

From: Casey Botts [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, May 29, 2020 5:51 PM
To: Rick Landt <commissioner_landt@external.ashland.or.us>; Mike Gardiner <mikeg@external.ashland.or.us>; Julian Bell <julianbell@hotmail.com>; Jim Lewis <commissioner_lewis@external.ashland.or.us>; Joel Heller <joel@ashland.or.us>; Michael Black <michael.black@ashland.or.us>
Subject: RVMBA letters of support for skills park project

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

Greetings Commissioners and Director Black,

I wanted to reach out and first say thanks for all the work you're doing in working to reorganize the budget priorities in these tough times. I wanted to attach these letters of support, including a generic grant letter from State Senator Jeff Golden, for our project and let you know that we have been successful in our initial grant fundraising cycle in raising \$13,000 to go towards the construction of the track. At this point, some granting agencies have extended fund usage past their original dates given, and we are hopeful we won't have to return these funds due to inevitable, unavoidable delays and shortfalls in the park planning process.

While \$13,000 is just a mere start, it does represent a lot of hard work and the building of funds in this project. The plan is to continue to leverage these funds into larger grants, keeping the proverbial snowball rolling. Raising around \$80,000 would allow us to build a small beginner pump track which we are calling "Phase 1". We are hopeful that if we can get plans done for under the \$25,000 allocated for the skills park, (which we can if RVMBA contracts a professional company outside of the RFP process) the difference could be contributed to that \$80,000 goal for Phase 1.

I understand that East Main Park Development and Skills Park are two different line items on the CIP budget. It's my hope that we (RVMBA) can work with APRC and staff to keep the momentum of our project going by potentially keeping these projects separate. To sum it up, we would hate to see our project stymied because it is wrapped directly into the E. Main design process which could be delayed according to your latest meeting discussion.

Overall, we are open and willing to provide any ideas or plans to keep this project at the forefront, thinking outside the box in these times.

Since I began this venture in October 2017, I've learned a lot about the public process, and truly do appreciate your open minds to something that is new and unproven in our immediate area. I look forward to the day we can have an opening ceremony and we all can see just how exciting and necessary this concept is to our community.

With gratitude,

Casey Botts
[REDACTED]

From: City of Ashland, Oregon <administration@ashland.or.us>
Sent: Tuesday, June 09, 2020 1:08 PM
To: Parks Commissioners <parks_commissioners@ashland.or.us>
Subject: Contact the APRC Commissioners Submitted

*** FORM FIELD DATA***

Name : **Leslie Eldridge**

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email : [REDACTED]

Subject: Support Bike parks and trails

Message : My name is Leslie Eldridge and I am a Professor of Environmental Science and Management at SOU. I also have two sons, ages 5 and 7, that attend Ashland public schools. Our family has lived here three years and we love and are committed to this community. I want to express my support for the development of outdoor recreation activities for youth in our city parks. Specifically, I want to support the development of a mountain biking pump track and of beginner trails within the city limits. Public, free and easily accessible outdoor recreation for youth is key to a diverse, inclusive and active community. The pump track is where kids can easily and safely practice skills, play and meet new friends and start healthy lifestyles. Anyone with a bike can go to the city parks for free and become a part of the kid tribe of bikers. It's a place where anyone, regardless of socio-economic status, gender, sexual preference, ability or ethnicity, can show up and participate. I grew up on suburban Long Island, NY in a wealthy neighborhood. We were one of the poorest families in our school district. Some of the best memories of my childhood were biking around the school playground in the summer with the other kids that didn't have money for camps or private lessons. Public parks have always been a critical part of democratic society. We currently serve very young children with our playgrounds as well as older community members with gardens and walking trails. The continued support of youth and young adult facilities is so critical for keeping that age group safe, active, healthy and building responsibility and confidence. Recent events in the world: Black Lives Matter and covid-19 serve to highlight the need for Ashland to focus on social justice and equity as well as free and accessible healthy outdoor activities that maximize social distance. People of all ages and walks-of-life are dusting off their old bicycles and jumping on them for the first time in years. And they are remembering the joy, freedom and fun (not to mention the lower carbon footprint) that can be derived from bikes. Families are looking to the city to provide these opportunities to all. Let's prioritize mountain biking parks and lower watershed beginner trails to serve the needs of ALL our youth. Thanks, Leslie Eldridge

Ashland has an great user created trail network for intermediate and advanced riders, yet is lacking any beginner infrastructure. We want kids to get off their phones and out from behind a screen, yet we don't give them a place to do it. It has taken non profit organizations and personal time to create the mountain bike network that exists.

