

Summary of Sports Ramps Representative Telephone Survey, 2016 March.

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Background

In June, Council supported a Notice of Motion that directed Administration to engage with residents on sports ramps. This research on general public opinions is part of a number of research and engagement activities related to residential skateboard/sports ramps.

The Notice of Motion states that skateboarding is a fun and healthy activity enjoyed by over 34,000 Calgarians each year and the current restrictions on skateboarding and other wheeled sports in Calgary are overreaching, unnecessary and prejudiced.

As a result, a representative telephone survey was undertaken by Harris/Decima Inc. to gauge the perceptions associated with allowing skateboard/sports ramps on residential properties. Specifically, the survey sought responses from Calgary residents to confirm that:

1. The proposed maximum dimensions of 1.5 meters (5 ft) high X 5 meters (16 ft) wide X 6 meters (20 ft) long allowed for sports ramps on private property is appropriate;
2. Sport ramps within the allowable size should be exempt from the requirements of a development permit; and,
3. Proposed new amendments to the Community Standards Bylaw, as part of its comprehensive review, will address excessive noise related to sport ramp activities.

Methodology

Harris/Decima conducted a telephone survey using a stratified random sampling approach. The purpose of this approach is to yield a sample that mirrors the actual population as closely as possible. Full details and the complete report are available at calgary.[ca/sportsramps](http://calgary.ca/sportsramps).

Surveys were completed using both landline and cell phone samples. 504 residents were surveyed. The results are within a Margin of Error of $\pm 4.4\%$ at a 95% confidence level. The survey was conducted between 2015 November 24 to December 6. Respondents were informed regarding the general purpose of the research and the sponsor, The City of Calgary.

The overarching objective of this research was to gauge citizens' views, perceptions and opinions related to skateboard/sports ramps and respond to the Notice of Motion questions. This survey strived to better understand:

1. Awareness of current regulations regarding skateboard/sports ramps on private property;
2. Support for or opposition to skateboard/sports ramps on private property;
3. Opinions regarding the acceptable size;
4. Opinions regarding an exemption from a development permit;
5. Opinions about placement on the residential parcel;
6. Perceived benefits and concerns;
7. Current household participation in wheeled sports;
8. Ideas about standards and limits that could be put in place to address noise.

I. Findings

(Note: Percentages in this summary may not add up to 100% due to rounding, opportunities for respondents to identify more than one response to some open ended questions, or because the summary highlights the top responses.)

Areas	Questions Asked	Results	Top Findings
General Impression of skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties	In general, what impression do you have of skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68% respondents have positive/somewhat positive impression about skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties • 27% respondents have negative/somewhat negative impression about skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties • 5% don't know 	68% have either a very or somewhat positive impression about skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties.
	What benefits, if any, are there in allowing skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties	Top 3 benefits identified by residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes exercise/physical recreation/being outdoors (36%) • Provides entertainment/keeps youth busy/out of trouble (26%) • Provides a safe environment/keeps youth close to home/under supervision (20%) 	While many benefits were identified, promoting physical exercise/activity (36%) is perceived as the main benefits.
	What drawbacks, if any are there in allowing skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties?	Top 3 drawbacks identified by residents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety concerns/youth could sustain injuries/cause accidents with traffic/pedestrians (34%) • Noise/disruptive to neighbours/the community (31%) • Concerns about large groups of youth forming/causing trouble/loitering/vandalism (15%) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) When asked what drawback there would be, 34% think there are safety concerns such as injuries or accidents with traffic or pedestrians with skateboard /sports ramps. Other drawbacks identified include ramps being disruptive and noisy (31%), causing loitering and vandalism (15%). 2) The proportion of respondents mentioning noise to neighbours as a drawback increases with age (22% for those 18-34 years and 40% for those 55 years and over)

Areas	Questions Asked	Results	Top Findings
General Impression of skateboard or sports ramps on residential properties	Should sports ramps be allowed on residential properties? If no, why do you say that?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 72% say yes • 26% say no • 2% don't know/not sure 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Majority of respondents (72%) would allow sports ramps on residential properties. 2) The top four concerns cited for not wanting sports ramps on residential properties are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring regulations are in place to prevent injury (9%) • Ensuring regulations are in place regarding noise (8%) • Ensuring placement is not too close to fence, house (5%) • Aesthetics (does not look good) (5%)
Rules for residential sports ramps: 1. General	As far as you know, does The City of Calgary have regulations now for sports ramps on residential properties?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17% say yes • 25% say no • 58% don't know/not sure 	There is a lack of clarity among respondents on the current regulations of skateboard/sports ramps. Over half are unsure if the City currently has regulations for ramps while one in five respondents believe there are some in place.
	Do you think that there should be rules and standards to regulate sports ramps on residential properties? If yes, what standards or rules, if anything, should be applied to sports ramps on residential properties?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% say yes • 21% say no • 4% don't know 	The majority of Calgarians surveyed (75%) think that there should be rules and standards to regulate skateboard/sports ramps. The top four rules wanted by Calgarians are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety regulations needed to prevent injury (30%) • Size (25%) • Time of use (night) (14%) • Placement (too close to fence, house) (13%)

