

**MISSOURI-MADISON RIVER FUND RECREATION PROJECT
FY2024 GRANT APPLICATION FORM**

Project Name: The Electric City Bike Park

Reservoir or River Segment: City of Great Falls, "Great Falls Area" County(ies) Cascade

Site Name (or project location): Elks Riverside Park (47.5144096485136, -111.30066717453771)

Applicant Name: Brian Thompson

Position and Agency: Great Falls Bike Club

Telephone: 406-491-0028

Email: climbgreatfalls@gmail.com

Project Sponsor Name: Steffen Janikula

Position and Agency: Giant Springs State Park, (past Great Falls Parks and Recreation Trails Coordinator)

Telephone: (406) 231-9721

Email: sjanikula@mt.gov

Project Cost Breakdown and Financial Request:

Complete the financial section below by providing total project cost (to the nearest dollar), contributions by applicant and cooperators, request for NorthWestern Energy match of agency funds (see detailed instruction), and River Fund Grant request. Document in-kind contributions by public agencies for determination of NorthWestern Energy match request. A description of funding sources and in-kind contributions should be included in the Project Description.

Total project cost:	<u>\$25,000</u>	
Applicant Contributions – cash	<u>\$21,100</u>	
Applicant Contributions – value of in-kind:	<u>\$0</u>	
Other Contributions – Please list by source:		
	<u>\$</u>	
	<u>\$</u>	
	<u>\$</u>	Percentage of Total Project Cost:
Total Applicant and Other Contributions:	<u>\$21,100</u>	<u>84%</u>
NorthWestern Energy Match Request:	<u>\$0</u>	<u>0.0%</u>
River Fund Grant Request:	<u>\$3,900</u>	<u>16%</u>
Proposed Project Implementation Period:	<u>2024 -2025</u>	

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1. Has this project been previously submitted for funding consideration by the River Fund Board, either as a separate project or part of another project? Yes No

If yes, please identify which years the application was submitted and, if the project was previously funded, list the amount funded by year.

2. **Project Description:** Provide a description of the proposed project. Be sure to include specific project elements that are planned, and any associated cost detail.

► The Missouri-Madison River Fund Grant will be used to complete the design and geotechnical report for a first of its kind bike park for the City of Great Falls, located alongside the Missouri River. This project (The Electric City Bike Park) will be a collaboration between the Great Falls Bike Club and the City of Great Falls.

 Securing funding for the architectural design from the contractor Velosolutions is the first stage of this project and the immediate goal. Velosolutions is a global leader in the bike park, trail, and pump track space. The cost of the initial design quote is \$25,000. Our current fundraising has garnered \$21,100 in donations from private individuals and local businesses. The City of Great Falls has indicated their support for this project, including a potential site for construction. We plan on using a combination of private donations, public dollars, and grant funds to make this park a reality.

 Once the design is completed, we will submit our project to the city commission for funding the construction of the bike park from the City of Great Falls Parks and Recreation Department. We will also use the completed design to pursue “in-kind” donations from local contractors for materials, equipment, and labor. The Great Falls Bike Club will supply laborers to the project as a further in-kind donation. This is a community-based project led by community members. Our focus is to create a unique bike experience along the banks of the Missouri River to further engage Great Falls and the surrounding communities in outdoor recreation.

 The Electric City Bike Park will feature “pump tracks,” consisting of a series of tracks with loops and hills that can be navigated by any wheeled vehicle. Riders navigate these hills and turns using their whole body to generate momentum rather than relying exclusively on pedal power to traverse obstacles. Riders of all ages can play on these tracks as they progress and develop higher levels of skill. Our specific design will have tracks for beginners, intermediate and advanced riders. The beginner track is aimed at riders learning how to ride and will be accessible to ages 2 and up. Our advanced track will be aimed at riders looking to improve their skills and play on harder terrain. This park will be a place for kids and adults to learn new skills in a safe and welcoming environment. The bike park itself will be supported by existing restroom facilities and parking. A wind break, gazebo, bike repair stand and benches will be part of the design elements for spectators and riders. Our goal is to make a place that inspires community pride and healthy habits.