I have been a mountain biker for 25 years, here in Ashland, and have benefited from and observed the fitness and confidence that mountain biking can bring. I would love to see more individuals have that same experience. We have this amazing opportunity right in our back yards yet there is a huge learning curve to feel confident on the existing trails. Overcoming any fears that you might not be a good enough rider can be a barrier for some, a pump track is the perfect place to face and overcome those fears!

We need a pump track to facilitate beginning riders. Safety is paramount for every parent that rides with their young children on the trails. Increasing kids', and beginning riders', chances of mountain biking safely with the proper training is a win for everyone. Learning to ride on a pump track leads to success when transitioning onto our existing trails, not just for kids, but anyone beginning the sport.

Potential for more cyclists is an obvious benefit to local bike shops, but the benefit of having one more place for people to safely explore their potential in fitness is a benefit for everyone. Local shops would benefit from kids, families and all people that come here and want to get on a bike, but a pump track to support all ages and skills could provide the scaffolding for community events and increase local support of all the trails.

Many people who ride pump tracks will eventually try mountain biking on trails, and will love it because they've already developed those skills. The direct effect to local bike shops is most of those kids will want a bike soon, or a better one. Hopefully those people will come to Bear Creek Bicycle.

John Ford
Owner / Manager
Bear Creek Bicycle
541.488.4270
www.bearcreekbicycle.com

-----Original Message-----

From: martin stadtmueller <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2020 7:41 PM

To: Sean Sullivan <sean.sullivan@ashland.or.us>

Subject: Keep the Pump Track a priority

[EXTERNAL SENDER]

I am writing to encourage you to keep the pump track and skills park a priority during your re-assessment. As you are certainly aware by now, RVMBA represents a passionate and growing number of constituents. Rather than bombard you with hundreds of emails from them, please know that I speak for all of them when I say that the bike pump track and skills park should remain high on the priority list.

I do not envy your position of having to reorganize priorities, and work within what I'm sure are tighter restraints than a few months ago. RVMBA does appreciate working through the process generally problem-free to get to the point we are at now. We've built significant community momentum and don't want this project to wind up on the back burner. I would like to lay out the case, and an option or two, to keep the bike skills park on the forefront of project priority moving forward.

RVMBA has been working with APR since October 2017 to develop this idea into a plan, and ultimately a reality. Originally, using \$25,000 of City budget approved for the skills park, RVMBA was going to hire a professional bike park builder to plan and design the park. This plan shifted into a landscape architect firm bidding on the design, pairing up with a subcontractor bike park builder to turn in an RFP. RVMBA would like to strongly advocate for the project moving forward:

- When the time comes, using the two submitted RFP's rather than reopening the process. RVMBA is aware that two well-qualified bike park companies teamed with architect firms, including one local, to complete the RFP. Requiring this work to be redone to require new proposals would seem counter productive.
- If the East Main Park design loses funding, or is delayed this year, RVMBA is requesting \$10,000 of the skills park plan and design budget of \$25,000 to hire Velosolutions USA to create a conceptual plan of the pump track/skills area. This would make it easier to continue applying for grants, show our "chomping at the bit" community that progress is being made, and allow us to utilize budget approved funding in a way that lets RVMBA help direct the project to help APR as subject matter experts. RVMBA would suggest that the remaining \$15,000 be retained for additional design requirements the city may anticipate, or go towards construction costs of the skills park.

Along with our immediate constituents, it's hard, if not impossible, to deny the explosion in growth of mountain biking in Ashland.

- 257 out of 341 respondents asked for bike related infrastructure in your goals survey.
- Local trail systems are overloaded by locals and tourists alike who have picked up mountain biking.
- A struggling tourism economy that won't be relying on a normal Shakespeare season revenue, is turning towards outdoor recreation to take the main stage, with mountain biking at the forefront.
- RVMBA worked hard to help APR to keep users out of the BMX park area during the shutdown, and now that facility is seeing heavy use from families and youth finally discovering it is there.
- The project has support from a diverse group of local and regional partners, and our local state senator Jeff Golden.
- Ashland DEVO, a brand new non-profit kids' bike program co-founded by RVMBA board member

Casey Botts, saw 72 registrations, doubling its initial predictions and showing the need of learning programs for youth mountain bikers.

