

Advisory Committee Recommendation

From: Chehalem Heritage Trails Advisory Committee (CHTAC)

To: CPRD Board of Directors

Recommendation Approved at: June 12, 2024 CHTAC Meeting (8-0-0)

Discussion/Vote Requested at: June 27, 2024 CPRD Board of Directors Meeting

Recommendation:

The CHTAC recommends the CPRD Board of Directors direct staff to identify, acquire, plan, and/or develop a cycling trail system according to the provided criteria (see attached) with these listed adjustments:

1. Trails to include mixed vegetation – wooded/shaded and mixed with meadows
2. Trails shall be in close proximity to population
3. Trails shall have parking and infrastructures (toilets/signs)
4. List of similar parks for comparison
 - Powell Butte Park
 - Chehalem Ridge Park
 - Stubb Stewart State Park
 - Cooper Mountain Park
 - Silver Falls State Park
 - Bob & Crystal Rilee Park

Cycling Trails Criteria

Introduction

In response to the removal of cyclists from Bob and Crystal Rilee Park and the exploration of new cycling trail opportunities, the Chehalem Heritage Trails Advisory Committee has compiled a list of criteria for developing a new cycling trail network. This document is intended to serve as a roadmap for the Board and park staff.

Trail Design and Configuration:

- **Trail Length and Configuration:** Aim for at least four (4) miles of trail in a system of stacked loops (B. Bowman, personal communication, May 10, 2024). Stacked loops provide a variety of trail difficulties and route options while maximizing space usage.
- **Elevation and Terrain:** Ensure the trails have at least 400 feet of cumulative climbing to maintain the essence of mountain biking (B. Bowman, personal communication, May 10, 2024). Utilize the natural grade and terrain to maximize downhill trail sections.

Trail Difficulty and Surface:

- **IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System:** Design trails with varying levels of difficulty (e.g., Green Circle for easy trails and Blue Square for more difficult trails) to cater to a broad range of cyclists (Northwest Trail Alliance, n.d.).
- **Natural/Native Trail Tread Surface:** Construct and maintain trails using natural materials suitable for year-round use to ensure sustainability and environmental compatibility (Northwest Trail Alliance, n.d.).

Environmental and Ecological Considerations:

- **Erosion Control:** Implement best management practices for erosion control to prevent soil and water degradation. This includes proper drainage design, vegetative erosion control, and minimizing soil disturbance (American Trails, n.d.).
- **Avoid Sensitive Areas:** Plan trails to avoid wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas whenever possible. Design proper crossings at the narrowest points if avoidance is not feasible (American Trails, n.d.).

Accessibility and Amenities:

- **Adequate Parking:** Ensure there is sufficient parking to accommodate trail users comfortably.
- **Toilets:** Install a vault toilet or full-service bathroom for cyclists.
- **Signage:** Provide basic signage at trailheads and key points for navigation and safety.

Community and Recreational Integration:

- **Proximity to Other Trails and Facilities:** Consider the integration of new trails with existing trail networks and nearby recreational facilities to enhance user experience and accessibility (Northwest Trail Alliance, n.d.).
- **Proximity to Populated Areas:** Locate trails in close proximity to population centers to provide equitable and accessible cycling opportunities.

Sustainability and Maintenance:

- **Regular Maintenance and Stewardship:** Engage local communities and volunteers in trail maintenance and stewardship programs to ensure long-term sustainability. This can be facilitated through partnerships with organizations like the Northwest Trail Alliance and Trail Keepers of Oregon (National Park Service, n.d.) (American Trails, n.d.).

Surrounding Vegetation:

- **Mixed Vegetation:** Incorporate a mix of both wooded and shaded areas mixed with meadows to create a varied and engaging environment for cyclists. Ensure visibility and safety at trail intersections and points of interest.

Comparable Examples

For comparison, here are examples of existing parks that have implemented these or similar criteria:

1. Powell Butte Park
2. Chehalem Ridge Park
3. Stubb Stewart State Park
4. Cooper Mountain Park
5. Silver Falls State Park
6. Bob & Crystal Rilee Park

Additionally, below is an image of a trail matching the desired criteria.



Image Courtesy of Brian Bowman

Conclusion

By following these criteria, CPRD can develop a cycling trail network that meets the expectations of local cyclists while ensuring environmental sustainability and practical trail management. The Chehalem Heritage Trails Advisory Committee would appreciate the opportunity to advance cycling trails within CPRD through collaboration with stakeholders and park staff—utilizing public input and best practices.

References:

- American Trails. (n.d.). Best management practices for erosion control during trail maintenance and construction. Retrieved from <https://www.americantrails.org/resources/best-management-practices-for-erosion-control-during-trail-maintenance-and-construction>
- National Park Service. (n.d.). Trail management & maintenance. Retrieved from <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/trails/trail-management-and-maintenance.htm>
- Northwest Trail Alliance. (n.d.). Trail sustainability institute. Retrieved from <https://nw-trail.org/volunteer/learn/>