

# Del Rio Skate Garden: Where Skateboarding Meets Ecology

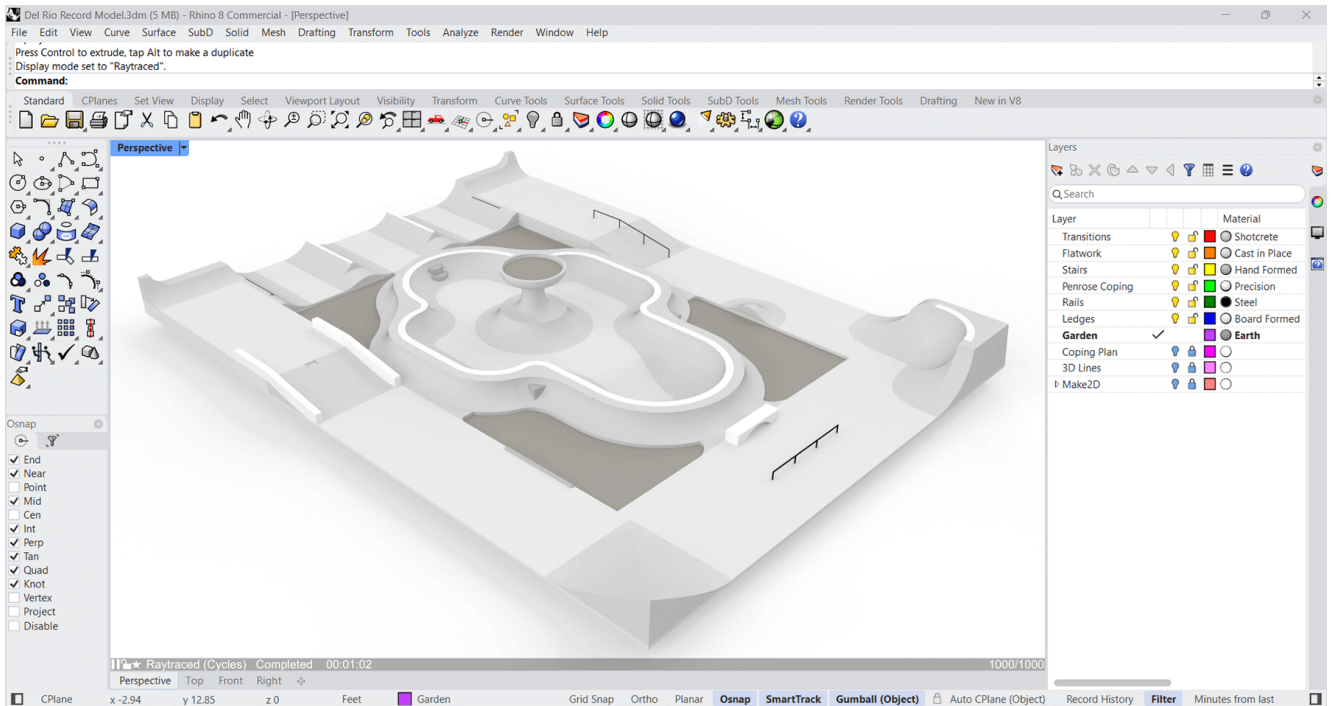
The Del Rio Skate Garden in Del Rio, Texas, is the world's first ground-up municipal skate garden. This innovative public space combines sculptural form, athletic performance, and environmental stewardship. Conceived and built by [skateECOSYSTEMS](#), the project reimagines what a skatepark can be: more than a place for skating, it is a civic artwork, a living landscape, and a cultural landmark.



