

Mountain Biking Community Engagement
Focus Groups Summary - November 8 & 16, 2017
Minnetonka Park Board

Introduction

In November 2017, Minnetonka residents were invited to two focus groups to share their thoughts on the concept of creating mountain bike trails in Minnetonka. The first focus group was aimed at residents concerned about the potential trails while the second focus group convened residents who were advocates for mountain bike trails. Each group provided feedback on the prospect of trails and expressed priorities for the potential project.

Feedback

Below is a summary of the findings from the community engagement activities. This information will be used to guide staff in creating a study to present to the park board.

Focus group #1



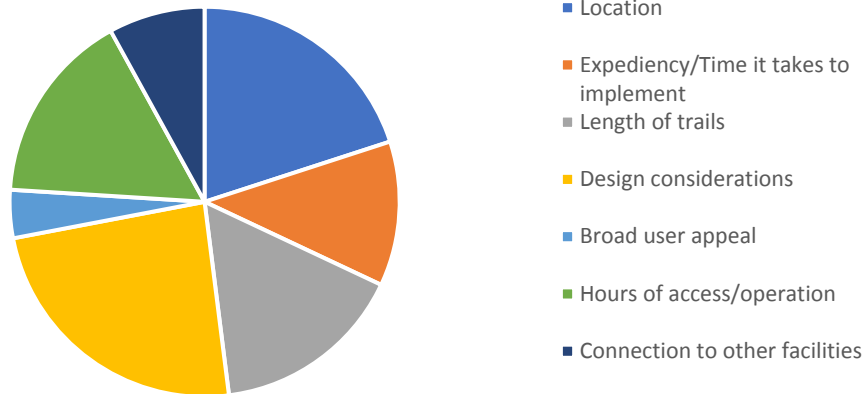
Representative comments:

- Mountain bike trails will cause “damage to nature, animals/plant life, erosion.”
- The trails will “radically change the character of the park.”
- There may be “danger for walkers at common trail segments.”
- The trails will cause disruption, noise, and ruin solitude.
- Concern for the “displacement of current trail users.”

Generally, focus group attendees expressed a concern for the safety of park users, bikers and pedestrians alike. They also wondered how the trails would add to parking pressures, noise pollution and environmental deterioration. Attendees also voiced a desire for increased communication and engagement surrounding this issue.

Focus group #2

Priorities for Trails



Representative comments:

- Users “don’t want to have to drive to trails—local kids need outdoor activities.”
- Attendees believed “separating walkers from bikers will increase safety.”
- Potential trail users are “stewards of the land and want good trail design to minimize bike/other users’ conflicts and address safety concerns.”
- The trails will cater to young people and increase physical activity.
- Park programming should cater to diverse community interests.

Generally, focus group attendees expressed excitement at the prospect of mountain bike trails in Minnetonka. They see this as a growing sport that has the potential to draw new, young people to outdoor recreation and physical activity. Similar to concerned residents, they prioritize safety, and the mitigation of trail user conflict. They are also concerned with the design and construction of the trail, desiring a course that is high quality and challenging.