

Ad-Hoc Bike Recreation Subcommittee Report



December 20, 2022

The mission of this subcommittee is to determine public interest in, and opportunities for enhancing, bike recreation in the City of Ann Arbor. The subcommittee seeks to use information gathered from the public and experts in the bike recreation field to establish bike recreation stewardship, maintenance, and improvement protocols and plans.

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Introduction and Background

Ann Arbor is home to an enthusiastic bicycle recreation community that has a lengthy history of engagement with City staff. Beginning in the 1970s, bicycle recreation and maintenance of bike facilities received great attention and support from the City and the Ann Arbor community. Annual events such as bike expos and festivals consistently drew large crowds, and a full-time designated Bicycle Coordinator oversaw the City's official Bicycle Program. In the 1980s, a robust bike safety program was instituted in Ann Arbor's schools, and a first-of-its kind Bicycle Parking Facilities Study was conducted. Unfortunately, budget cuts at the end of the 1980s led to the elimination of the Bicycle Coordinator position and most of these programs (See Appendix I: Timeline of Bike Recreation Features in Ann Arbor Parks for additional historical details). Since the 1990s, the coordination of bicycle recreation and maintenance of bicycle facilities has fallen to various arms of the Parks and Recreation Services Unit. Citizen cyclists, volunteers, and groups have engaged with many different City staff, agencies, and officials over the years, and there has been a lack of clarity as to how to maintain or create trails for biking in City parks. Recent years have also seen significant community interest in cultivating and expanding bicycle recreation opportunities in Ann Arbor's parks beyond the current trail system.

In order to address these concerns, the Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee for Bike Recreation was established by a resolution from the Parks Advisory Commission in December 2021, and it was set for a term of one year. Members of the subcommittee include staff from the City's Parks and Recreation Services Unit, a PAC representative, and local bicycling advocates. The purpose of the subcommittee is to advise the Parks and Recreation Services Unit and the Parks Advisory Commission on potential improvements to existing bicycle recreation infrastructure, the development of a pump track, signage and accessibility, volunteer opportunities and partnerships related to bicycle recreation, and general bicycle recreation topics. To this end, the subcommittee synthesized the tasks assigned to it by PAC into four goals.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Evaluate Community Preferences around Bike Recreation

To address this goal, the subcommittee solicited feedback from the community through the PROS Plan survey and a Bike Recreation Focus Group. The PROS Plan survey was open to all members of the community, while the focus group was targeted toward local and regional biking advocacy groups.

Goal 2: Provide Guidelines for the Development and Maintenance of a Pump Track

To address this goal, the subcommittee gathered information from a variety of sources, such as best practices manuals and interviews with several professional bike park contractors and municipalities that offer similar amenities. This information was combined with the subcommittee's own recommendations.

Goal 3: Develop Best Management Practices and Policies for Bicycle Recreation Amenities and Activities

To address this goal, the subcommittee compiled a summary of recommendations for developing a risk management plan, which would guide the development and management of trail systems and bike amenities within City parks. The subcommittee also compiled recommendations for the addition of a dedicated staff person to be the point of contact in developing best management practices and the risk management plan.

Goal 4: Provide Guidelines for Community Involvement and Stewardship of Bicycle Recreation Amenities

To address this goal, the subcommittee synthesized community feedback from the City-issued Bandemer Bike Park survey, the PROS Plan survey, subcommittee meeting discussions, interviews with local cycling advocates and volunteers, and GIVE 365-supported volunteer day discussions. More work is needed to develop Guidelines for Community Involvement and Stewardship of Bicycle Recreation Amenities; however, the current, most sustainable course of action is laid out.

Research and Findings

PROS Plan Survey (Goal 1, Part 1)

The PROS Plan survey happened to be taking place at the same time as the subcommittee was developing and researching its goals. The subcommittee took the opportunity to gather additional information about the community's preferences around bike recreation through the broad reach of the survey. The survey was open for two months, from April to June 2022, and over 2,300 survey responses were recorded. Although the survey is not statistically valid, it was open to anyone who wanted to take it, and it provided useful community feedback. It helped reveal and confirm parks with high community usage, as well as identifying underused parks, which is helpful in locating new amenities.

Survey Results

- Initial responses showed a community preference for improving existing parks and amenities.
- Bicycle infrastructure, such as the B2B Trail, is heavily used by the community, and there is strong support for money being spent on improvements.
- 75% of respondents are not aware of recreational bike infrastructure amenities such as the Bandemer and Tuebingen Bike Parks.

Specific comments and suggestions received included:

- Expanding the off-road trail network, making connections between parks and green spaces, and creating longer continuous runs of trails.

- Improving the existing mountain biking trails in the parks, as well as creating new trail systems.
- Adding a bike pump track to the park system.
- Enhancing the bicycle transportation network, such as by widening the B2B Trail in some sections, adding new segments to the B2B Trail, and improving bike lanes.

Bike Recreation Focus Group (Goal 1, Part 2)

The Bike Recreation Focus Group meeting was held on the evening of August 17th, 2022. Many members from the biking community were invited to attend, including representatives from the following groups :

- Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative
- Washtenaw County Bicycling and Walking Coalition
- Bicycle Alliance of Washtenaw
- Ann Arbor Bicycle Touring Society
- Ann Arbor Velo Club
- Potawatomi Chapter of the International Mountain Biking Association
- Bike Recreation Task Force members
- Washtenaw County Border-to-Border Trail Staff
- City Transportation staff
- Park Advisory Commission
- Common Cycle

The group was asked to think about the following questions:

- What should Parks and Recreation focus on achieving over the next five years? What one thing is most important for Parks to accomplish related to biking and bike infrastructure?
- Are there amenities or programs that Parks should consider adding to ensure we have a comprehensive park system for bike recreation?
- What are the highest priorities for bicycling infrastructure connections? Are there important linkages that haven't been identified?
- What is the greatest strength of biking in Ann Arbor's parks? How can we build on that going forward?