*Drone view of the construction process.*

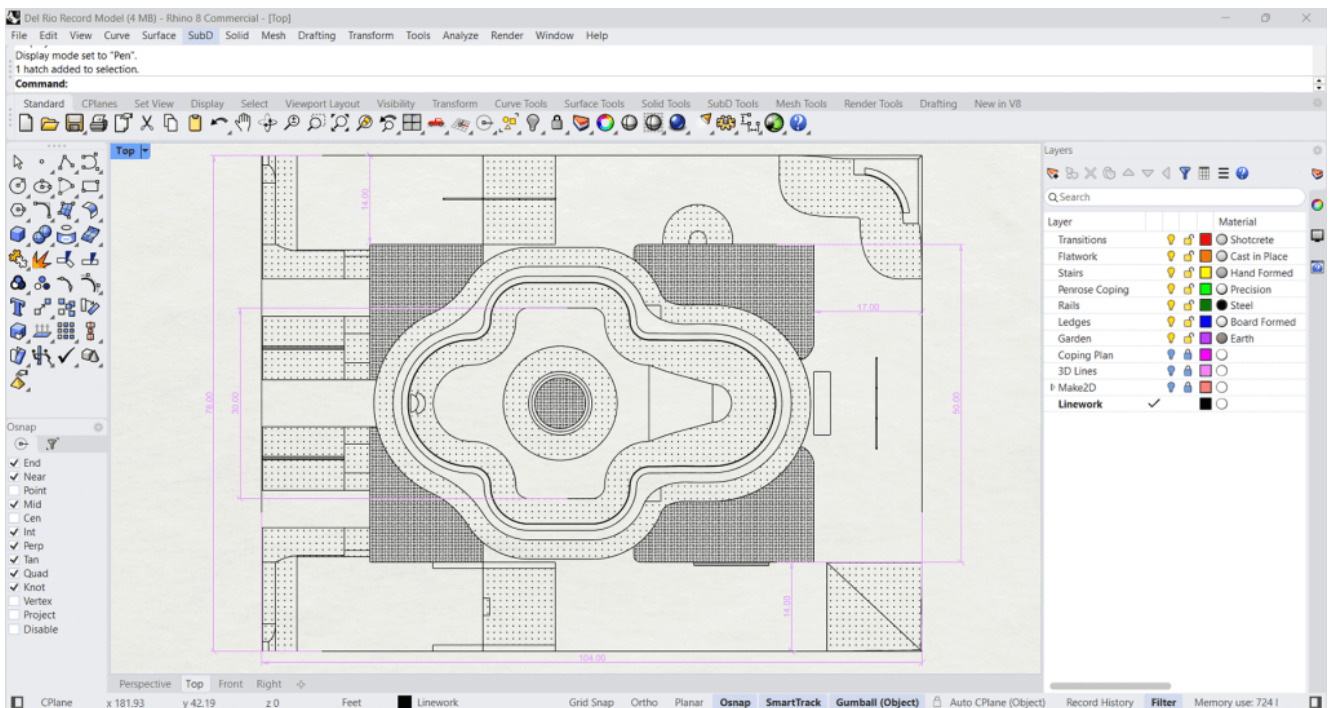
## A GARDEN IN MOTION

The project takes inspiration from Del Rio's nickname, "a fountain in the desert," and transforms an underutilized lot into a vibrant hub of activity and ecology. Its design integrates over 50 native plant species from the Chihuahuan Desert and Edwards Plateau, embedding West Texas ecology into the flow of concrete forms.



*Raytraced Rhino model of the Del Rio Skate Garden.*

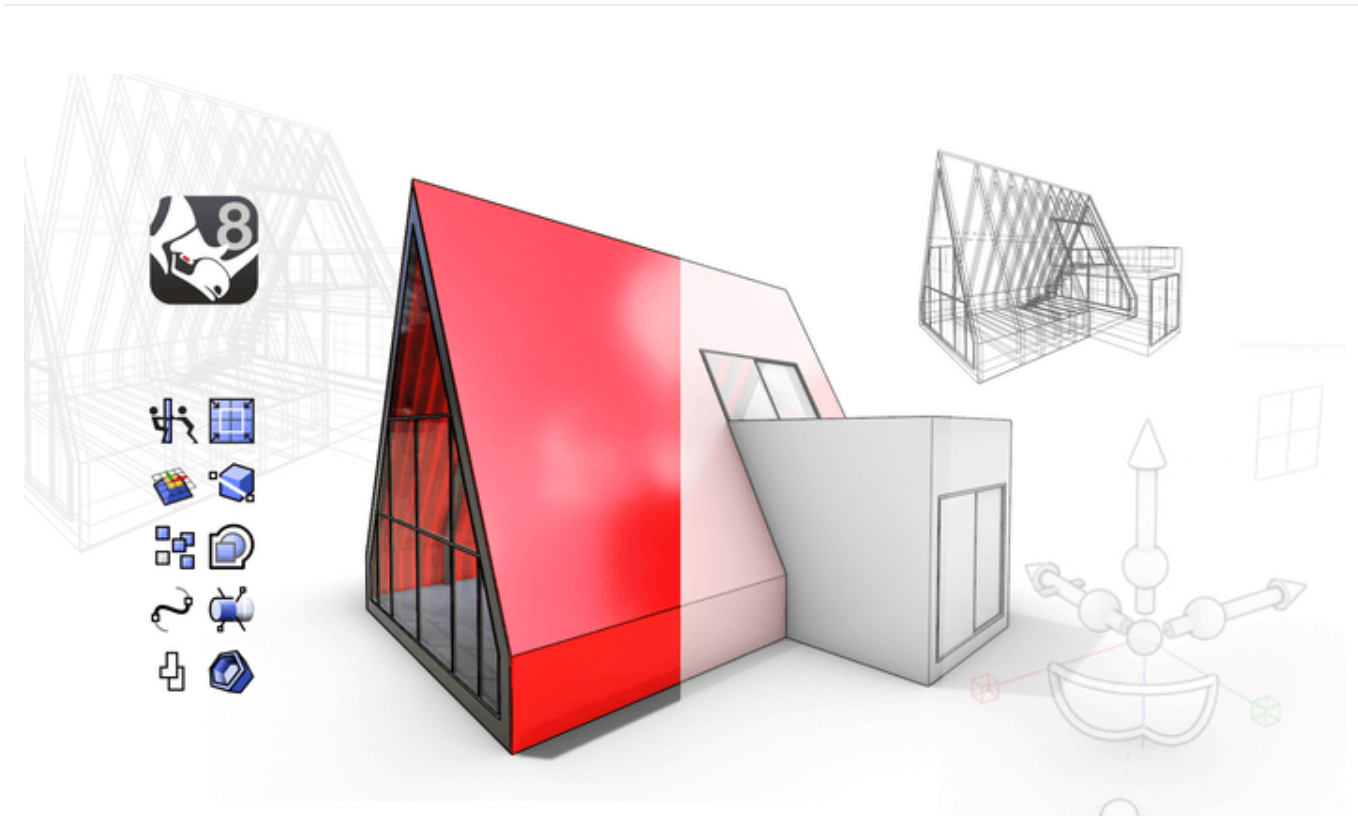
Four planted garden voids punctuate the terrain, functioning as natural cooling beds and gathering areas. These voids not only mitigate heat but also blur the line between skating and landscape.



