

TOPIC: Extreme Sports

TREND/ISSUE

- Municipalities are becoming increasingly aware of the popularity of unstructured free play including "action sports" which include Skateboarding, Bmx, Inline skating and Free style biking.
- Municipal Parks and Recreation departments have been under heavy pressure from action sport participants and private landowners to provide authorized, safe facilities for action sports.

BACKGROUND

Extreme sports are becoming an important and relatively inexpensive type of opportunity to provide inexpensive and accessible leisure opportunities for youth and young adults.

- Action sports generally do not keep score, are self taught and the facilities are often free of charge and unsupervised.
- Statistics from the action sport retail industry confirm that action sport equipment and clothing sales are skyrocketing.
- The question is "Where do these consumers go once they leave the store?"
- The Canadian Amateur Skateboard Association (CASA) is striving to create a governing body for skateboarding because they recognize skateboarding needs to become organized in order to address insurance needs, access government grants and to develop the sport in the mainstream.
- BMX has been adopted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to be included as an official sport in the 2008 Beijing Olympics and it is a member of the Ontario Cycling Association, which provides liability insurance for BMX events and competitions.
- Free style biking is also recognized as a member of the Ontario Cycling Association.
- Many municipalities have groups such as "Action Sport Coalitions" which advocate for facilities to be built.

LINKS

CASA – Canadian Amateur Skateboarding Association

http://www.ca-sa.ca/about_why.php

West 49 Skateboarding Events

<http://www.canadianopenskateboard.com/>

IMPACT/IMPLICATIONS

- Action sports tend to occur in unauthorized and sometimes unsafe areas such as street curbs, underground parking garages, office building stairways.
- Due to the unstructured nature of action sports, municipalities have difficulty determining the needs due to lack of participation statistics and organization among the participants.
- Municipalities that typically budget for traditional sport facilities such as baseball, soccer and hockey are faced with the challenge of making these dollars go further to address the need for action sport facilities such as Skate parks, BMX parks and Free Style Biking areas.

CONTACT

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