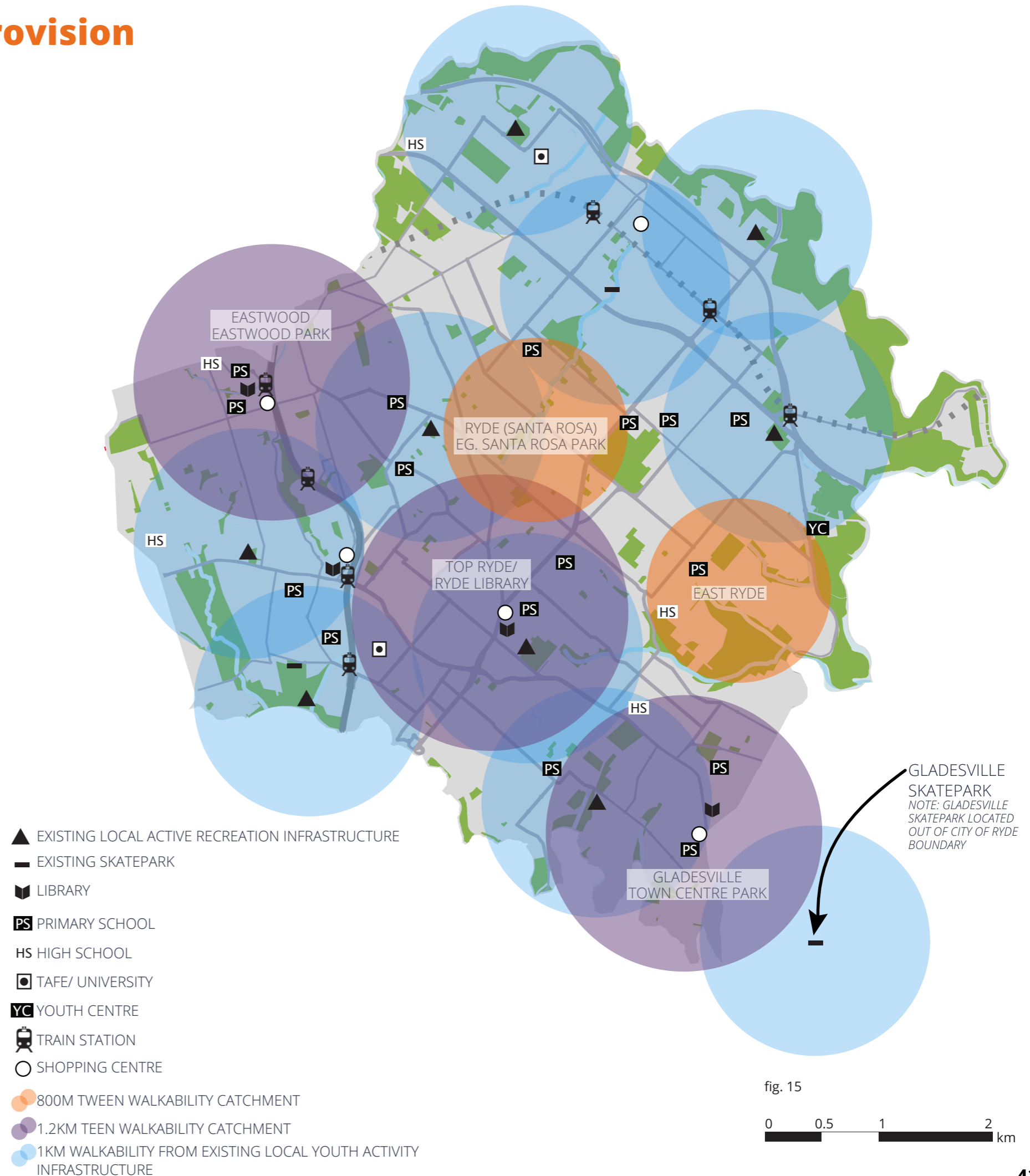


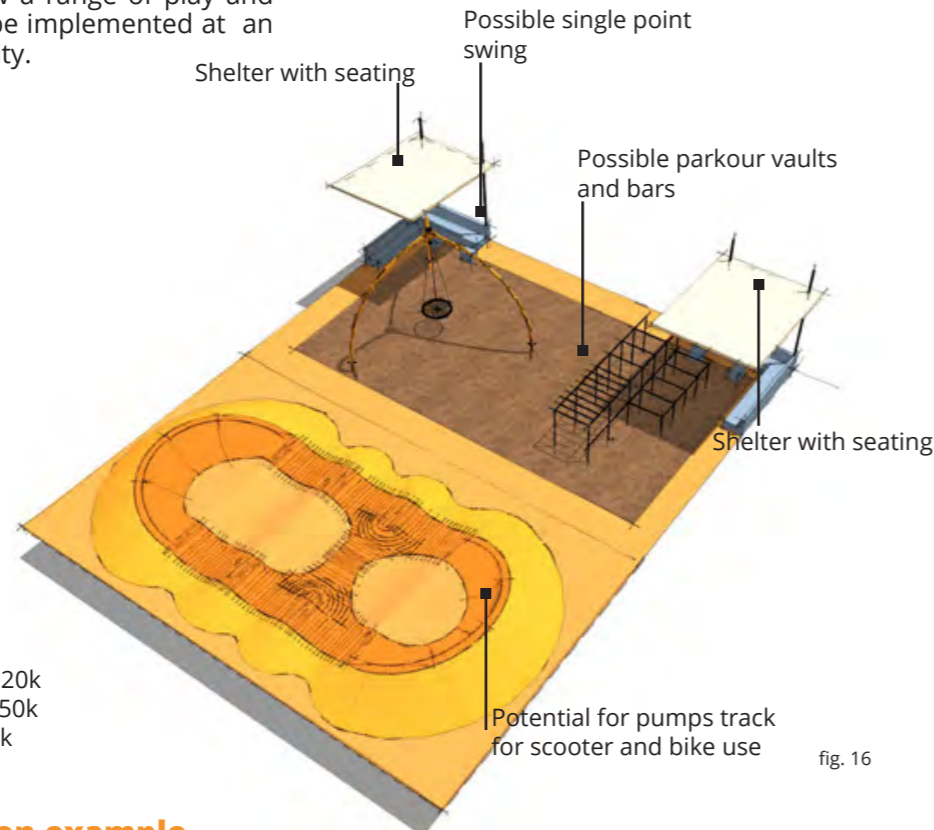
fig. 15



# Local tween and teen recreation recommendations

## Tween recreation provision example

The below diagram shows how a range of play and recreation components could be implemented at an existing tween site within the City.



