



# Proposal: St. John's Pump Track

Version 2

March 8, 2021

Avalon Mountain Bike Association

28 Bond St.

St. John's, NL

A1C 1S5



## Overview

The Avalon Mountain Bike Association (AMBA) is a not-for-profit community organization engaged in promoting the sport of mountain biking on the Avalon Peninsula. AMBA's primary goals are to develop, maintain and preserve shared-use mountain bike trails and infrastructure. We are committed to promoting socially and environmentally responsible mountain biking and trail usage, while making mountain biking fun and accessible for riders of all ages and skill levels.

AMBA, in collaboration with Canary Cycles, is proposing to the City of St. John's to allocate a portion of city land for the development of an asphalt pump track. A pump track is a continuous loop of berms and "rollers" (smooth dirt or paved mounds) that is ridden by "pumping" your body up and down over features to generate momentum, without pedaling or pushing. Pump tracks can be used by cyclists of all ages and skill levels, as well as scooters, skateboards and wheelchairs when paved. Pump tracks are a great way to develop balance and handling skills for everyone from toddlers to professional athletes and offer an opportunity for the whole family to enjoy cycling in a safe, traffic-free environment.

Pump tracks are an economically friendly, sustainable option for a community looking to increase its recreational infrastructure. One of the advantages of a pump track is that it can be built almost anywhere. They require relatively little space, ranging from an old parking lot, vacant building lot, old industrial space to a field or wooded area, for example. Standard pump tracks are designed for areas of approximately 1,000 square meters or more. No matter the size, shape, or slope (within reason), there are opportunities for pump tracks.

Paved pump tracks, while having a higher upfront cost than dirt pump tracks, require very little ongoing maintenance and can be enjoyed by a more diverse range of people. With proper care and maintenance, a pump track will provide years of enjoyment and physical activity for residents and visitors alike. A pump track also provides an excellent training ground for cycling skill development, which is an important consideration with St. John's set to host the 2025 Canada Games (which includes mountain biking). Lastly, a venue like this can host competitions and events.

In addition to providing safe, fun, healthy options for young people and families, pump tracks can be used as hubs to drive tourism and community activities. With the rapidly growing global interest in cycling and mountain biking tourism, communities are increasingly leveraging cycling infrastructure to draw visitors from far and wide. Investing in high quality cycling infrastructure has the ability to turn day trips into vacations and vacations into relocations.



## Summary of Benefits

- Promotes healthy, physical outdoor activity;
- Great, low risk environment for cyclists of all ages and skill levels;
- Creates a gathering area for the community;
- Affordable and accessible for families;
- Generates a community effort supported by donors and volunteer efforts;
- Sustainable recreation with minimal environmental impact;
- Low initial costs and low maintenance costs; and
- Simple and fun.

## Financial Implications

Canary Cycles has generously offered to support the project with a \$100,000 contribution. AMBA has the people, knowledge and energy to help drive the project through to completion. AMBA is asking the City of St. John's for a one-time contribution of \$60,000 from its capital expenditure budget. The \$60,000 would include both a contribution towards pump track construction expenses and would cover the potential preparation work deemed necessary by the city based on our recent consultation (estimated at \$10,000). Using comparative projects from other jurisdictions, we estimate the upfront cost for a professionally built asphalt pump track to be in the range of \$150,000-\$175,000.

Additional funds required would be generated through fundraising initiatives, corporate sponsors, and other funding opportunities.

## Risk and Liability Concerns

The City of St. John's would assume the risk with a pump track as they would any other recreational facility such as a skate park or ball field. Risk is relatively low due to the way that a pump track is used. Signs would be installed at entrances to the pump track area outlining the rules and etiquette for users. Helmets would be required and compliance with riders is generally very good.

## Specifications

An asphalt pump track is being proposed. Paved pump tracks have an advantage in that they can be ridden by skateboarders, in-line skaters, wheelchairs and foot-powered scooters. Paved pump tracks also require very little ongoing maintenance. Using the recently built pump track in Shubie Park in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia as a model, the pump track would require an approximate footprint of 35 by 35 metres.

## Long Term Maintenance

The pump track itself will require little maintenance since it will be constructed using asphalt. Since the pump track will be within an existing recreational area, services such as trash pickup and restrooms are already provided by the City of St. John's. We do not anticipate the pump track will add significantly to the need for such services. Mowing the grass around the pump track would be required. It is recommended that this be conducted by the city to coordinate the mowing schedule with that of the adjacent grass

## Examples

Some examples of pump tracks in North America are as follows:

[Shubie Park Pump Track, Dartmouth, NS](#)

[Steve Smith Memorial Park](#)

[Fundy National Park Pump Track](#)

[Town of Pasadena](#)



## Proposed Area and Supporting Methodology

### Quidi Vidi Lake

Pump tracks are most successful when they are located in centre-city, bike accessible locations near existing off-road cycling infrastructure. Installing the pump track next to Quidi Vidi Lake (between the skate and dog parks as outlined below) would bring further amenities to this area, be within riding distance of the White Hills mountain bike trail network and be accessible by all modes of transportation. In addition, there is already sufficient parking infrastructure within the area. This location would be AMBA's leading recommendation for this project.

In meeting with City of St. John's employees (Brian Head, Parks Division; Karen Sherriffs, Community Development; and Scott Winsor and Mark White from Engineering), a discussion was held on the location of such a venue by Quidi Vidi Lake. Given the presence of a floodplain, it was suggested by the City team that the small breed dog area could be moved to the other side of the dog park. This would free up the space required to build the pump track in a zone that would not be affected by flooding. Upon further investigation, there appears to be sufficient area to install the pump track adjacent to the small breed dog park without relocating the dog park, subject to approval by all stakeholders. The original request for funding support by the City in this proposal has been revised from \$50,000 to \$60,000 to reflect the potential work to relocate the small breed dog park, if required by one of the other stakeholders.