Focus Group Findings and Suggestions

Suggestions from the focus group fell into several broad categories.

- **Connectivity and Safety:** Improve connections between parks, areas of interest, and neighborhoods. Parks and Recreation can help make these connections in coordination with other City units. Non-

motorized connections that are safe and easy to navigate should drastically cut down on vehicular use. Improvements could include formalizing the Ann Arbor Local Loop, providing consistent wayfinding signage, and installing bike parking and bike repair stations.

- **Pump Track:** Design and construct a bike pump track that would be suitable for all levels of skill. This would add excitement into the community, providing a new recreational activity that we don't currently have in the area.
- **Mountain Bike Trails:** Be intentional with designing, constructing, and maintaining mountain biking trails. The more intentional the trail is, the more awareness and excitement it brings. Trail improvements and enhancements (such as new features including berms, jumps, bridges, etc.) are needed. Develop a set of trail maintenance protocols, so that staff and volunteers know what needs to be done, who is able to participate, and how to provide consistent, sustainable work.
- **Staffing and Volunteers:** Develop a volunteer trail maintenance program or explore hiring a dedicated staff member to maintain trails, coordinate volunteer efforts, and be a point of contact within the City for bike recreation concerns, questions, and information sharing.
- **Outreach:** Increase public awareness with outreach, such as workshops, community events, or school involvement. With more exposure to biking, people will feel more comfortable with the idea of bike recreation. Biking outreach is especially important for lower income families, as they do not have the resources to jump into trail riding and bike recreation, and they may have some preconceived notions about the safety level of these activities.
- **Amenities:** Increase bicycle infrastructure and amenities so that biking becomes more accessible to the community. Examples include starting or returning to a bike share program, providing bike repair stations and parking, and hosting bike repair and maintenance workshops.
- **Advocacy:** Continue working with local advocacy groups to promote recreational biking opportunities. There is a passion for biking within the community. Partnering with these groups can help push these opportunities further.

Criteria for Pump Track Location and Design (Goal 2)

Over the course of several months, subcommittee members spoke with nine professionals from around the country who oversee the operations and/or the construction of bike parks and amenities. Through these conversations, as well as research into best management practices for building bike parks, the subcommittee determined a list of needs and wants for pump track location and a set of criteria for pump track design. See Appendix II for a list of existing exemplary bike park examples and Appendix III for a list of potential bike park contractors.

Location Criteria – Needs

- 30,000 square feet available (this number is based on the footprint of the Skatepark).
- Low impact, or positive impact on existing environmental communities.
- Pre-existing parking, or land available to create 100 parking spaces, to accommodate large events. This is also similar in size to the Skatepark. A small lot with room for expansion could be considered, as well as a location with access to a satellite lot.

Location Criteria – Wants

- Close proximity to public transit.
- ADA-accessible location, or the potential to make the location ADA-accessible.
- Connection to non-motorized transportation routes and/or off-road trail networks.
- Current underutilization, to limit competition for space with other amenities.
- Close proximity to low-income housing.
- Available utility infrastructure, or the potential to add utility infrastructure.
- Shade trees for seating opportunities.

Track Design

- Largely dependent on the site, important factors to consider are lot size, topography, and orientation.
- Track length of approximately 200-400 meters (depending on space).
- Surface should be Pump Track Asphalt Mix for northern climates.
- Approximately 0.5-1.5 seconds of ride time between obstacles.
- Include skills development progressions (intentional design of features for riders of all skill levels).

Other Amenities to Consider

- Lighting, which will allow the track to be used longer in the fall and winter months.
- Grandstand seating, while not necessary, would allow optimal seating for events. At minimum, a location should be identified where additional temporary seating may be set up.
- A bike repair station would be beneficial.
- Paved waiting areas, which would prevent erosion or compaction of the areas surrounding the track.
- An information kiosk, which would be used to display events, rules, and other pertinent information.
- Activity or play areas for families with children who do not ride or are unable to ride.

Next Steps

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 goals of the subcommittee should include:

- **Community Engagement:** Develop a community outreach strategy around the pump track.
- **Potential Partnerships:** Identify organizations and groups who would be interested in the construction of a pump track.

- **Funding:** Identify funding opportunities to assist with the development and construction of a pump track.
- **Pump Track Location:** Further develop location criteria needs and wants to generate a scoring matrix, identifying potential pump track locations.
- **Pump Track Design:** Begin generating conceptual pump track design ideas that can be used for community engagement and fundraising efforts.

Risk Management (Goal 3, Part 1)

In order to develop best management practices for bike recreation, it's important to understand the risks involved in this type of recreation. By having a risk management plan outlined, City staff can confidently encourage and support bike recreation interests, amenities, and activities. Therefore, the subcommittee began by looking at risk management, a systemized approach to incorporating safety into the trail riding experience. Two industry-standard trail-related risk management goals are to manage the risks on trails and bike recreation elements and to minimize the losses from lawsuits. We defined our risk management objectives as:

- Design and build trails and bike amenities appropriately.
- Manage and maintain trails consistently and responsibly.
- Establish an understanding of liability and governmental immunity (See Appendix IV for specific liability information).

Our specific recommendations to address these objectives are:

1. **Identify a risk management point person.** This person would be responsible for making sure the risk management program is developed, implemented, and documented. Ideally, this would be a Parks staff member who would coordinate and collaborate with bicycle recreation interest groups, volunteers, and the public. They would also participate or engage with the Vision Zero Subcommittee alongside Ann Arbor Transportation. This person would serve as a trail professional who would stay up on current trends and professional standards, gather resources from existing associations and industry experts, and attend trail related workshops to ensure best practices.
2. **Write a philosophy statement.** An example of a philosophy statement could be something such as, "The inherent risks in bicycle recreation activities are in large part what makes them fun and exciting. It is not possible, or desirable, to eliminate all risk from a recreation experience as risk is a fundamental part of play, essential to human growth, health, and wellness. Recognizing the inherent risks in bicycle recreation activities that occur in unsupervised park and natural areas, the Ann Arbor Parks and Recreation Services Unit aims to manage risk through responsible and proactive measures as outlined in our bicycle recreation risk management plan."
3. **Inventory the existing trail system.** A full inventory of trails would include creating a comprehensive list of trails available within the Ann Arbor Parks system, with short description about each trail

(including length, terrain, difficulty, etc.), and notations of which trails are best for biking and connecting to longer rides. It should also identify connection challenges, such as crossing private property or railroads, and it should keep in mind the need to create a larger connected loop. Unreasonable hazards along the trail should be identified so they can be eliminated, or warning signs posted. Finally, the inventory should assign a trail difficulty rating in line with best practices.

