

## The Big Q: Future brightens for skateboarders

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**With the closing of the Board to Death skateboard shop and skate park earlier this week, what is the status of the planned improvements to the Silver Lake skate park?**

The city of Rochester hopes to start building a 7,000-square-foot addition to the skate park this spring, doubling the skate park's size, said park department planner Jeff Morton. The city didn't have the money to do it last summer, he said.

The addition is expected to cost \$225,000, with Rotary clubs pitching in \$30,000 and the Rochester Area Foundation \$10,000 of the total.

"By hook or by crook, it's going to happen this year," said Roy Sutherland, superintendent of the Park and Recreation Department.

Some skaters have derided the Silver Lake skate park because its ramps are relatively small -- no more than 3 feet tall. The facility is defined as Tier 1, which is suitable for beginners. Higher-tiered parks include larger obstacles but also require supervision and require riders to wear protective gear.

The addition also will be Tier 1, but the obstacles will be 4 feet tall, because the criteria for Tier 1 has changed. The plan is to add a bank, ledges, stairs and rails, all made of or set in concrete.

The existing obstacles, which include a half pipe, a few quarter pipes and some ramps, are steel modular pieces set on a concrete pad.

There are also tentative plans to expand the park further in future years, Morton said.

How quickly that happens depends in part on support from the skating community, he said.

"The vast majority of the projects we do nowadays are joint kind of projects," he said.

-- Mike Klein