

With \$33K in Funds, RVA More Sets Sights on New Mountain Biking Trails at Pocahontas Park

Posted by: brad – Jun 05, 2014



The wheels are in motion for Richmond to become one of the top riding destinations in the country, pending approval from the [International Mountain Biking Association \(IMBA\)](#).

On May 19th, [Bell](#) announced the winners of the first annual Bell Built Grant, a project that donates 100,000 to the winning cities park systems to build public trails.

[RVA more](#) spearheaded Richmond's participation in the project and Greg Rollins, President of RVA more, hopes the donation will help Richmond become a IMBA ride

center.



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Each year IMBA recognizes parks around the world for superior trails and communities. IMBA rates the ride centers in varying degrees, from bronze to gold, the trails are ranked based on their difficulty from beginner (gateway trails) to the advanced trails.

The surrounding area is also considered when selecting the rating.

Doug Vinson, Project Manager for IMBA, feels, with the help of the Bell Built Grant, Richmond is well on its way to achieving this status. "First of all in addition to fantastic mountain biking opportunities there has to be an outstanding community behind it. with a host of facilities geared toward mountain biking and cyclists in general. from your average family on vacation to the die-hard mountain bikers. Richmond has that, has had that for a long time"

According to Vinson, the only thing Richmond has been missing is a broad spectrum of trails for all levels to enjoy. "And that's what they hoped to achieve through this Bell grant, to add that extra level of really amazing trails to really make it a ride center," said Vinson.

Rollins has been working closely with IMBA throughout this process to ensure that Richmond is recognized as a Ride Center. "IMBA is looking for the area to have really good restaurants, really good bike shops, brew pubs, places to rent bicycles. Classes and instructors that will instruct riders on how to ride. We feel that we're pretty close to it, we really think that we should be silver, when the whole project is complete we could actually be bumped up to silver," said Rollins.





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RVA more routinely maintains the James River Park system, keeping up with the trails and protecting the paths from erosion. But because of the narrow space on the trails there is limited room to expand. Therefore, the grant money will be used to build a new set of trails in Pocahontas park.

"In Pocahontas we will build some what they call flow trails, part of the concept behind flow trail is that there is not really braking. You can ride it really fast, its directional, it doesn't have any obstacles in the way. there's not going to be a conflict. there will probably be jumps at a little bit more of an advanced level," said Rollins

In addition to Pocahontas park, the group also has Plans for trails in Deer Run Park in Henrico county.

[RVA more](#) posted to their [twitter](#) account shortly after winning the grant asking voters to pledge a donation to the project. Richmond won the grant with a total of 13,896 votes, if each person donates 2.40\$ RVA more could match the 33,000 grant. One voter, according to Rollins, pledged to donate 1\$ to the cause for each vote Richmond had over New York City. "We're trying to pick up some of the momentum that had happened over this," said Rollins.

Construction on the trails is set to begin this summer, to volunteer to help build the trails visit rvamore.org.

Words by Meghan Gaffney