4. **Establish a trail design and construction policy.** In order to accomplish this goal, the point staff person could attend workshops to develop trail design and construction guidelines and/or they may consult with industry experts to assist. This design policy should identify and establish ADA and accessibility goals for trails.
5. **Develop an effective signage system.** This would involve developing consistent, simple, and clean signage templates relating to bicycle trails throughout the park system. These could take the form of trail map boards, difficulty markers, and/or trail rules, etiquette, regulations, policies, and recommendations for responsible riding. The bicycle courses should have a separate set of comprehensive rules that are approved by the legal department.
6. **Develop an emergency plan.** Because of the increased risks involved in off-road bicycle recreation, Bandemer and Tuebingen Bike Parks should have specific emergency action plans in the event of an accident or injury. The trail system as a whole should also have an emergency action plan.
7. **Establish a trail inspection and maintenance policy.** In order to accomplish this goal, best practices in the industry need to be researched and outlined. This policy should provide guidelines for community involvement and volunteer stewardship of bicycle recreation amenities and should include a framework, protocols, and structure for volunteer maintenance. Guidelines for hosting special events would also be essential.
8. **Maintain the trail system consistent with the maintenance policy.** This includes, but is not limited to, developing a long-term trail maintenance plan and creating a maintenance recordkeeping system.

Bicycle Recreation-Focused Staffing (Goal 3, Part 2)

Currently, there are no dedicated staff within Parks and Recreation who are tasked to manage trails or bicycle recreation interests. With 75 miles of paths and trails within Ann Arbor's parks (not including sidewalks), the capacity for responding to bicycle recreation concerns is spread among three operations within Parks and Recreation. None of these operations are equipped to fully address the broad range of needs that may arise.

1. **Natural Area Preservation:** As the majority of mountain biking trails are located in natural areas, NAP has always had a hand in trail maintenance. NAP's mission is to protect and restore Ann Arbor's natural areas and to foster an environmental ethic within the community. While bicycle recreation does not conflict with this mission, its needs are outside of NAP's focus and expertise.

2. **GIVE 365, volunteer and outreach:** GIVE has periodically hosted volunteer workdays at Bandemer Bike Park over the years, yet they have not always known what to do to improve it. Most recently, GIVE formed a partnership with dedicated volunteers who had submitted a special park project for their ideas and wants at Bandemer and Tubingen Bike Parks. GIVE has also responded to requests for better bicycle recreation information to be available online.
3. **Park Operations:** Many of the A2 Fix It requests regarding trail maintenance are sent to Park Operations. When the trails are in natural areas, those service requests are forwarded to NAP. However, there are many trails in non-natural areas, so there is currently a lack of clarity as to who is responsible for addressing these needs and requests. The only trail maintenance that is currently performed by Parks Operations is reactive, that is, to fix a specific problem.

To fully address Goal 3, the subcommittee recommends the addition of an FTE staff member. This staff member would be the point person for bicycle recreation issues throughout the city, including developing the detailed risk management plan for bicycling related amenities. There are many benefits to hiring such a staff member, including:

- Adding trail maintenance expertise to Parks' collective knowledge (specifically geared toward recreational use of trails).
- The development and execution of a risk management plan.
- Adding training in current industry trends, best practices, and regional resources to Parks' collective knowledge.
- The development of a proactive trail maintenance plan, as no long-term vision, preventative maintenance plan, or strategy currently exists.
- Communication of clear guidelines for how to train, facilitate, and incorporate volunteer passion for sustainable trail maintenance.
- Additional departmental capacity to advocate for trail connectivity, best practices, and access/inclusion goals.
- Additional capacity to explore funding opportunities, such as grants or other funding sources that are available for trail development.

Subcommittee members reached out to many other organizations to learn about potential staffing models and management of bicycle recreation. The organizations contacted included the Michigan Recreation and Park Association's trails committee, the Michigan DNR, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks, Washtenaw County Parks, and Ann Arbor Transportation. Through this research, the subcommittee discovered that there are many trail systems that are regional with non-profit associations or multi-town/county collaborations participating in their trail management. Some of these are similar to the Washtenaw County Border-to-Border Trail in that they focus on a corridor. See Appendix V for a list of these organizations.

Conversations also revealed that there are two aspects to consider when exploring staffing positions that relate to trail management:

- **Trail planning and connectivity.** This may include land acquisition, coordination with other entities, and high-level planning that has a vision for the trail system.
- **Maintenance.** Day-to-day maintenance and management of the trails' conditions that may be done by staff or volunteers. These tasks can also be integrated into the planning and vision for the overall trail system.

While Parks has pieces of these embedded in other staff roles and responsibilities, there is no cohesive, intentional vision for bicycle recreation and trail connectivity. A staff person dedicated to overseeing bicycle recreation needs would help bridge these gaps. The subcommittee has begun drafting a job description for such a position, and example job descriptions from similar organizations may be found in Appendix VI.

Current budget does not specify or outline funding for trail maintenance or related staff time. Maintenance is currently managed within the various millage-funded general maintenance/operations budgets within NAP, Park Operations, and/or GIVE 365.

