

TO: MAYOR & COUNCILLORS
FROM: DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE
SUBJECT: **BURNABY MOUNTAIN BIKE SKILLS COURSE**
PURPOSE: To obtain Council approval to proceed with redevelopment of the Burnaby Mountain Bike Skills Course.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT approval be given to the final design of the Burnaby Mountain Bike Skills Course with a Class 'C' cost estimate of \$4,720,000 (excluding GST).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Burnaby Mountain Bike Skills Course (BMBSC) has been a popular and well used amenity since its original opening in 2008. Given its age, redevelopment of the site is now required to support its ongoing use by the community. This is an exciting initiative that will support community access to a growing sport, providing a variety of dedicated off-road cycling offerings such as flow trails, pump track, jumps, and BMX, at a single location and with connections to mountain biking riding trails on Burnaby Mountain. The investment is needed to keep the amenity safe and relevant to current and future riders and their needs. To ensure this, extensive community engagement took place over late 2022 and early 2023. Staff are now seeking Council's approval of the final design, which if approved, is anticipated to be opened in summer 2025.

1.0 POLICY SECTION

The advancement of this project aligns with and complements the following Council-adopted policies and strategies: Corporate Strategic Plan (2017), Social Sustainability Strategy (2011), the Environmental Sustainability Strategy (2016), Burnaby Transportation Plan (2021), and Healthy Community Policy (1991) and the Benefits Based Approach (2023).

2.0 BACKGROUND

Burnaby Mountain Conservation Area (BMCA) is a 1,430-acre municipal park that offers unique forested recreation experiences for pedestrians and cyclists. The conservation area offers 30 km of hiking and biking trails and a dedicated zone for bike skills development. The attractions provide free family friendly and inclusive recreation amenities to thousands of users annually.

Off-road cycling and various forms of mountain biking involve riding over rough terrain on bikes. The sport supports healthy lifestyles, access, exposure to nature and outdoors, bike-handling skills, endurance, and connection to community. Burnaby and Metro Vancouver are home to passionate and active off-road cycling communities with a vast local network of bike trails across the region. According to Statista Global Consumer Survey, in Canada the popularity of mountain biking is projected to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of over 7% annually, with BC leading that growth. According to the same survey, over 53% of households nationally already have at least one mountain bike. Metro Vancouver is also home to incredible global mountain biking brands, further contributing to active mountain biking culture and a rapidly growing green local economy.

The existing bike skills course at BMCA is a one-of-a-kind recreation amenity in Burnaby that was opened in 2008, providing a unique combination of riding challenges targeted to beginners looking to learn a new sport and intermediate users seeking to enhance their skills locally. Located at a 2.7-acre parcel on the north side of Burnaby Mountain, this amenity is situated on a former target range site which was capped 3 meters below grade to isolate and prevent the spread of potential contaminants, utilizing this site to its best potential for the community.

Since opening in 2008, the facility has become home to local off-road cycling community, helping to provide a designated safe place to learn various types of off-road bike skills and reducing the rogue and illegal construction of bike elements within the conservation area and other parks. The bike skills course has served the community well, positioning Burnaby as a leader and a valuable service provider to the regional network of off-road cycling infrastructure. After over 15 years of use, the amenity has aged and requires a complete redevelopment to continue to maintain a safe and fun amenity for the community.

The proposed BMBSC was reviewed with the Parks, Recreation, and Culture Committee on February 13, 2024 and is now proceeding to Council for consideration with support from that select advisory committee.

3.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

The key goals of the BMBSC redevelopment:

- Provide relevant and meaningful progressive skill development opportunities at a local level for all, with particular focus on beginner to intermediate riders;
- Incorporate a variety of riding styles and challenges in a single safe location to facilitate progressive skill development;
- Contain the skills area to a similar footprint of the existing course;
- No impact to the below grade cap.

3.1 Proposed Bike Course Upgrades

Based on feedback from users and community engagement, the plan for BMBSC was developed (**Attachments 1 and 2**).

The proposed redevelopment plan includes:

- Asphalt pump track accessible to all skill levels or riders;
- Flow trail or miniature “slopestyle” course with technical skill features;
- Jump lines with walls and drops to support safe skill development;
- BMX specific section tailored to unique rider needs;
- Common gathering and staging areas for socializing and group classes;
- Connection to the larger Burnaby Mountain trail network and the Barnet Highway bike lane;
- Access to existing washroom and parking facilities.

3.2 Project Timeline

Recognizing the importance of investing in the pedestrian and bicycling trails while protecting the conservation area, Council provided a budget to initiate the BMBSC redevelopment project in 2022. The project has advanced through community consultation, concept design, and detailed design. Pending approval of the works, the project will proceed through tender and construction. The project is anticipated to open for the summer 2025 riding season. All efforts will be made to minimize impacts to existing users and the amenity closure period which is anticipated to start following this summer season in 2024.

4.0 COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The general public and biking community were consulted on this project through two periods. The first in August 2022 and again in January 2023 which included an on-line survey and two public open houses. The majority of survey respondents listed themselves as mountain bikers (95%) with an intermediate level of biking experience. A total of 622 survey replies were received. The top comments from the engagement included: provision of additional beginner riding areas with tabletops on the crest of jumps rather than gaps; having the riding terrain made of dirt rather than asphalt to mimic the natural surroundings; provision of bigger jumps with ride around options and a progressive layout of jump options so riders could work their way up to more difficult jumps; a reduction of size in the advanced rider areas and development of ride lines for kids. The common theme in all zones was to create parallel beginner and advanced ride lines to allow young riders to safely stop mid ride and find assistance without being ridden over by larger or faster riders. This valuable feedback was integrated into the proposed design to create a safe and relevant amenity that the community will use and appreciate for many more years to come.

5.0 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Class 'C' cost estimate for this project is approximately \$4.72M and is broken down as follows:

Mobilization:	\$0.2M
Civil Works	\$1.22M
Bike Park Landscape:	\$2.7M
<u>Contingency:</u>	<u>\$0.6M</u>
Estimated Total:	\$4.72M

This capital project is included in the 2024-2028 Financial Plan under Parks, Recreation & Culture, Park Facilities, Burnaby Mountain Park – Air Bike Skills Course Redevelopment with a budget of \$4,300,000. As staff plan to advance this project in 2024, they will look to reallocate existing funds within the capital plan to fund the remaining \$420,000 required to complete this project. This capital asset is anticipated to have a lifespan of 15 years, requiring \$300,000 to be allocated annually towards replacement anticipated in 2040.

The PRC operating budget currently includes \$35,000 for the ongoing maintenance and operation of the BMBSC and staff do not anticipate any additional operating tied to capital funding requests associated with the redevelopment of this park.

Respectfully submitted,

Carmen Gonzalez, Deputy General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Burnaby Mountain Bike Skills Course Plan

Attachment 2 – Burnaby Mountain Bike Skills Course Presentation

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

This report was prepared by Heather Edwards, Manager Parks Plan., Design & Dev. and reviewed by Steve Bruneau, Director Parks, Bob Farahani, Director PMO & Enterprise Services, Andre Isakov, Director PRC Planning, Coreen Jorgenson, Manager Budgets and Reporting.