Areas	Questions Asked	Results	Top Findings
<p>Rules for residential sports ramps:</p> <p>2. Development permits</p>	<p>Do you agree or disagree that sports ramps on residential properties should require a development permit?</p> <p>If agree, why do you say that? If disagree, why do you say that?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% say yes • 37% say no • 3% don't know 	<p>A small majority of residents agree that a development permit should be required for a sports ramp on a residential property.</p> <p>The top four reasons are identified by Calgarians why they agree that a development permit should be required :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A permit will ensure that any standards or regulations that are developed will be consistent across properties (39%) • A permit should be required to reduce the risk of injury (20%) • A permit will allow the community to be involved and be able to voice their opinions (7%) • A permit should be required to reduce noise concerns (7%) <p>The top four reasons are identified by Calgarians why they disagree that a development permit should be required :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring a permit is unnecessary as it is a small structure (20%) • Permit shouldn't be required on private property (8%) • It's only a temporary structure (4%) • It should be free/do not wish to pay for a permit (4%)
<p>Rules for residential sports ramps:</p> <p>3. Size</p>	<p>The proposed maximum size of sports ramps on residential properties is 5 feet high, 16 feet wide and 20 feet long. How appropriate do you think that proposed maximum size is?</p> <p>If inappropriate, why? And what, if anything, would make the size of sports ramps more acceptable to you?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 59% consider these dimensions appropriate for residential properties • 28% consider these dimensions inappropriate • 13% don't know 	<p>A small majority of residents consider these dimensions appropriate for residential properties.</p> <p>The top four reasons are identified by Calgarians why they consider these dimensions inappropriate :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too large (15%) • To small (2%) • It should be proportionate to the property size (2%) • Do not want any sports ramps on residential properties (2%) <p>Additionally, the four things Calgarians believe would help make them feel more comfortable with sports ramps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing/don't want sports ramps in residential areas (7%) • Too large (6%) • Size allowed should be relative to property size (2%) • Width/length should be reduced (2%)

Areas	Questions Asked	Results	Top Findings
Rules for residential sports ramps: 4. Location	What areas do you think sports ramps should be allowed on residential lots?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Back yard-85% • Side yard-57% • Attached to a garage-50% • Attached to a house-45% • Attached to a fence-37% • Front yard-30% 	85% of Calgarians surveyed said sports ramps should be allowed in residential back yards. Fewer would like them in other locations.
Rules for residential sports ramps: 5. Noise	Assuming noise from sports ramp activities would be restricted between 10pm and 7am on weekdays and 10pm and 9am on weekends. How comfortable or uncomfortable would you be if sports ramps were allowed on residential properties? Why do you say that?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 74% say they are comfortable with skateboard/sports ramps on residential properties. • 24% say they are uncomfortable with skateboard/sports ramps on residential properties. • 2% don't know 	Assuming noise from sports ramp activities would be restricted, three-quarters of residents say they are comfortable with skateboard/sports ramps on residential properties. The top four reasons are identified by Calgarians explaining why they were comfortable with sports ramps when considering noise restrictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise restrictions are reasonable under the noise bylaw (35%) • The current noise restrictions no different than other residential noises (12%) • It provides entertainment for youth (7%) The top four reasons are identified by Calgarians explaining why they were uncomfortable with sports ramps when considering noise restrictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View noise as an infringement to their right to enjoy their own property (12%) • 10 p.m. is too late (6%) • Against the building of sports ramps on residential properties (3%)

II. Conclusions

What Calgarians said in regards to the three key questions from the Notice of Motion:

1. How appropriate is the proposed maximum size for sports ramps on residential properties?
 - Overall, 59% of residents are comfortable with the proposed size of sports ramps on residential properties. Perceived appropriateness declines with age. Homeowners are less likely to feel the proposed size is appropriate (55%) compared to renters (71%).
 - 15% of Calgarians think the dimension is inappropriate because it is too large.
2. Should sports ramps within an allowable size be exempted from the requirement of a development permit?
 - In total, 60% of respondents agree that a development permit should be required for any sports ramps on residential properties.
 - 39% Calgarians think a development permit is necessary to ensure consistent standards across properties, while 20% indicate that a permit should be required to reduce the risk of injury.
3. Confirmation that proposed new amendments to the Community Standards Bylaw, as part of its comprehensive review, will address excessive noise related to sport ramp activities.
 - In general, a majority of residents (74%) are comfortable with sports ramps in their neighbourhood, assuming that noise would be restricted between 10 p.m. to 7 a.m. on weekdays and Saturdays, and 10 p.m. to 9 a.m. on Sundays and statutory holidays.

General impression of residential sports ramps from Calgarians:

1. Residents (67%) have a positive overall impression of skateboard/sports ramps.
2. Residents (75%) are comfortable with regulations and standards.
3. Placement and size factor in receptivity to skateboard/sports ramps. Most prefer that ramps be placed in the backyard with size restrictions. A small majority (60%) believe a development permit should be required. Generally, those over the age of 55 are less positive about skateboard/sports ramps.