Parks staff should set up accounts to better track spending related to the bicycle recreation. This information would help determine budget needs for specific projects. It must be noted that by moving millage dollars to support bicycle recreation maintenance and development, other projects, maintenance and support will not be provided within the Parks department. For bicycle recreation to move forward, it is imperative that additional funding be found to support the recommendations in this report. Funding options could include, but are not limited to, inclusion in future or second parks millage, sponsorships, grants and private funding.

Partnerships between City departments and external organizations could also help to reduce costs and provide consistency in wayfinding signage. For example, developing signage in tandem with the City's Vision Zero transportation plan might allow costs to be shared among departments and reduce the total cost of signage overall. A partnership with Washtenaw County might provide additional opportunities for cost sharing and would help to ensure that all wayfinding signage is consistent throughout the region.

A more coordinated approach is desired by all. With better structure, coordination, and a vision, it is possible that funding, volunteers and community support could be leveraged to maximize community impact.

Community Involvement Guidelines (Goal 4)

The biking community is very active and interested in helping to support the maintenance of bicycle amenities in Ann Arbor. Therefore, the subcommittee determined that a framework, protocols, and structure for volunteer maintenance of bicycle trails and bicycling amenities is needed. A trail inspection and maintenance policy for staff and volunteers should also be developed, and avenues for community input on bicycle recreation goals and issues should be identified moving forward. The course of action for reaching these objectives includes:

- Researching and developing protocols, structure, and guidelines for volunteer maintenance.
- Establishing instructions, standards, approval steps, and expectations for volunteers.

- Developing standards and protocols for proposing new recreation features (such as jumps, berms, bridges, and trail obstacles).
- Developing simple protocols for volunteers to report, record, and highlight volunteer hours, efforts, and results.

The subcommittee synthesized community feedback from the City-issued Bandemer Bike Park survey, the PROS Plan survey, subcommittee meeting discussions, interviews with local cycling advocates and volunteers, and GIVE 365-supported volunteer day discussions. This synthesis resulted in the above course of action to develop guidelines for community involvement and stewardship of bicycle recreation amenities.

The most sustainable course of action for developing these guidelines would involve bicycle recreation-focused staff (as discussed in Goal 3). Until that staff position is realized, the subcommittee suggests the following course of action:

- Parks staff, volunteers, and citizens will report bicycle trail and bicycle parks maintenance needs to the A2 Fix It app, the A2 Fix It web page, or by calling Customer Service at 734-794-6320. These three reporting methods will be posted on all bicycle-recreation-pertinent Ann Arbor Parks information kiosks. Additional signage may be posted on stakes in pertinent locations.
- GIVE 365 and NAP volunteers may repair damage to existing off-road bicycle trails and bicycle parks as needed, provided they obtain permission from GIVE 365 and/or NAP staff in advance. Volunteers may contact GIVE 365 staff (734-794-6445, volunteer@a2gov.org) and/or NAP staff (734-794-6627, nap@a2gov.org) to propose projects and request use of GIVE 365 & NAP tools and equipment; staff may approve or deny proposals and requests. Volunteers must set up caution signage, cones, flags or tape, OR visibly and verbally caution trail users to any hazards related to repairs until completed. Volunteers may also perform these tasks as part of official workdays led by GIVE 365 or NAP staff.
- GIVE 365 and NAP volunteers may conduct maintenance on existing off-road bicycle trails and bicycle parks as needed, including removing debris, trimming growth blocking or overlapping trails and bicycle parks features, removing invasive plants, collecting litter, and adding dirt/earth to reinforce existing dirt/earth structures. Volunteers must set up caution signage, cones, flags or tape, OR visibly and verbally caution trail users to any hazards related to repairs until completed. Volunteers may also perform these tasks as part of official workdays led by GIVE 365 or NAP staff.
- GIVE 365 and NAP staff, and other City staff deemed pertinent, will collaborate with volunteers on the maintenance of off-road bicycle trails on City land, including Bandemer Bike Park, Tuebingen Bike Park, Olson Park, and bicycle trails along the Ann Arbor Local Loop.
- GIVE 365 staff and volunteers will collaborate with the City's Park Planner, and other City staff deemed pertinent, on the development of and enhancements to off-road bicycle trails and bicycle parks on City land.

- Staff and volunteers will submit a development request to GIVE 365 using an updated form with fields pertinent to bicycle recreation, or using an existing version of the GIVE 365/Adopt-a-Park park development request form.
 - When needed, GIVE 365 staff will confer with the City’s Park Planner about the request.
 - GIVE 365 staff will respond to requestors within ten (10) business days or fourteen (14) total days of the submission to either approve the request, deny the request, or suggest edits, amendments, or alternate action steps.
 - When pertinent, GIVE 365 staff and/or the City’s Park Planner may contract development work from a professional trail builder or bicycle park contractor. When pertinent, contractors will bid the job. GIVE 365 staff, the City’s Park Planner, and the requestor will discuss the bids and make a selection.
 - When additional funding is required beyond existing budgets, volunteers may donate, fundraise, and/or seek out grant funding for approved development and enhancement projects (approved requests). In these instances, an existing account will be designated, or a new account will be established to store these funds until used to compensate applicable contractors.
- GIVE 365 and NAP staff, along with volunteers, may meet to edit, amend, or append these Guidelines for Community Involvement and Stewardship of bicycle recreation amenities as needed.

Conclusion

Bike recreation has strong support in the City of Ann Arbor and there is a desire for better infrastructure and amenities throughout the city. In December 2021, the Parks Advisory Commission set forth several objectives to the Ad-Hoc Bike Recreation Subcommittee in order to address some of the community concerns in relation to bike recreation infrastructure. The committee formed those objectives into four goals, which were addressed in several ways. Goals 1 and 2 were addressed using the PROS Plan survey results, solicitation of additional feedback from the community, and interviews with professionals in the business of building and maintaining pump tracks. The subcommittee recommends the next course of action is to take the preliminary findings described in this report and establish a Bike Pump Track Subcommittee to further research and develop plans for this potential new amenity in Ann Arbor.

