

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Park Advisory Commission

FROM: Bike Recreation Subcommittee of the Park Advisory Commission

DATE: December 20, 2022

SUBJECT: Resolution Approving the Bike Recreation Subcommittee report and recommendations

Attached is the Bike Recreation Subcommittee resolution along with the recommendation report that was developed by the Parks Bike Recreation Subcommittee of the Park Advisory Commission entitled Ad-Hoc Bike Recreation Subcommittee Report for your consideration and approval.

In 2021, a subcommittee of the Parks Advisory Commission was formed to provide recommendations on the following topics: Improvements to the Bandemer and Tuebingen bike recreation areas, development of a pump track, bike recreation signage and accessibility, bike recreation volunteer opportunities and partnerships, and general bike recreation topics.

From March 2022 through November 2022, the subcommittee, consisting of five parks staff, one PAC member and 4 community members, met formally 8 times. There were occasionally members of the public at the meeting with opportunities for public commentary at each meeting. There were also small groups that met on specific areas of focus throughout the year.

The subcommittee developed four goals that centered on bicycle recreation. These goals were the following: 1. Evaluate community preferences around bike recreation 2. Provide guidelines for the development and maintenance of a pump track 3. Develop best management practices and policies for bicycle recreation amenities and activities 4. Provide guidelines for community involvement and stewardship of bicycle recreation amenities.

The subcommittee spent roughly 10 months researching what bike recreation was taking place in Ann Arbor, as well as around the country. This research included gaining understanding of best practices for trail design and maintenance, staffing models to support bike recreation, and pump track design location criteria from other agencies that have established bike recreation policies.

In addition to the research, the subcommittee also used feedback from a bike recreation survey completed in 2021 along with information gathered by the community wide PROS Plan survey to identify various bicycle recreation trends and needs. Based on the information that was gathered by the subcommittee through research and public feedback, the attached report includes the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations**

1. Bike Recreation has strong support in the City of Ann Arbor and there is a desire for better infrastructure and amenities throughout the city. Any future bike recreation opportunities should prioritize community preferences.

2. The public process for bike recreation does not end with these recommendations. Any major bike recreation initiatives or projects would require robust public input regarding the location, design, features, and proposed activities.
3. The Ad-Hoc Bike Recreation Subcommittee recommends the formation of a Bike Pump Track Subcommittee to continue progress towards the creation of a bike pump track. The Subcommittee would focus on the following items.
  - a. **Community Engagement:** Develop a community outreach strategy around the pump track.
  - b. **Potential Partnerships:** Identify organizations and groups who would be interested in the construction of a pump track.
  - c. **Funding:** Identify funding opportunities to assist with the development and construction of a pump track.
  - d. **Pump Track Location:** Further develop location criteria needs and wants to generate a scoring matrix, identifying potential pump track locations.
  - e. **Pump Track Design:** Begin generating conceptual pump track design ideas that can be used for community engagement and fundraising efforts.
4. Currently, support for bike recreation comes from a number of different Parks areas and there is no dedicated funding allocated for trail maintenance or bike recreation amenities. The committee recommends that Parks staff should set up accounts to better track spending related to bike recreation. It must be noted that by moving millage dollars to support bike recreation maintenance and development, other projects, maintenance, and support will not be provided within the parks department. For bike recreation to move forward, it is imperative that additional funding be found to support the recommendations in the report.
5. The committee also recommends identifying a dedicated staff person to focus on bike recreation. As with the previous recommendation, this currently handled by multiple areas and individuals, but having a staff person dedicated to overseeing bicycle recreation would help ensure that these recommendations move forward and continue the progress made by this committee. Again, funding for this position is not currently in the budget or available to reallocate from other needs.
6. The committee recommends developing a risk management plan for bike recreation to ensure that trails and bike amenities are designed, built, managed, and maintained appropriately. Due to the unique nature of bike recreation, it is important that rules, regulations and policies are updated and reviewed regularly to help protect users and the city.
7. The committee also has recommended a more formalized community involvement guideline. The subcommittee determined that a framework, protocols, and structure for volunteer maintenance of bicycle trails and bicycling amenities is needed. Without a dedicated staff person, this work will be handled by GIVE365 and NAP to ensure consistent practices with other park volunteer projects and processes.

## RESOLUTION APPROVING THE BIKE RECREATION SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Whereas, In 2021, PAC created a bike recreation subcommittee to discuss bike recreation opportunities in the Ann Arbor Parks;

Whereas, The bike recreation subcommittee was charged with providing recommendations on the following topics: Improvements to the Bandemer and Tuebingen bike recreation areas, development of a pump track, bike recreation signage and accessibility, bike recreation volunteer opportunities and partnerships and general bike recreation topics

Whereas, The bike recreation subcommittee devoted considerable time and effort to learn more about what was taking place in Ann Arbor as well as around the country in regards to bike recreations, while focusing on the priorities and values of Ann Arbor;

Whereas, The Bike Recreation Subcommittee has set forth recommendations as described in the Bike Recreation Subcommittee Report.

RESOLVED, that PAC accepts the Bike Recreation Subcommittee Report and approves the following recommendations in regard to bike recreation and amenities:

1. Bike Recreation has strong support in the City of Ann Arbor and there is a desire for better infrastructure and amenities throughout the city. Any future bike recreation opportunities should prioritize community preferences.
2. The public process for bike recreation does not end with these recommendations. Any major bike recreation initiatives or projects would require robust public input regarding the location, design, features, and proposed activities.
3. The Ad-Hoc Bike Recreation Subcommittee recommends the formation of a Bike Pump Track Subcommittee to continue progress towards the creation of a bike pump track. The Subcommittee would focus on the following items.
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  3. **Funding:** Identify funding opportunities to assist with the development and construction of a pump track.
  4. **Pump Track Location:** Further develop location criteria needs and wants to generate a scoring matrix, identifying potential pump track locations.
  5. **Pump Track Design:** Begin generating conceptual pump track design ideas that can be used for community engagement and fundraising efforts.
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to bike recreation. It must be noted that by moving millage dollars to support bike recreation maintenance and development, other projects, maintenance, and support will not be provided within the parks department. For bike recreation to move forward, it is imperative that additional funding be found to support the recommendations in the report.

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7. The committee also has recommended a more formalized community involvement guideline. The subcommittee determined that a framework, protocols, and structure for volunteer maintenance of bicycle trails and bicycling amenities is needed. Without a dedicated staff person, this work will be handled by GIVE365 and NAP to ensure consistent practices with other park volunteer projects and processes.
- 8.

RESOLVED, that PAC recommends that City Council accept the report and adopt the recommendations as proposed to be used as guidelines for current and future bike recreation discussions.