



**DESCRIPTION:**

The new skate facility is conceived as a PLAZA, a SKATEPLAZA. Standard public space materials are used to build it, such as pedestrian pavements or massive granite ledges. The development of the plaza extends and shapes the new park around: Ramps and banks turn into soft green slopes. These slopes also chase to deter any unwanted corners or graffiti surfaces, avoiding vertical facings or the need of protective handrails. This provides a visual connection and continuity between the park and the skate area.

The massive granite blocks subtly enclose the perimeter of the space for skateboarding. They also confer some sort of sculptural value to the whole intervention which may please the rest of the citizens who might not be necessarily so interested in skateboarding. The granite obstacles become like sculptures in the park. A new line of trees provides shadow for the skaters, but also defines the park space and a new green façade for the industrial surroundings. Even the higher level of the skateplaza also serves as a stage towards the park, for occasional city events and for the Rock'n'Board skate festival, organized annually by the local skaters.

**ASSESSMENT:**

The population and the City Hall see with positive eyes that the investment put into skateboarding has been able to offer a new green space to the city. Nowadays, the reluctant neighbors may have gladly learned that concrete skateplazas might not be as noisy as the banging of the old metal ramps. Still the skate area was placed as far as possible from the closest houses. The old fence surrounding the whole sport complex has been taken away, so the space is left open for public access.

Sport and leisure is combined in the same public space. The old running track was kept and it's being used much more, by runners but also by elderly folks that now see the space as a nice place to go and chat, watch the youth in action and move their legs a bit. It also hosts the local school's annual cross race. A specific urban design has proved that such a singular sports facility as a Skatepark can also become a new green public space, open and attractive for users of all sorts of age.