For Goals 3 and 4, the subcommittee conducted extensive research and interviews with other bike recreation professionals in order to develop a framework and identify important considerations for addressing best management practices, risk management, and community involvement in bike recreation facilities. However,

additional funding is needed to be able to fully develop and realize these processes and procedures. The effort of a dedicated and focused bike recreation staff member would ensure robust and thorough guiding documents are produced. Until such a time that a staff person can be hired, Parks staff should set up accounts to better track spending related to bike recreation. Additional funding would also ensure efficient maintenance of current bike recreation facilities.

It is important to note that 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.

Appendices

Appendix I: Timeline of Bicycle Recreation Features in Ann Arbor Parks

1970s

- Worsening traffic congestion and unreliable public transportation in Ann Arbor leads to the creation of the Ann Arbor Bicycle Program.
- A group of citizens concerned about bicycle safety form the Ann Arbor Bicycle League.
- The Ann Arbor Velo Club is founded to “develop southeast Michigan's cycling community with weekly training rides, coaching, and races.”
- The Potawatomi Mountain Biking Association (Poto MBA) is founded with the mission “to maintain and develop mountain biking trails, promote and advocate for the sport of mountain biking and build the mountain biking community in Washtenaw, Lenawee, and Livingston counties.”
- The Ann Arbor Bicycle Path Study (1972) recommends the establishment of a network of bicycle routes throughout the city, with particular emphasis on access to schools and parks. It also recommends the establishment of a committee of bicyclists and city staff.
- The Bicycle Coordinating Committee is established by a resolution of City Council (November 20, 1972).
- A 1973 Bond Issue provided funding for bicycle routes, paths, and designated lanes, which were built between 1974-1978.
- The city hires a Bicycle Coordinator to supervise the Bicycle Program, which is housed under Parks (1979).
- The Bicycle Coordinator begins holding bicycle safety presentations in schools.
- Trails are built.

1980s-1990s

- More trails are built, improved, and maintained.
- A vert halfpipe ramp is built in Veterans Memorial Park for the bicyclists and skateboarders.
- Volunteers build trails and dirt jumps at Tuebingen Park.
- The first annual Bicycle Expo is held as an exposition of bicycle shops and organizations, along with bicycle workshops and tours (1980).
- The Bicycle Coordinator completes the first Bicycle Parking Facilities Study in the country (1980).
- The first Ann Arbor Festival of Cycling is held, sponsored by the Ann Arbor Velo Club (1988).
- An annual bicycle facility inspection and maintenance program is implemented, then cut (1988-1989).
- The Bicycle Coordinator’s responsibilities are reduced from full-time focus on bicycle recreation, adding responsibilities at other Parks facilities.
- The Border 2 Border Trail is conceived.
- The Bicycle Coordinator position is cut (early 1990s).

- The Bicycle Coordinating Committee meets and develops the Ann Arbor Bicycle Master Plan (1987-1992)

2001

- The Washtenaw Bicycling and Walking Coalition (WBWC) is founded to “to make Washtenaw County a national leader in bicycling & walking by improving facilities, policies, & community support through advocacy & education.”
- Olson Park mountain bicycle trails are approved by the City of Ann Arbor to be built, with the eventual partnership of the Poto MBA. Volunteer crews lay out and build the trail network.
- Near this time, trails are built at Kuebler Langford and Barton Nature Areas.

2005

- Ann Arbor Skatepark advocates meet with the City of Ann Arbor to discuss developing a skatepark.

2007

- Poto MBA members help build the Bluffs Nature Area cycling trail.
- Poto MBA members begin to get involved in volunteer mountain bicycle advocacy--clearing logs, mowing, trimming, weed whipping, and communicating with the city.

2008

- The City of Ann Arbor tears down the dirt jumps at Bandemer Park, with the promise to begin construction of the Bandemer Bike Park immediately, however, no development occurs.
- Bicyclists turn their focus on the remaining dirt jumps at Tuebingen Park and begin to repair, restore, maintain, and build new dirt jumps.
- The Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission passes a resolution recommending that City Council approve the proposed location of a skatepark at Veterans Memorial Park (May 20, 2008).
- City staff note the development of bicycle jumps at Tuebingen Park and begin negotiations with bicyclists and bicycling advocates about following through with the Bandemer Bike Park in early 2009.

2009

- The A2 Skatepark Action Committee enters an agreement with the City of Ann Arbor (January 5, 2009).
- Volunteers secure sources of donated dirt from area construction companies/sites. City staff transport dirt to the Bandemer Bike Park site. A team of volunteers creates the Bandemer Bike Park from the dirt piles with City permission in the spring.

2009 through 2021

- A skilled volunteer is given special permission to move dirt, help repair, maintain, and develop dirt jumps and bicycle park features at the Bandemer Bike Park with his skid steer. Dozens of volunteers assist with shovels.
- Extensive volunteer effort goes into maintenance and upkeep, largely due to erosion.
- The Poto MBA is involved with re-routes in local parks, Barton Nature Area, the Bluffs and Leslie Park to name a few.

2010

- Common Cycle is founded through a Kickstarter campaign, in response to a lack of bicycle services in town. They are “a community-based organization empowering Ann Arbor to ride bicycles by providing access to education, workspace, and resources.”

2011

- The PROS Plan mentions the following: “Passive recreation facilities, such as bicycle trails, should include improved signage/wayfinding and interpretive displays...”; “Need a comprehensive plan for bicycles in parks...”; “Continue to seek ways to connect parks through acquisition of parcels to serve as linkages for use as bicycle and pedestrian paths”; “Construct a new park linkage, such as a route for bicycles and pedestrians that...connects parks”

2014

- Volunteers meet with city parks staff to get approval for wooden/metal launch ramps at the Bandemer Bike Park. The city initially approves and supports the proposal, but the project is held up (and not executed to date in 2022). More dirt is brought to the Bandemer Bike Park parking lot. The dirt is moved by the volunteer using his skid steer, and he and repairs/restores the Bike Park.

