



Department Source: Parks and Recreation

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: January 17, 2023

Re: Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area: Bike Park Development

Executive Summary

Staff is requesting a public hearing for the construction of a bike park in the northeast corner of Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area (Cosmo Park). The proposed improvements include the construction of a trailhead for Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail, asphalt pump track, mountain bike skills course, cyclocross event space and bike playground. This project will create a destination bike park designed to host amateur and professional events enhancing Columbia as a sports tourism destination site. The total project budget is \$775,000 and includes \$225,000 in Park Sales Tax funds and \$550,000 in donated funds from the Frank W. Morris Memorial Trust and COMO Trails Association. . In addition to project approval, staff is requesting City Council approval to use the design/build process for the project. The selected contractor will complete all necessary design/engineering work for the project and will complete the construction of the asphalt pump track, installation of mountain bike skills course features and installation of the bike playground amenities. Park staff will coordinate the construction of the parking lot, shelter, cyclocross event space and installation of site utilities. The bike park development at Cosmo Park is scheduled to begin after City Council approval, with an anticipated completion date of late summer 2024.

Discussion

Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area, located at 1615 Business Loop 70 West, encompasses 533 acres and includes a wide variety of recreational amenities including athletic fields, park shelters, playgrounds, sport courts, skatepark, RC car track and L.A. Nickell Golf Course. The park includes a portion of the Bear Creek Trail, 4.1-mile Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail and 1.25-mile asphalt fitness trail. The park also includes seven reservable shelters, two non-reservable shelters and seven restroom facilities.

The Parks and Recreation Department is requesting approval to authorize the construction of a bike park in the northeast corner of Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area (Cosmo Park). In addition to project approval, staff is requesting City Council approval to use the design/build process for the project. The proposed improvements include the construction of a trailhead for Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail, asphalt pump track, mountain bike skills course, cyclocross event space and bike playground.

After reviewing the proposed Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area improvements in the *2013 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan*, staff initially focused on the need to develop a designated trailhead for Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail that would include a parking lot, shelter and water access. Staff discussed placement of the trailhead in an undeveloped, 26-acre area of the park in the northeast corner. Staff included the construction of the trailhead in the list of projects from the 2021 Park Sales Tax renewal. Shortly after the renewal of the Park Sales Tax in November 2021, the COMO Trail Association



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notified the Department that they had acquired a \$250,000 donation from the Veterans United Foundation for the construction of the asphalt pump track at the bike park. Park staff also submitted a project proposal to the Frank W. Morris Memorial Trust Committee that included \$300,000 for the bike park development. Staff was notified in summer 2022 that the proposal had been approved and the combined Park Sales Tax funding and donations would allow for full development of the bike park.

Bike Parks as Sports Tourism Destination Sites

Bike parks have grown in popularity over the past 10 years and have become key sports tourism attractions for communities throughout the United States. Multi-state travel to visit bike parks is not uncommon for mountain bike enthusiasts. The bike park at Cosmo Park will be planned and constructed to handle the traffic flow of local riders and out-of-town visitors to the community. Staff will also discuss the requirements for professional competition level facilities for the asphalt pump track and cyclocross event space with the contractor during the design phase of the project. Constructing these facilities with the ability to host professional competition level events will provide staff with the opportunity to expand sports tourism opportunities in Columbia.

Public Input

Park staff held an interested parties meeting at the Activity & Recreation Center on Nov. 10, 2022. Park staff met with more than 40 citizens to discuss the proposed plans and gain feedback about the proposed improvements. Citizens had an additional opportunity to provide comments about the project on beheard.como.gov. All feedback from the public input meetings and beheard.como.gov are included with this Council memo and may also be found at [CIP Search: Cosmo Rec Area: Bike Park - City of Columbia Missouri. \(como.gov\)](#).

Park staff introduced the proposed bike park to the Parks and Recreation Commission on Nov. 17, 2022. After discussion of the project, the commissioners voted to endorse the proposed improvements at the park and recommended that Council approve the plans as presented. After considering all citizen comments and the P&R Commission recommendation, staff believes the proposed bike park development represents a consensus of park users and staff.

