What constitutes a legitimate use of public space is an actively debated issue in the field of urban planning. Skateboarders are one user group whose access to and usage of public space is highly contested. New York City is the birthplace of street skateboarding, as skateboarders discovered that the city’s terrain held obstacles such as stair rails, benches, and ledges, which inadvertently created their own personal skate park. This thesis focuses on current planning practices for skateboarding in New York City. The institutional planning response for skateboarding has included positive planning practices such as the creation of skate parks as a means to give skateboarders their own designated areas. Negative planning practices include the implementation of design strategies to prevent skateboarders from using other public spaces and as well as the creation of legislation policing the activity. This thesis relied on interviews with skateboarders, advocates, and Department of Parks and Recreation officials, a review of skateboarding websites and magazine articles, as well as a case study of the development of the Coleman Oval /Manhattan Bridge Skatepark, a public skatepark undergoing a redesign process spearheaded by community group Open Road. Research demonstrated that planning can best respond to skateboarding in New York City by including a participatory design structure, allowing for elements of subversive planning by skateboarders, as well as broadening public space design practices.