THE OLD WAY & YOUR OLD PARK

There was a time in skatepark history when prefabricated skateparks were deemed a relatively acceptable option. That time is over. Shorter life expectancy, design constraints, noise, high maintenance costs and risks of heated metal and loose screws are the reasons that prefabricated skateparks are no longer the correct choice for public skateparks. Poured in place, custom concrete skateparks are the contemporary choice for successful public skateparks due to their longevity, design potential, lower noise, lower risk and lower maintenance.

IF YOUR TOWN HAS A PREFAB SKATEPARK THAT IS FALLING APART...

Many communities start their new skatepark project journey by trying to figure out what to do with the old “skatepark” that’s falling apart. There are concerns about safety, liability and how much should be spent on repairing the old skatepark vs. saving for a new concrete skatepark.

In general we recommend putting most if not all of the effort toward replacing the park with a contemporary concrete skatepark. Here are some suggestions for how to make the process a little easier:
MAXIMIZE USE, PREPARE FOR THE FUTURE
Get to work on a concrete skatepark project as soon as possible, but utilize any existing ramps that are in good shape as long as possible (even after the new park is open, if you have space for them.)

NOTE: Moving prefab ramps is difficult, tricky and can be dangerous. On top of that, they rarely keep their shape after being moved unless disassembled and reassembled. (by professional ramp builders).

Utilize the space by fundraising for future concrete skatepark by highlighting and logging the use of the existing space. It’s very likely that you’ll get more users to a contemporary skatepark that’s well designed and built out of concrete. Consider donating any old ramps to another city, but know that moving those ramps is not only difficult, they tend to lose shape and are hard to put back together.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF DEMOLITION
If the park gets shut down due to legitimate safety concerns before a replacement skatepark opens, utilize this moment to gain more support for the new project through local news. Avoid blame, look forward to the future and share the vision.

UTILIZING EXISTING SLABS
If you have a prefabricated skatepark, it’s likely that it was built on a concrete slab. This slab can be reused as additional (or central) space in the construction of the new skatepark. Work with your skatepark designer or builder to see if the slab is in good enough condition and how you might work the old slab into or around the new design.

BEST CASE SCENARIO
WORK TOWARD AND COMPLETE A CONCRETE SKATEPARK PROJECT THAT IS:

1. In another part of town to serve more people (assuming old park will still work for a while, open new park then work toward putting concrete obstacles on old park’s slab)
2. Adjacent to the existing skatepark so both areas can be utilized. Once the old skatepark elements fall apart, continue to utilize the slab as an open skate space and eventually build concrete elements into the old space.

RAMPS
Ramps are best found in private residential backyards or driveways. If you’re considering spending time building an expensive ramp out of wood to serve the whole community to ride, note that there’s a point of scale where you’d be better off building out of concrete so it lasts a long time and you get a better return on your investment. Anything bigger than a miniramp should be made from concrete (and even miniramps should be made from concrete, nowadays). People like wooden ramps because they appear easier to build and can be moved. This doesn’t work as a long term solution because they are extremely difficult to maintain, but they can benefit your skatepark project in other ways.

UTILIZING RAMPS FOR AWARENESS EVENTS
Creating some small ramps to demonstrate action sports in your community can be helpful. Just be mindful of the cost. They can also be used to activate an empty space with permission. However, they are not a permanent solution.

A quick note on the term “ramp”: The modern definition of a ramp is a skateable object made from wood. The concrete equivalent of a ramp is usually referred to by its more specific “obstacle” name.

Ultimately, if people are going to make little ramps in an area, try to work with them to let them have it and start to think about permanent solutions. They are providing a needed service and it can be very valuable until the permanent space is created.

REFURBISHING A CONCRETE SKATEPARK
If your existing permanent concrete skatepark has a contemporary design and it’s worth refreshing the concrete, there are firms that specialize in skatepark refurbishment. But if your city hasn’t met the need, it’s worth prioritizing getting enough skate space for all before spending money on refurbishment. Oftentimes older concrete can still be used while you meet the need. Once you do, you can go back and refurbish.
SUPPORT FROM THE SKATEPARK PROJECT

Founded by Tony Hawk, The Skatepark Project (TSP) is a nonprofit organization working to increase access to outdoor recreation and free play through the creation of safe and inclusive community skateparks. TSP provides the resources, advocacy skills, grants and fellowship programs that guide skaters in creating their own community skateparks, from conception through construction. This is a collaborative process between skaters and city authorities to invest in capital improvements that will enrich a community for decades. The Skatepark Project’s grant programs have awarded over $10 million to help fund nearly 700 public skateparks in all 50 states, enjoyed by an estimated six million people annually. The organization’s International Program has provided technical and financial support to assist youth through the Skateistan educational programs in Afghanistan, Cambodia, and South Africa. To get involved, visit www.skatepark.org

FREE SUPPORT
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, WORKSHOPS & PROGRAMS

PUBLIC SKATEPARK DEVELOPMENT GUIDE V2

THE SKATESPACE PODCAST

OTHER DOWNLOADS FROM TSP
MOBILE APP
INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEOS
SIGNATURE ELEMENTS
DIY CDS
GREEN SKATEPARKS

SUPPORT FROM SKATEISTAN AND GOOD PUS
GOODPUSH TOOLKIT

GRANT FUNDING
Over 600 granted parks open in the United States.
LEARN MORE

FEEDBACK SURVEY

FIND MORE AT SKATEPARK.ORG

SUPPORT FROM THE SKATEPARK PROJECT
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## Support from the Skatepark Project

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## Acknowledgements

## Photo Credits