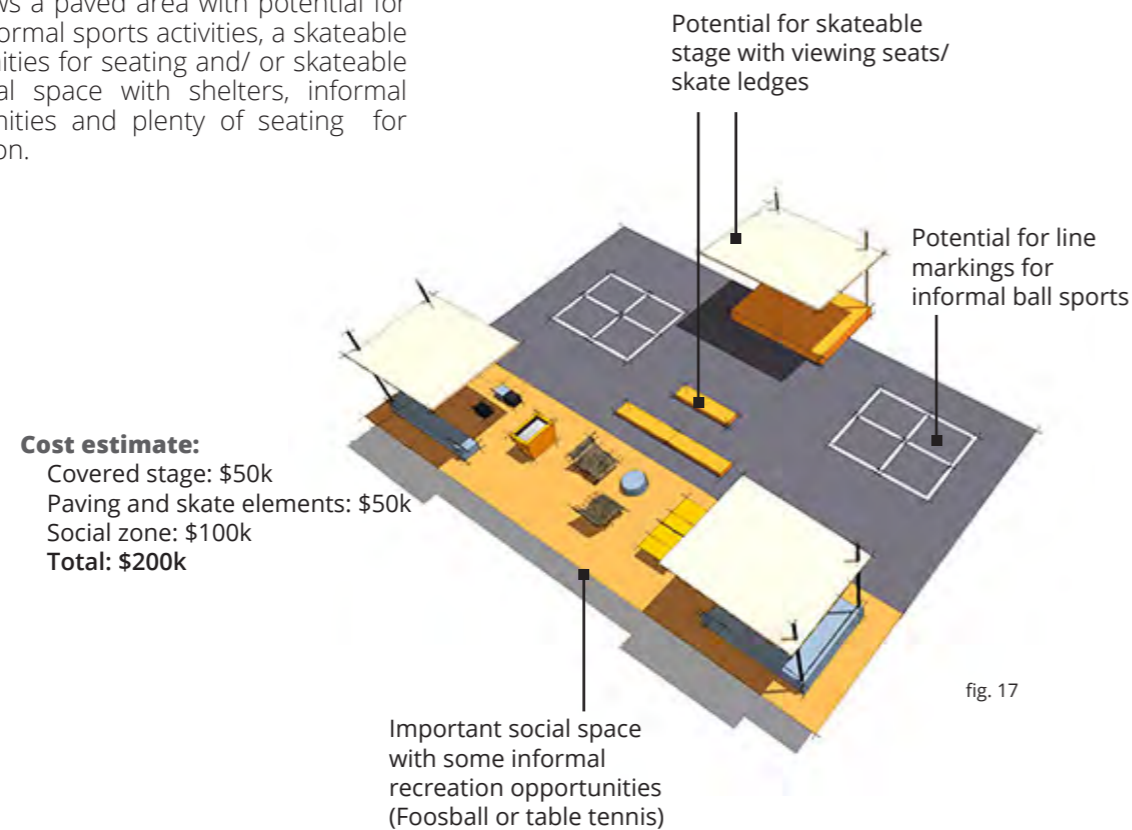
**Cost estimate:**

- Pumps track: \$120k
- Parkour/ play: \$50k
- Social zone: \$30k
- Total: \$200k

fig. 16

## Teen recreation provision example

The second diagram is an example of how different components can be implemented to create a space which aligns with the needs of teens, as discussed in this strategy. It shows a paved area with potential for line markings for informal sports activities, a skateable stage with opportunities for seating and/ or skateable ledges and a social space with shelters, informal recreation opportunities and plenty of seating for extended socialisation.



**Cost estimate:**

- Covered stage: \$50k
- Paving and skate elements: \$50k
- Social zone: \$100k
- Total: \$200k

fig. 17

## Tween recreation examples



## Teen recreation examples



# Existing recreation recommendations

The following examples show how existing youth infrastructure within the City of Ryde can be enhanced with the addition of other possible recreation components (Pgs 27-28).

## Tween recreation provision example

The below diagram shows how a range of play and recreation components could be added to an existing ball court to provide more diverse opportunities for tweens.