 The river corridor is the recreational centerpiece of Great Falls City Parks. The Parks and Recreation office for the City of Great Falls has identified an ideal location for the bike park just 200ft from the river. This location on the Northern end of Elks Riverside Park also has connectivity with the Rivers Edge Trail and River drive (see graphic). This location provides easy access for multiple modes of transportation as well as great views of the river. The high visibility of this project will inspire community pride and foster years of biking enthusiasm within the community. The Electric City Bike Park will help generations of people from Great Falls and the surrounding area play along the banks of the Missouri River, creating a long-term and sustainable impact on community health and wellness.

3. **Project Phasing:** Briefly discuss whether the project could be phased over more than one year or construction season.
 - ▶ Initial fundraising from January of 2023 -2024 is targeted at purchasing the architectural design from Velosolutions and the geotechnical report for the site. Planned build out of the track from this design is tentatively planned for 2024 – 2025. The park at this location is slated for demolition to accommodate the construction of a new water line crossing under the Missouri River. Our proposed plan is to roll the bike park construction into the landscaping and remediation of the park after the water line construction is completed. It is important that the plan for the park (architectural design) is in place and approved prior to the start of the water main construction. We are close with our community funding, but need to be sure we make our deadline for fundraising by March 2024. Our community funding efforts follow other similar projects by honoring our donors at different levels with varying honorific plaques (e.g., \$100 = paving brick, \$500 = fence panel, \$1000 = benches, bike stand etc.). This model has been used in other communities to build public playgrounds. Our community donation goal is \$100,000 by 2025. The project total is \$900,000. The River Fund grant will complete fundraising for the design of the park paving the way for further development and fundraising goals. We will also need a geotechnical report from an engineering firm to complete our site design. We will apply for matching funds for this approximately \$4900 report.
4. **Cultural Resource Management:** Cultural Resource Management (CRM) requirements for any activity related to this Project must be completed and documented to NorthWestern Energy as a condition of awarded River Fund grant funds or NorthWestern Energy matching funds. Grant and matching funds may not be used for any land-disturbing activity, or the modification, renovation, or removal of any buildings or structures until the CRM consultation process has been completed. Agency applicants must submit a copy of the proposed project to a designated Cultural Resource Specialist for their agency. Private parties or non-governmental organizations are encouraged to submit a copy of their proposed project to a CRM consultant they may have employed. Private parties and non-governmental organizations may also contact the NorthWestern Energy representative for further information or assistance. Applications submitted without this section completed will be held without any action until the information has been submitted.

Summarize how you will complete requirements for Cultural Resource Management.

- ▶ This is a design project so no CRM will be required at this phase.

5. **Scoring Criteria.** Respond to the following Scoring Criteria. Put answers in the cell after ►.

5.1 Does the project occur at a 2188 license site?

- No, Elks Riverside Park is not a 2188 site.

5.2 Project is for operation and maintenance of an existing recreation site. Describe if the project will meet operation and maintenance needs. Higher points awarded to projects that are higher priority and are not a recurring expense. Lower points awarded to projects that are low priority and/or have been previously funded. It is unlikely that the timeframe of River Fund would address emergency operation and maintenance needs but could support non-emergency operation and maintenance needs.

- This is a new recreation site. It is part of the existing Elks Riverside Park. This area of the park has been chosen for its visibility and its proximity to existing amenities (trails, parking, and bathrooms). The Parks and Recreation Department of Great Falls will maintain the park once it has been completed. The Great Falls Bike club will assist in maintenance with yearly trail-work days at the park and further developments as needed.

5.3 Project involves collaboration with other agencies or organizations. Identify project partners other than NorthWestern Energy or River Fund, if any, and describe their participation. Document all funding sources and all in-kind support and services to a project because all are sources of partnerships and in-kind contributions from public agencies qualify for calculation of NorthWestern Energy matching funds. If there are no project partners, explain why.

