

Meeting Minutes

MOUNTAIN BIKE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MBAC)

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

6:00 – 9:00 PM

CRD Engagement Centre
625 Fisgard Street
Victoria, BC V8W 1R7

PRESENT:

A. Soraya, H. Prince, H. Rose, D. Cammiade, I. Charles, D. Leong, T. Fenwick, T. Archer, B. von Sacken, C. Plant (ex officio & CRD Board Chair), J. Ellis (Consultant and Chair)

STAFF:

T. Moss, Manager, Visitor Services & Community Engagement; B. Wyman, Recreation Program Coordinator

GUESTS:

None

REGRETS:

None

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

1. Territorial Acknowledgement

2. Approval of Agenda:

Agenda for the October 7, 2020 Mountain Bike Advisory Committee meeting.

**MOVED by J. Ellis, SECONDED by B. von Sacken
That the agenda be approved and circulated.**

CARRIED

3. Adoption of Minutes:

Minutes for the October 7, 2020 Mountain Bike Advisory Committee meeting.

**MOVED by T. Fenwick, SECONDED by D. Cammiade
That the minutes be approved and circulated.**

CARRIED

T. Fenwick reminded the MBAC that there are several Parking Lot items on pg 4 of the minutes which may be beneficial to keep in mind as the committee works through the process, and perhaps revisit, if time permits.

4. Chair's Remarks

Chair Ellis thanked the MBAC members for a positive first meeting. Clarity around confidentiality expectations and the NDA that members signed was provided.

5. Committee Business:

Follow-up on action items --

Available CRD Parks visitation research was provided to MBAC. Specifically:

- a) 2017 Resident Survey -- This CRD-wide survey addressed the question of whether the residents use parks, and if so, how they use them. This was a random survey and focused on self-reporting of activities currently undertaken in regional parks. https://www.crd.bc.ca/docs/default-source/parks-pdf/crd-regional-parks-resident-survey-report-2017.pdf?sfvrsn=fe1014ca_4
- b) 2018-19 Visitor Use Surveys – These were carried out at individual parks. They're intended to provide a broad understanding of opinions regarding regional parks and trails and what is happening in individual parks and trails, they are not statistically valid. <https://crd.ca.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=18580&GUID=184430C0-AC91-42D8-AD03-235D67FBCD4D>
- c) Chair Ellis confirmed that there is no know recreation demand research for the CRD.
- d) Chair Ellis advised that the internal MBAC SharePoint website will be accessible in the next couple of days and will be used to share resources, research and drafts of MBAC Advice & Guidance Report.

6. MBAC Advice & Guidance:

The MBAC discussed and generated ideas and input on three focus discussion topics. Those topics and the generated input of the MBAC are as follows:

Question #1:

6.1 Considering the existing supply of mountain bike experiences throughout the Capital Region, and thinking about current and future demands and trends, what types of mountain bike experiences (discipline, level of difficulty, long-term athlete development model, etc.) are most needed and most appropriate to be provided in regional parks?

What MTB Disciplines are Most Needed in the CRD?

- a) MBAC discussed what MTB disciplines are most needed in the CRD. It was acknowledged that the best MTB trails are those that are purpose designed and built rather than simply designating other linear accesses or trails. The following disciplines emerged:
 - o Cross-country - MBAC recognized that there is currently a strong supply of cross-country riding in the CRD. However, what is considered cross-country on Vancouver Island is often considered "All-Mountain" in other jurisdictions due to the technical terrain and that more traditional cross-country experiences would be beneficial.

- Trail – There are a limited amount of beginner trails.
- All-mountain - MBAC recognized that greater All Mountain supply is needed especially opportunity that provides more gravity-oriented design and contains easier purpose built climbing trails.
- Downhill – MBAC recognized there are no formal purpose-built Downhill riding opportunities in the CRD and this discipline is growing. The lack of supply is, in part, a result of the limited suitable terrain (length of descents) or terrain combined with shuttle-access roads. The best potential terrain is out toward Sooke where there is greater elevation.
- Adaptive – MBAC recognized that there are no purpose designed and built a-MTB opportunities in the CRD.

What MTB Disciplines are Most Appropriate in CRD Regional Parks?

- a) MBAC discussed the riding disciplines that are most needed in the CRD and which are most compatible with the current supply of regional parks and the regional parks mandate. The following were determined to be the most appropriate disciplines:
 - Cross-country
 - Trail
 - All-mountain
 - Adaptive MTB
 - Long distance / interconnected loops that connect riders to areas of higher density networks or to other adjacent regional districts.
 - Gravel riding / Cycle cross
 - Bike packing (usually a multi-day outing)
- b) Though demand for Downhill opportunity is underserved, the MBAC identified Downhill MTB as less appropriate within regional parks due to the typical requirement for vehicle accessible roads that enable shuttling.
- c) The MBAC also acknowledged the growth in Dirt Jumping and gravity parks. However, with the intensive development required for these parks, the liability and given the recent construction of the Jordie Lunn Bike Park, found Dirt Jumping to be less appropriate in Regional Parks. Some members suggested that Dirt Jumping is not inclusive in the definition of mountain biking and therefore out of scope for the committee.

What MTB Levels of Difficulty are Most Needed in the CRD?