- Local shops are seeing their bike sales spike in huge numbers. In fact, multiple shops are reporting a major shortage of bikes as the COVID-19 crisis has boosted sales to all time record numbers and suppliers can't meet demand.

With the White Rabbit and Quarry parking areas seeing heavy use, now is the time to spread the crowds, and provide beginner terrain and facilities for those who want to ride bikes, but can't do so in our current trail system.

It is for these reasons that RVMBA is strongly advocating to find a way to keep this project moving forward and viewed as high priority. Thanks for your consideration, and I look forward to discussing ways to move forward in the coming weeks and months.

Sincerely,

Martin Stadtmueller
President, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association



PO BOX 220 ASHLAND, OREGON 97520 MTASHLAND.COM
P (541) 482-2897 F (541) 482-3644 INFO@MTASHLAND.COM

June 1, 2020

I am reaching out on behalf of Mt. Ashland with overwhelming support of outdoor recreation focused projects in the City of Ashland, especially those that are mountain bike and trail related.

We are in a critical time of change right now. As chair of the Travel Ashland Committee, I am hearing from our local businesses, and seeing firsthand the impacts of the rapid decline of visitation. Our Committee sees great potential in developing new assets that cater to an emerging visitor economy in Ashland. APRC has an incredibly important role to play in our city's future.

To ensure a bright tomorrow for our community, including Mt. Ashland, outdoor recreation must remain a priority for development. With the current trends, outdoor recreation offers the easiest way forward in increasing visitation and the revenues it brings. Thanks to a 50% matching grant from Travel Oregon, Mt. Ashland has hired the SE Group (the top resort planning consultants in the ski business) to do a feasibility study regarding non-skiing operations at Mt. Ashland. We hope to help backfill the declining visitor base with Spring to Fall outdoor recreation dollars.

From surveys we have conducted over the past six years, we hear that mountain biking is the most sought after improvement at Mt. Ashland. As a weekly trail user, and living and working on the mountain, I have seen the growth in trail use. I have seen thousands of mountain bikes passing by my driveway, and leaving the parking lot of Mt. Ashland. These tourists spend their money at our theaters, local hotels, restaurants, and retail shops. Mountain biking and other trail activities are a viable addition that can enhance Ashland's ability to be a resilient community, rather than die a slow economic death. But time is short.

As you consider all of the 19 goals for this biennium, I urge you to prioritize building trails, and seeing through the development of a pump track and skills park. These are projects that will not only enhance and grow a new outdoor recreation visitor economy, but will also add to the quality of place for those who choose Ashland as their home specifically because of these types of high quality recreation assets.

Thank you for your consideration, and I welcome your questions. Please feel free to contact me anytime.

Best Regards,

Hiram Towle
General Manager
Mt. Ashland
207-357-7030
htowle@mtashland.com

LOCAL MOUNTAIN FUN
— SINCE 1964 —



May 28th, 2020

Re: Support for prioritizing Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association's Pump Track

To the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission;

Travel Ashland, Ashland's official Destination Marketing Organization along with the Ashland Chamber of Commerce have provided support in the past and would like to express our continued support for Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association and prioritizing their plan for a pump track in Ashland.

When built, this pump track will help our community draw more families and visitors from afar to visit the City of Ashland. Ashland welcomes over 350,000 visitors annually, over half of whom visit to take advantage of our outstanding outdoor recreation options like biking, hiking, skiing, trail running, and rafting. As we seek to grow the number of visitors in each season for different reasons, we welcome the addition of new amenities, especially those appealing to families and beginners, thus diversifying our audience.

Given the COVID-19 crisis this spring, it is key now more than ever to diversify our visitor and the reasons they come to Ashland beyond theater.

Ashland is well known as a mountain bike destination with challenging terrain. This pump track would provide a beginner experience for those learning and younger riders. We support the pump track as a location that would enhance our park system and the variety of what riders can take part in while here. We acknowledge and are grateful for the increasing positive economic impact the mountain bike component of our visitor base has upon Ashland's economy, supporting the amenities all residents benefit from. A pump track like this could only serve to broaden the appeal of a trip to Ashland for bikers of all abilities.

Thank you for considering our support for Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association's pump track.

Katharine Cato

Travel Ashland & the Ashland Chamber of Commerce

Katharine@ashlandchamber.com 541-482-3486 ext. 106

www.travelashland.com