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The mission of the Ukiah Skate Park Committee is to provide a well designed Skate Park that promotes healthy recreational activities for our children and our community.

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Skate park's future continues to skate forward

By **RICHARD ROSIER/The Daily Journal**
Saturday, July 21, 2007

More than 30 skaters and community members showed up for the skate park design meeting Thursday night at the Ukiah Conference Center.

Hosted by Zack Wormhoudt of Wormhoudt, Inc., the meeting was an opportunity for Ukiah skateboarders to play an active role in the design of the Ukiah Skate Park.

"The idea is to have the people here determine what they want in the park and help them make it possible," Wormhoudt said. "We basically share information, take input, and based on that input, analyze the site, look at geo-technical conditions and water table conditions and all types of budget and things like that, and all the input we get tonight, and figure out what we can do here."



Ukiah skater Joe McGill works on a wave-shaped tunnel during...
 (MacLeod Pappidas/The Daily Journal)

With more than 100 skate parks to its credit, ranging from Hawaii to Arkansas, including the one in Willits, Wormhoudt, Inc. has a reputation for building quality skate parks.

Justin Capri, owner of Freedom Skate Shop, chatted with fellow skateboarders before the meeting about his ideas for the skate park. One idea was to honor the history of the site by incorporating railroad themes and material in the park.

"We discussed using some of the old train tracks as our hand rails so we're saving cost as well as recycling and keeping the railroad history," said Capri. "There's a lot of stuff that we want to use."

"There's so many different aspects of skateboarding, and things that kids like versus older skaters. We're really trying to tie all of that stuff together and get a good flow to the park," said Capri. "We're very aware that most of the young kids like street skating; we're just trying to find that happy medium. We don't want to section it off, Here's the street kids, and here's the transition kids.' We're going to try to tie in street obstacles with the bowl sections and the transition sections and vice versa."

Street style skating refers to the use of different aspects of street terrain as obstacles, such as handrails and flat banks. Transition refers to curves and bowls and half pipes usually seen in skate parks.

"It's important not to go into any one thing, so that as the sport progresses you don't

have a park that nobody wants to ride," said Anthony Walsh, another experienced skateboarder.

Another design aspect important to Capri is making the park safe for younger skateboarders and those just entering the sport.

"A big design aspect that's definitely going to go down too is that this age group right here (gesturing to his 4-year-old son) -- as well as super beginners that might be an older skateboarder that just wants to get out there -- we're going to have a beginner section of the park that's kind of separate," Capri said.

According to Capri, his son often wants to go to the skate park in Willits, but on a busy day the high traffic of skateboarders can make it a dangerous prospect.

After a slideshow presentation showcasing other skate parks that Wormhoudt, Inc. has designed, skaters and other community members separated into groups with model clay and graph paper. Using these mediums, they gave form to their hopes and aspirations for the Ukiah Skate Park.

Asked what he hoped the Ukiah Skate Park would be after its completion, skateboarder Perry Hall said, "Something good and positive for the community, as it always will be -- something for the kids to actually relate to one another, which skateboarding has always done. It's a good and positive environment usually."

For more information about Wormhoudt, Inc., visit www.skateparks.com.

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