- a) MBAC discussed what level of difficulty of trail are most needed in the CRD. The MBAC recognized that ensuring the mountain bike

system in the CRD delivers the full diversity of disciplines and difficulties is needed to address the demands for mountain biking in the CRD. It was acknowledged that the current supply is currently focused toward the black and double black level of difficulty which is a barrier to supporting new riders and keeping riders in the activity. The current concentration of more difficult trails reflects the challenging trail building terrain in the CRD. The following levels of difficulties were determined to be of greatest need:

- o Need more trails targeting kids and families with entry level green/blue level of difficult. This will also appeal more to mountain bike tourists and support the cycle cross / gravel ride disciplines.
 - o Much of the rogue trail building is developing double black diamond difficulty trails. This is suggestive of the need for a greater supply of sanctioned trails at the most difficult level.
- b) It was recognized that the CRD Regional Parks Strategic Plan is due for review and updating and is forthcoming. The MBAC should acknowledge, in their advice and guidance report, the need to reflect the growth of mountain biking in the CRD in the plan and incorporate policy direction and priorities.
- c) A blue downhill trail could be used for trail runners (defined as an 'optimized' trail – safe for multiple users, e.g., hikers). Note: properly designed trails would not be hollowed out in the middle.

Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) -- Where should CRD be investing to support this?

- a) The LTAD was used as a model to discuss what stages are of greatest priority for CRD Regional Parks. The MBAC recognized that the CRD provides a climate that support year-round riding which builds high-calibre athletes. Bear Mountain is home to MTB Canada. Given this, the MBAC acknowledged the MTB trails in regional parks will be used by athletes at all levels, but that the primary focus should be on directly providing for and supporting riders in the active start, fundamentals, learn to trail and fit for life stages.

=====

Question #2

6.2 The CRD can play a variety of roles in the delivery of mountain biking in regional parks. What is the preferred service delivery model for the planning, design, construction, management and monitoring of mountain bike trails and mountain bike use in regional parks (direct, indirect, enablement)?

- a) The MBAC discussed the various roles the CRD could play in the planning, design, construction, maintenance, monitoring of mountain bike trails and visitor management. The MBAC recognized the CRD sets direction for each regional park through park specific management plans. Where MTB is deemed to be an appropriate activity in a regional park through a management plan, the MBAC recommends that the CRD undertake the following service delivery roles:
 - o MTB Trail Concept Planning – support role
 - o MTB Trail Design – support role
 - o Approvals - lead
 - o MTB Trail Construction – support role
 - o MTB Trail Maintenance – support role
 - o MTB Trail Monitoring – support role
 - o Visitor Management – lead with support from MTB club
- b) Local MTB clubs would take the lead role in accordance with a formal license agreement with the CRD.
- c) The MBAC discussed MTB trail granting and funding supports provided by other regional and local government jurisdictions. It was recognized that the CRD could consider the development of a granting program to support MTB trail development similar to other jurisdictions such as the CVRD provides to the Cowichan Trail Stewards of District of Squamish provides for Squamish Off-road Cycling Association.
- d) The MBAC recognized the importance of describing why a service delivery model should be formalized, the benefits of doing so, the benefits of alternative models and where alternative delivery models have worked elsewhere.

ACTION ITEM: Chair Ellis to include rationale around the recommended service delivery model based on other jurisdictions and benefits experienced with SIMBS.

=====

Question #3

6.3 What criteria should the CRD use to determine in which regional parks it is appropriate to support mountain biking and therefore, mountain bike trails? (applies new to new and existing parks)

ACTION ITEM: Chair Ellis to get a list of the parks with their classifications and the zonings that are applied in each.

- a) The MBAC discussed the use of criteria as an approach to help CRD consistently and objectively determine in which regional parks it is more or less appropriate to support mountain biking, and therefore mountain bike trails. The MBAC brainstormed criteria and

discussed the merits of the criteria that were raised by members. The following criteria emerged for consideration to include in the advice and guidance report:

- The terrain is suitable to support the development / delivery of mountain bike experiences that are most needed / desired.
- The recreation setting of the park would support an undersupplied mountain bike experience (e.g. backcountry).
- A mountain bike trail corridor through the park is needed provide connectivity to a existing of future planned trail system or dense riding area which can not be developed / established outside the park.
- The presence and extent of at-risk species or ecosystems in the park.
- The size of the park, or the area land zoned in the park, can support a minimum density of trails which are needed to make it worthwhile for a rider to go that park. The MBAC noted that, in general, members do not envision the future creation of a dense network of trails similar to what exists at Mt Work.
- Alignment with the park classification and the zoning as established in the management plan.
- The extent of other permitted existing recreational activities that could create unmanageable / unavoidable visitor conflicts or visitor safety issues if mountain biking is introduced.
- Accessibility of the park – the ability to mountain bikers to easily access the park (e.g. connections to public transportation, active transportation networks).
- Size of the park can accommodate required comfort and convenience amenities and infrastructure (e.g. parking areas, washrooms, day use etc.).
- Mountain bike community feedback and demand – the MTB community has expressed interest in mountain biking in a specific park.
- Designating and improved management of informal trail networks could provide opportunity to repair environmental damaged from informal unsanctioned trails.

7. Next Meeting:

The next MBAC meeting will be October 21, 2020

8. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Motion to adjourn C. Plant; seconded by H. Prince