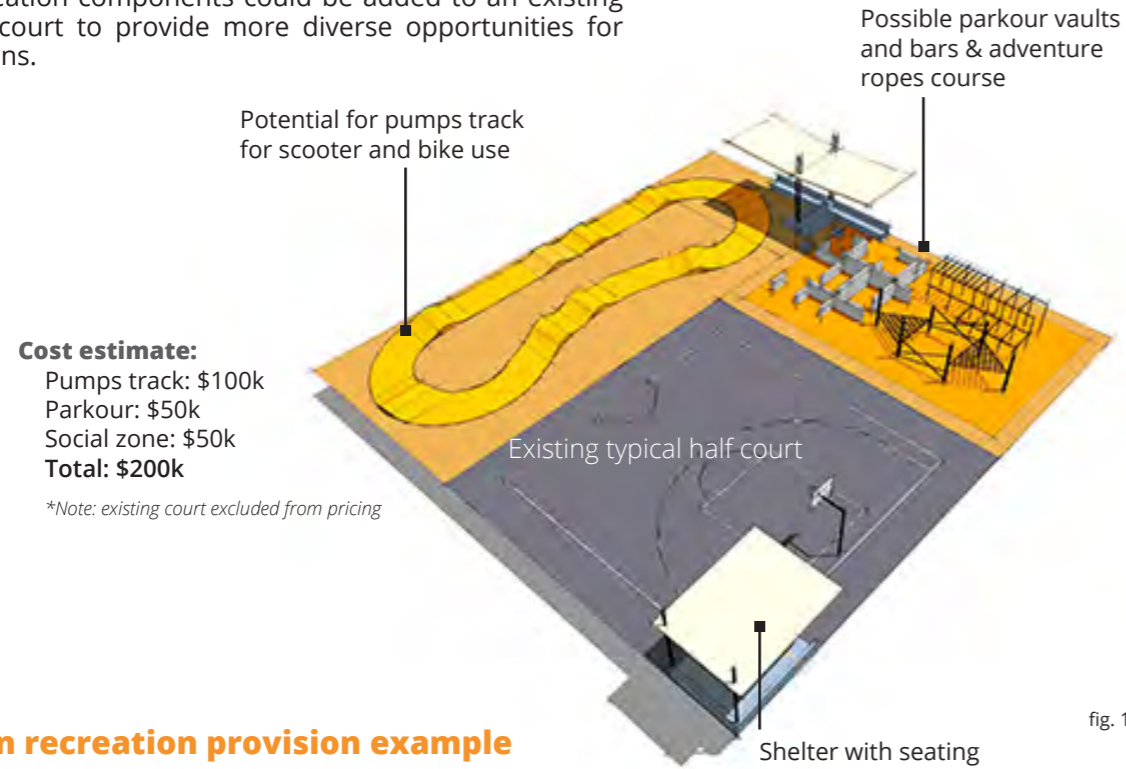


fig. 18

## Teen recreation provision example

The below diagram shows how an existing ball court can be adapted to include rebound/bouldering