The proposed development of the bike park at Cosmo Park will include the following:

Trailhead for Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail:

A combination of contract and force account labor will be used to construct a trailhead for Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail. The trailhead will include a medium-sized shelter, bike repair amenities, bike washing station, water fountain, permanent start/finish arch, LED lighting and 40-car parking lot. The addition of these amenities resolves the long-standing need for a dedicated start/finish area for Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Course and creates the destination location for riders coming from different areas of Missouri to ride the trail. The layout of this area will include enough space for race coordinators to host mountain bike competitions from this location. Along with the trailhead development, sidewalks will also be constructed



to connect adjoining parking lots to the bike park. The construction of these amenities will also serve the other bike park facilities.

Staff will utilize a portable toilet at the site when the facility is ready to open are analyzing the possibility of a shared permanent restroom between the Cosmo Bike Park and the teeball fields at Antimi Sports Complex. Once a location and funding is identified, staff will return to City Council for construction approval.

Asphalt Pump Track:

Contract labor will be used to construct an asphalt pump track that will create a playground and training facility for bikers, skateboarders and scooter riders of all skill levels. Riders will be able to practice the basic skills of carrying momentum, improve bike balance and build speed by using their arms and legs to pump their bike/board/scooter around the track. The pump track will be designed to handle beginner riders and challenge experienced riders as well.

Mountain Bike Skills Course:

A combination of contract labor and force account labor will be used to construct the looping short track with different mountain bike obstacles, including ladder bridges, rollers, A-frames and rock gardens, designed to offer a variety of obstacles to build biking confidence in all ages. The course will be designed with obstacles of varying skill levels to serve as an introduction into skill development up to advanced mastery of difficult riding techniques.

Bike Playground:

A combination of contract labor and force account labor will be used to construct a beginner loop in the park that will introduce young riders to the skills needed for mountain biking. The course will be designed and constructed to develop skills related to bike balance, maintaining momentum and changing elevations on a bicycle. The beginner loop will tie in with other features of the park, such as the skills course, to allow new riders of all ages to experience the park and begin to develop necessary skills to ride Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Course. The bike playground will include low-level bridges, roll over rocks, tunnels and in and out poles to help build rider skills.

Cyclocross Event Space:

The cyclocross event space will encompass a large part of the park as the course setup is changed for each event. Cyclocross is a combination of road cycling, mountain biking and steeplechase that has riders completing laps on a closed circuit that will include sharp turns, steep banks, hurdles and other obstacles. Cyclocross practices have taken place at Cosmo Park for a number of years and often has 75 to 100 riders at each event. Including this cycling sport in the bike park will allow for some permanent features for events, a start/finish location and permanent lighting for the facility.

The total project budget is \$775,000 and includes \$225,000 in Park Sales Tax funds and \$550,000 in donated funds. Staff will utilize the design/build process for the project. The selected contractor will complete all necessary design/engineering work for the project and



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will complete the construction of the asphalt pump track, installation of mountain bike skills course features and installation of the bike playground amenities. Park staff will coordinate the construction of all other bike park features, including the shelter, parking lot, cyclocross event space, landscaping and utilities installation. The bike park development at Cosmo Park is scheduled to begin after City Council approval, with an anticipated completion date of late summer 2024.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: The total project cost is \$775,000 and is funded by the 2021 Park Sales Tax (\$225,000) and private donations (\$550,000).

Long-Term Impact: Park staff anticipates a slight increase in utility expenses after the completion of the project due to electric and water expenses at the site. A combination of park staff and volunteers with the COMO Trail Association will complete the weekly maintenance associated with the bike park.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impact

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Reliable Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Not Applicable, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Infrastructure, Secondary Impact: Livable & Sustainable Communities, Tertiary Impact: Not Applicable

Legislative History

Date	Action
5/16/22	B143-22: Authorizing a donation agreement with Community Foundation of Central Missouri and the Frank W. Morris Memorial Trust for the planning and development of the Cosmo Bike Park, and the development of the Gans Creek Recreation Area natural surface trail and the Stephens Lake Park trailhead; amending the FY 2022 Annual Budget by appropriating funds. https://gocolumbiamo.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5571573&GUID=85552A74-2D80-4EA9-A3D3-9B0D22EBFC32&Options=&Search=
09/7/99	B302-99. Appropriation of donated funds for the construction of the Rhett's Run Mountain Bike Trail in Cosmo Park.

Suggested Council Action

After the public hearing, approve the ordinance authorizing the bike park development project at Columbia Cosmopolitan Recreation Area and authorizing staff to utilize the design/build process for the project.