2015

- There are approximately 250 members of the Poto MBA. Their new leader begins volunteering his time, equipment, and resources to mow and maintain many of the city’s mountain bicycle trails along the Ann Arbor Local Loop.
- Trail bridges are added at creek and ditch crossings in parks along the Ann Arbor Local Loop.

2016

- The Bicycle Alliance of Washtenaw is founded with the mission “to foster better bicycling opportunities and outcomes in and around the greater Washtenaw area by sharing the collective resources and knowledge of area organizations and enthusiasts.”

2017

- Common Cycle searches for city-owned/managed physical space where they could offer free services to the community.

- Responsibility for the Ann Arbor Bicycle Summit is transferred to the Bicycle Alliance. The annual summit convenes area enthusiasts and advocates to build consensus around the cycling community's wants, needs, and existing circumstances--to learn and provide feedback.

2019

- A dedicated volunteer begins repairing and maintaining the Bandemer Bike Park and Tuebingen Bike Park with the help of adult and youth volunteers.
- Common Cycle was given a Sustaining Ann Arbor Together Grant.

2020

- Interest in cycling grows exponentially nationwide, due in large part to the global COVID pandemic.
- Volunteers meet with Ann Arbor Parks and Rec staff about the possibility of developing bicycle recreation features on undeveloped park land. Volunteer maintenance and repairs continue at Tuebingen and Bandemer Bike Parks.
- Poto MBA membership triples in size since 2015 from about 250 members to over 700.

Spring, 2021

- Natural Area Preservation staff clear fallen trees blocking trails at Tuebingen.
- Volunteers repair and restore existing trails and features at Tuebingen Bike Park.
- Volunteers connect with GIVE 365 and Adopt-A-Park about bringing in dirt to repair and improve Bandemer Bike Park.
- Several community members reach out to Ann Arbor Parks and Rec staff requesting development of an asphalt pump track, and a collaboration between interested organizations begins.
- Dirt with rock is purchased from Washtenaw Sand and Gravel for maintenance of Bandemer Bike Park.
- Volunteers meet with City staff at Bandemer Bike Park to discuss next steps for repair, maintenance, and development. The team brainstorms ideas and draws up designs for proposed improvements to the Bandemer Bike Park.
- Formal proposals for restoration and improvement of the Bike Parks, as well as development of an asphalt pump track, are submitted to the City.

Summer, 2021

- The city purchases and moves 60+ cubic yards of rock/soil/clay mix to Bandemer Bike Park. A large team of volunteers place and shape the dirt, with the assistance of the skid steer.
- A city-provided tool shed is constructed on site by volunteers and stocked with new city-provided tools.
- The city provides compost, recycling, and garbage cans for Bandemer Bike Park.

- Volunteers purchase treated lumber to build trailhead information kiosks at Bandemer and Tuebingen.
- Ann Arbor Bike Parks hosts a free Jump Clinic with 30+ participants.
- Ann Arbor Bike Parks volunteer building and restoration day includes 15-20 participants.
- 200+ cubic yards of clay and rock are moved into Bandemer Bike Park by a city-hired skid steer operator. Volunteers spread the clay and rock with shovels and wheelbarrows.
- Local advocate from the Ann Arbor Bicycle Recreation Advocacy Team meets with and interviews bicycle park contractors and parks leaders in municipalities across the US.
- The city constructs a treated-wood bicycle park information kiosk at Bandemer and Tuebingen Parks.

Fall/Winter, 2021

- The Ann Arbor Bicycle Recreation Advocacy Team meets with city staff in preparation for the Parks Advisory Commission meeting.
- The Ann Arbor Bicycle Recreation Advocacy Team presents to the Parks Advisory Commission, proposing:
 - Construction of an asphalt pump track and skills area.
 - Continued city staff support with implementation of efficient, functional protocols for future maintenance and development across the city parks system.
 - Implementation of city-wide wayfinding (including trail maps and signs at trail sites and online).
- The Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee for Bicycle Recreation is formed by a resolution of PAC on December 14, 2021.

Winter/Spring, 2022

- Official signage with rules and information are posted at Bandemer and Tuebingen Bike Parks.
- The Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee for Bicycle Recreation begins meeting.

Summer, 2022

- Volunteer build days are led at Bandemer and Tuebingen Bike Parks with strong turnout.
- The city provides another load of dirt, but not machinery. Volunteers move dirt with shovels and wheelbarrows.
- A tool shed is built and installed at Tuebingen Bike Park.
- Skills clinics are led at Bandemer and Tuebingen Bike Parks with strong turnout.
- The Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee for Bicycle Recreation continues to meet monthly to develop surveys, analyze data, volunteer, plan, and strategize.
- City staff and Bike Park volunteers work toward the creation of mapping and wayfinding at Tuebingen.

Fall, 2022

- The Poto MBA continues to maintain Olson Park’s trails, primarily mowing and trimming back invasive growth. They also maintain many of the other connecting trails in the unofficial Ann Arbor Local Loop.
- An array of volunteers continue to maintain and support the Bandemer Bike Park, Tuebingen Bike Park, and the Ann Arbor Local Loop.
- The Ad-Hoc Sub-Committee for Bicycle Recreation submits its final report to PAC (December 13, 2022).