*Rhino floorplan with hatching.*

# FROM COMMUNITY TO COMPUTATION

Community engagement shaped the project from the outset. Locals voiced their desire for a skate space that reflected both culture and ecology, coining the idea of a “skate garden.” To better translate this vision, the team began with AI-generated concept studies, which offered unexpected geometries and compositional variations.



[See Also](#)

[INTRODUCTION TO RHINO 8](#)

The process then moved into [Rhino 8](#), where designers refined forms with millimeter precision. Tools like Sweep, Loft, SubD, and Boolean operations were central to modeling the flowing, double-curved geometries of bowls, transitions, and the monumental fountain pool. Construction documents, plans, sections, and elevations were extracted directly from the Rhino model, ensuring fidelity between design intent and built outcome.



*Volunteers, community members, and crew planting the outer cruciform garden bed*

## **BUILDING THE SCULPTURAL TERRAIN**

Fabrication unfolded with a careful balance of high-tech precision and traditional craftsmanship. Earthwork and grading established the foundation, followed by rebar fabrication shaped with full-scale Rhino templates. Shotcrete was applied in layers, then hand-finished to glass-smooth surfaces using trowels and floats.



*Drone view, Looking southeast into the park.*

The most technically challenging feature, the fountainhead crowned with a 60-gallon Agave Americana, required an unconventional solution: shotcrete sprayed upside down without molds. This method, made possible by a custom high-viscosity concrete mix and the injection of an accelerator at the nozzle, avoided costly formwork while preserving design accuracy.



*Looking though outer garden bed.*



*Sculptural combination corner pocket.*

# A NEW STANDARD FOR SKATE ARCHITECTURE

The Del Rio Skate Garden is more than a skatepark; it is an interactive civic artwork. By merging ecological performance with flowing geometry, the project redefines urban infrastructure as poetic terrain. It is a place where movement and memory converge, offering the community an experience beyond recreation.



*Monolithic pyramid with red yucca and yucca rostrata.*



*Looking northwest from south platform.*

## **CREDITS**

**Client:** City of Del Rio

**Design & Build Studio:** skateECOSYSTEMS

- Chief Design Officer – Shane Yee
- Master Design Builder – Bobby King
- Superintendents – Connor Smith, Clayton Taylor
- Computational Designer – Rodrigo Gallardo
- Sculptor – Austin Studios
- Horticulture – Brandon Kent
- Plant Suppliers – Little Acre Nursery, Saunders Uvalde Desert Nursery
- City of Del Rio Team – Luis Menchaca, Scott Carcasi, Lazaro Castro
- Concrete Pumping – Johnson & Sons
- Batch Plant – Ingram Readymix, Inc.