wall, ping pong table, skateable ledges and shelters with ample seating and places to socialise.

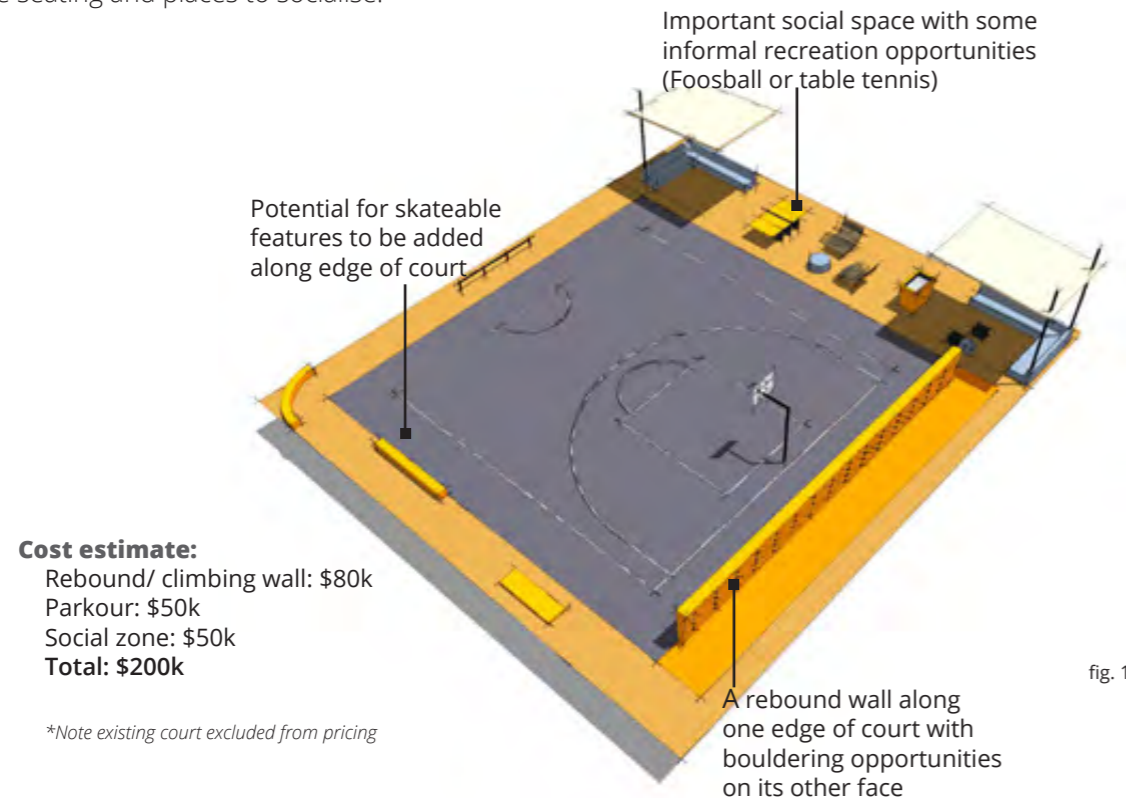
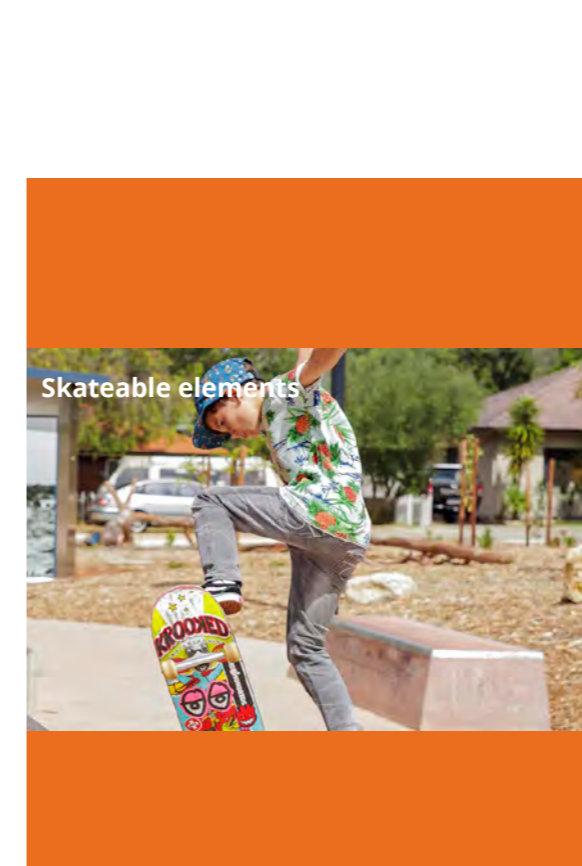


