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Proposed Bike Park Project Status

By Cathy Tyson

Because efforts to curtail unauthorized bike jumps along Las Trampas Creek didn't seem to be working, a group of young bike riders and City staff had an alternative they presented to the Parks Trails and Recreation Commission (PTRC). They believe a better solution than tearing up sensitive creek habitat is to build an official bike riding and jumping area that is legal, safe and oriented toward a wide range of cycling abilities.

The proposed, but a long way from finalized, location is the south end of the Community Park since it is the only city-owned property that has the space, parking, restrooms and emergency access necessary. This potential location is close to the Lafayette-Moraga Regional Trail making it accessible to cyclists without a parent-provided ride.

In the roughly two years since the initial proposal, there has been input from the community and bike riders both pro and con. An environmental habitat assessment, a soil study and a traffic study have all been performed.

If the bike park is approved permits would need to be obtained from the Army Corps of Engineers, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game. Currently not all the results of the studies are complete, upon completion the next step is a public hearing with the Planning Commission.

The one question that comes up time and again is City liability in case of an accident. City staff met with a representative of their insurance carrier to clarify coverage. As long as requirements are met - the potential park would be covered. The six required items include the adoption of procedures and requirements intended to ensure the safety of participants, design approval, appropriate signage and more.

The current status is posted on the city website: "Construction funding for the proposed bike facility in the Lafayette Community Park has not been approved by the Lafayette City Council, and the construction will not be funded until the Council is satisfied that the facility would benefit the community, that it is consistent with the nature of the other facilities in the Community Park, and that it is designed safely and properly for public use."

For more information, go to the city website, www.lovelafayette.com or go to www.lafayettebikepark.com.

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