Appendix II: Exemplary Bicycle Parks and Pump Tracks

Cleveland Cliffs Bike Park & Pump Track, Cleveland, Ohio

<https://www.clevelandmetroparks.com/parks/visit/parks/ohio-erie-canal-reservation/cleveland-cliffs-bike-park>

Riveter Bike Park, North Carolina

<https://youtu.be/8NTDbz7IPLI>

Powell River Bike Park, British Columbia

<http://www.alpinebikeparks.com/project/powell-river-bike-park>

<https://vimeo.com/144789376>

Baker Creek Preserve Bike Park, Knoxville, TN

<https://youtu.be/EuGI0M4PSfk> ; <https://outdoorknoxville.com/places/parks/south/baker-creek-preserve/>

Boise Bike Park, Boise, Idaho

https://youtu.be/ZFye5a_R088 ; <https://www.cityofboise.org/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks/ja-and-kathryn-albertson-family-foundation-bike-park/>

Jordie Lunn Bike Park, British Columbia

<https://www.jordielunbikepark.com/>

St Charles County Pump Track

<https://youtu.be/lFa9aJlO27o> (See line of step-ups at about 0:40-1:00)

Railyard Bike Park, Arkansas

<https://youtu.be/szdMbWMtRNQ>

Ruby Hill Bike Park Denver, Colorado

<https://youtu.be/hQkehySLK9c>

Lapoma Bike Park, Spain

<https://youtu.be/btXDcWGOmtM> ; <https://youtu.be/2e0pHcce7ng>

Gorge Road Bike Jump Park, New Zealand

<https://youtu.be/HosMlu9QA9w> (See berms at 1:20, 3:20, 3:40); <https://youtu.be/hhrIo-VT6JE>

Ray's Bike Park, Cleveland, Ohio

<https://youtu.be/uqCioZvswx4>

Zurich Pump Track, Switzerland

<https://youtu.be/n3xCFNOS67w> (Go to 10:00)

Mendrisio Pump Track, Switzerland
<https://youtu.be/n3xCFNOS67w> (Go to 7:55)

Park City Bike Park, Park City, Utah
<https://youtu.be/AgWI00GHTA0>
<https://youtu.be/vtDFL6sWm94>

Valmont Bike Park, Boulder, Colorado
<https://youtu.be/paM8OTkYTlc>

Skyline Bike Park New Zealand
<https://youtu.be/2e0pHcce7ng>

Rudolph Bike Park, Wood County, Ohio
https://youtu.be/L36HBqY_Brl
<https://www.wcparks.org/parks/rudolph-bike-park/>

Woodward West Bike Park
https://youtu.be/XNSf_eSFj_M
<https://youtu.be/Fg8C2tpRKic>

Skypark Bike Park California
https://youtu.be/DK5kx-w_WF8

Kicking Horse Bike Park, British Columbia
<https://youtu.be/c0Sz6PFXmhw> (See ladder bridges and wood berms after 5:00)

Pump Track France
<https://youtu.be/eGq8ucEZoBw>

Velosolutions Pump Tracks
<https://youtu.be/hVFxEM5nHh8>

Velo Solutions Pump Track at Anthem Park Broomfield Colorado
<https://youtu.be/SpbxpVrjff0>

10 Pump Tracks in One Day
<https://youtu.be/qpfbjMKsm04>

Little Switzerland Bike Park Slinger, Wisconsin
<https://youtu.be/onmjpgYyJVE>

Appendix III: Potential Bike Park and Pump Track Contractors

Jump Doctors – Colorado

<https://jumpdoctor.com/>

Alpine Bike Parks – California

<https://www.alpinebikeparks.com/>

McGill Trail Fabricators – Colorado

<http://www.mcgilltrailfabrication.com/>

PumpTrax USA – Ohio

<https://www.pumptraxusa.com/>

DirtSculpt – Pennsylvania

<https://dirtsculpt.com/>

American Ramp Company – Based in Missouri, works with Velosolutions for pump tracks

<https://americanrampcompany.com/>

Velosolutions – Based in Europe, working globally

<https://velosolutions.com/>

Appendix IV: Governmental Tort Liability Act

From Michigan Bicycle Law:

As a general rule, when a person is injured due to the negligent, wrongful, or unlawful conduct of a government entity or one (1) of its employees, the law prevents a lawsuit which attempts to hold the government entity accountable for the injury. This concept is typically known as “sovereign immunity” or “governmental immunity,” and is contained in the Government Tort Liability Act, MCL 691.1401 et seq. However, the Government Tort Liability Act contains three (3) exceptions to governmental immunity, which include: (1) claims for defective highways; (2) defective public buildings; and (3) negligently driven government motor vehicles. Accordingly, if a cyclist is injured due to a government agency’s failure to adequately maintain a roadway or sidewalk, they may have a cause of action, provided the facts and circumstances of their injury fit within the highway exception to Michigan’s Governmental Immunity Act.

<https://michiganbicyclelaw.com/liability-claims-bicycle-accident-in-michigan/>

This language could be summarized and posted on rule signs as:

“The City of Ann Arbor is immune from liability for death, injuries, or damages associated with the voluntary use of this bike park.”

Appendix V: Regional Trail Organizations

Michigan Air Line Trail

<http://www.miairlinetrail.com/>

Polly Ann Trail

<http://www.pollyantrailway.org/>

Clinton River Trail

<http://www.clintonrivertrail.org/>

Paint Creek Trail

<http://paintcreektrail.org/wordpress/>

North Country Trail

<https://northcountrytrail.org>

Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy Trails

<https://www.gtrlc.org/volunteer/trail-building/>

Oakland County Trails and Pathways

<https://www.oakgov.com/advantageoakland/planning/Pages/trails-pathways.aspx>

Downriver Linked Greenways

<https://downrivertrails.org/>

West Bloomfield Trail

<https://www.wbparks.org/west-bloomfield-trail.html>

Appendix VI: Example Job Descriptions

Trailway Program Coordinator

Kalamazoo County Government

Kalamazoo, MI

Part-time

Job highlights

Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in parks & recreation management, business or public administration, or related field, or military equivalency, with two years progressive parks management experience, or any comparable combination of experience, education, or training
- Must have strong verbal and written communications and organizational skills and experience with fundraising and event programming & marketing
- Also, must have a valid Michigan driver's license and reliable transportation