fig. 19

## Tween recreation examples



## Teen recreation examples



# Implementation Plan by priority

The following is a suggested prioritized implementation plan. It outlines a hierarchical model to ensure the City of Ryde has significant long term built spaces and places for its young people to enjoy.

Location	Scale/type of facility	Suburb/ Profile area	Age focus	Status	Recommendations	Priority
Blenheim Park	District Recreation Space	North Ryde	All	Masterplan provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide active sport provision for this area of the City including multicourts and skate space</li> <li>Consider social and cultural focus considering its close proximity to train station and schools to provide access and space to those who don't skate</li> </ul>	High
Meadowbank Park	Regional Recreation Space	Melrose - Meadowbank park	All	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional active recreation elements to enhance existing space</li> <li>Consider linking proposed multicourts with skate elements to the skate park due to its ongoing popularity</li> </ul>	High
Eastwood Park	Local Recreation Space	Eastwood	Teen	Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporate a teen active recreation hub/social amenities when preparing the Eastwood Park masterplan</li> </ul>	Medium
Santa Rosa Park	Local Recreation Space	Ryde (Santa Rosa)	Tween	Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed new playground within Santa Rosa Park to have a tween focus on challenging active recreation components as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Medium
Top Ryde/ Ryde Library	Local Recreation Space	Top Ryde	Teen	Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council to engage with Top Ryde Shopping Centre to provide more social areas for teens/ young adults around Ryde Library and Top Ryde shopping precinct</li> </ul>	Medium
Whiteside Street Reserve (adj ELS Hall Park)	District Recreation Space	Marsfield	All	Masterplan provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide active sport provision for this area of the City including multicourts, mountain bike, BMX and skate space</li> <li>Consider social and cultural focus considering its close proximity to train station and schools to provide access and space to those who don't skate</li> </ul>	Medium
Future Gladesville Town Centre Park	Local Recreation Space	Gladesville/ Tennyson Point	Teen	Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider a social area for teens/young adults when designing the new park in Gladesville Town Centre</li> </ul>	Low
Kings Park	Local Recreation Space	Denistone East	Tween	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand existing infrastructure with tween focused elements as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Low
Lions Park	Local Recreation Space	West Ryde	Tween	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand existing infrastructure with tween focused elements as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Low
Morrison Bay Park	Local Recreation Space	Putney	Tween	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand existing infrastructure with tween focused elements as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Low
Ryde Park	Local Recreation Space	East Ryde	Tween	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand existing infrastructure with tween focused elements as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Low
Sager Place	Local Recreation Space	East Ryde	Tween	Feasibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consideration of a tween focused active recreation space as outlined in the study in consultation with local shop owners</li> </ul>	Low
Tuckwell Park	Local Recreation Space	Macquarie Park	Tween	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand existing infrastructure with tween focused elements as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Low
Waterloo Park	Local Recreation Space	Marsfield	Tween	Existing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand existing infrastructure with tween focused elements as outlined in the study</li> </ul>	Low