Responsibilities

- Supervise staff and operations of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail and programs to promote the trail way system's safe use and continued development
- Develop and maintain stakeholder and other networking contacts to identify community recreation habits and needs
- Research industry trends and emerging collaborative opportunities; develop a marketing plan and promotional events to increase local/regional recognition and usage of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail
- Lead strategic planning for continued maintenance and development of the trail way system, including recruitment and coordination of trail way program volunteers; coordinate fundraising efforts and other trail fund development
- Write press releases and advertisements copy; generate and produce print, broadcast, electronic, or other media advertising for the trail way system
- Monitor advertising and marketing budget; place media buys and order promotional giveaway items
- Review trail way usage and promotional event participation information; generate statistical and other reports to project and improve the effectiveness of operation and marketing efforts
- Oversee trail maintenance and repair projects; complete monthly trail safety inspections and coordinate contracted services to repair and maintain the trail

Benefits

- Starting Salary: K-07 (A) \$22.13/hr

Job description

Parks & Expo Center Starting Salary: K-07 (A) \$22.13/hr

Part-Time, 20 hours a week, hours vary

Posting: 094-22

Date Posted: 07/07/2022

Deadline: Until filled

Summary: Supervise staff and operations of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail and programs to promote the trail way system's safe use and continued development. Responsibilities:

- Supervise Kalamazoo River Valley Trail program staff and operations.
- Develop and maintain stakeholder and other networking contacts to identify community recreation habits and needs. Research industry trends and emerging collaborative opportunities; develop a marketing plan and promotional events to increase local/regional recognition and usage of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail.
- Lead strategic planning for continued maintenance and development of the trail way system, including recruitment and coordination of trail way program volunteers; coordinate fundraising efforts and other trail fund development.
- Write press releases and advertisements copy; generate and produce print, broadcast, electronic, or other media advertising for the trail way system.
- Monitor advertising and marketing budget; place media buys and order promotional giveaway items.
- Review trail way usage and promotional event participation information; generate statistical and other reports to project and improve the effectiveness of operation and marketing efforts.
- Oversee trail maintenance and repair projects; complete monthly trail safety inspections and coordinate contracted services to repair and maintain the trail.

Qualifications: Education: Bachelor's degree in parks & recreation management, business or public administration, or related field, or military equivalency, with two years progressive parks management experience, or any comparable combination of experience, education, or training.

Experience: Must have strong verbal and written communications and organizational skills and experience with fundraising and event programming & marketing. Also, must have a valid Michigan driver's license and reliable transportation

Trails Coordinator Job Description

San Diego Mountain Biking Association

Posting 6/29/2018 -7/13/2018

(non exempt, part-time hourly position)

San Diego Mountain Biking Association (SDMBA) is seeking a passionate, highly motivated mountain biking and trail enthusiast for SDMBA's part-time Trails Coordinator position. The position reports directly to the SDMBA Executive Committee with an initial time commitment of 20 hours per week. The desire is to make this full-time once fully established and adequately funded. The position is based in San Diego County, and requires extensive travel throughout San Diego County with several annual trips beyond the county.

The position is funded through donations and grants, therefore development is an essential part of the position. The Trails Coordinator will be a key representative for SDMBA and must positively represent the organization to the community—with stakeholders, agencies, and funding entities, and at public events. All candidates must have a serious interest in mountain biking and trail development. Candidate must be enthusiastic about promoting trail projects relating to mountain biking in San Diego County.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Provide supervision and quality control for SDMBA sponsored trail maintenance and trail construction projects including facilitating trail workdays in areas lacking a SDMBA liaison.
- Liaising with land managers, government officials, committee leaders, and board members
- Trail maintenance, building with potential heavy machine work as well as hand work. (work with mini-excavator or chainsaw is a plus)
- Maintain knowledge of sustainable trail construction and maintenance practices
- Teach sustainable trail construction and maintenance practices to SDMBA volunteers and the community at large at least once yearly.
- Develop and bolster the network of SDMBA Liaisons and volunteers.
- Prepare RFP's trail planning and construction projects.
- Compiling annual metrics and reporting to the board.
- Assist with grant writing
- Participate in monthly advocacy meetings
- Help with creating content for SDMBA website and social media platforms as it relates to trail opportunities
- Monitor Countywide Trails Projects
- Work on partnerships with agencies on potential Bike Parks

Requirements:

- Trail planning, maintenance and building management experience
- Knowledge of current mapping applications including GIS, Avenza, etc.
- Active with community volunteer experience

- Passionate about mountain biking and outdoor trail based recreation
- Strong organizational, leadership and management skills
- Clean driving record and valid driver's license
- Flexible work schedule (days, evenings, weekends)
- Ability to scale hours up as funding is secured
- Grant writing experience preferred (not required)
- Self-motivated problem solver
- Ability to work both independently and as part of a team
- Experience with Outlook, Office, Excel, Word, PowerPoint, and Google applications
- Ability to spend extensive time amounts of time “off-trail”
- Physical ability for long distance hiking, and element exposure
- Must be able to carry 50 lbs
- Can hike 10-12 miles within a day on a trail
- Can hike 3-7 miles cross country to flag new trail
- Capable of biking over 20 miles in a day
- Able to carry all needed gear to a work day sustain self
- Extensive GIS experience and fluency in ArcGis with an ability to produce PDF project maps and ArcMap online maps for events.
- Understanding of local Land Use, CEQA and NEPA
- Experience teaching and coaching others in trail maintenance and simple trail construction tasks
- First aid and CPR certified, or able to get certified

Benefits (subject to change):

- Hourly pay (\$30/hour), initially based on a 20 hour work week
- Workers Compensation and Unemployment
- Mileage (\$.53/5/mile or current federal rate)
- Food (when onsite or traveling)
- Phone and internet reimbursement for work related use
- Travel, training and conference costs
- Two Weeks Vacation
- Five Sick Days Per Code
- Parking

First Year Desired Metrics:

- Progress on Top 10 Projects on annual basis reported to the board on a quarterly basis.
- Assist in fundraising efforts through grant writing, new events or enhancing existing events to raise funds towards operational costs, projects, and programs in the first year.