- The City of Great Falls, Parks and Recreation will fund most of the project and perform annual maintenance.

The Great Falls Bike Club has raised \$21,100 from private donations and will assist in building and maintaining the park annually. The bike club will continue to raise donations to meet its goal of \$100,000 by 2025. The donated funds are kept in the 'People's Parks and Recreation Fund', a local non-profit dedicated to improving Great Falls local parks. All donations are tax deductible and funds raised cannot be used for any other purpose than the bike park.

River's Edge Trail Foundation will build connector trails from the new park to the established trail system.

Visit Great Falls (Great Falls Tourism) is a supporter. (See letter of support)

Downtown Great Falls Association is a supporter. (See letter of support)

5.4 Project provides a benefit to public recreation in the Project Area and addresses specific issues and goals of the Missouri-Madison Comprehensive Recreation Plan (CRP). Identify how the project provides a benefit to public recreation and describe how the project specifically addresses issues and goals in Chapter 2-1 of the CRP.

- The Electric City Bike Park fits the CRP goals by offering "experiences across a spectrum of opportunities" and by "maintaining open space" along the riverbank. The bike park is a new recreational facility that does not currently exist in the river corridor. The Park maintains open space by converting an underutilized space into highly visible infrastructure in a uniquely urban space while leaving the shoreline intact. Users will be diverse in age and background for this new recreational opportunity.

5.5 Project responds to a clearly identified need. Describe and document the need for this project and how the project would address that need. Cite specific sources, as possible, to establish need and support the project. Discuss consequences if the funding request is unsuccessful. For a new construction or acquisition project, identify how post-project, long-term costs (such as site maintenance and management) will be provided.

- ▶ Limited open space and access to recreational opportunities is a major problem in growing urban areas. Often the only opportunities for recreation along the river are in limited public access areas. Areas within The City of Great Falls are of particular importance as these areas are the closest areas to the highest concentration of people. Connectivity to the community is important, but a limited number of available activities limits the users. This bike park would create a new opportunity for children and young adults. The only similar space along the river corridor is the Riverside Railyard public skate park on the south end of Elks Riverside Park. This venue is overcrowded at peak times of day. Our project meets the stated goal of the Comprehensive Recreation Plan to create more trails, unique user experiences and alleviate congestion in public space. This project has particular importance for the city of Great Falls.

The Great Falls Master plan was created from an independent audit of city amenities and attractions for tourism and industry. It was completed in 2013. This audit identified key areas in which the City of Great Falls can improve its tourism and industry recruitment. The key point from this working group was that the river corridor was underutilized and should be the focus of economic revitalization for the city. This master plan is the current working plan for the city of Great Falls. Within this plan recreation on the river corridor was a key focus for improvement. The Great Falls Parks and Recreation Department similarly focuses on trails as a focal point for resident recreation opportunities. Within this, biking is a highly desirable focus for the Parks and Recreation Dept. This bike park responds to the stated needs of both the City of Great Falls and the CRP's goals by providing healthful "family based" activities.

The first hurdle to building this bike park is obtaining the architectural design for the park. If this fund does not grant the funding for this project the project may be set back for a time if other funds are not obtained equating to the amount asked for by Spring of 2024. This could impact approval of the park in conjunction with remediation of the water main construction project that will precede the bike park project. We are currently working as a group of impassioned citizens to obtain donations for the project. It is a slow process, but it is working. Obtaining a larger grant from the MMRF and possible matching funds from Northwestern Energy for required geotechnical reports for the area will allow us to purchase the design and leverage direct public funding over an expedited time frame. The director of Great Falls Parks and Recreation has written a letter of support for this project indicating his appreciation for this project and its value to the community. As have the Great Falls Tourism Office, The Rivers Edge Trail Foundation, and the Downtown Great Falls Association.

5.6 Project design options have been considered, estimated, and a preferred design selected. Well-designed projects reduce occurrences of budgetary overages, design changes, and additional complications. Discuss the current design phase for this project, demonstrate that the project has been well vetted, and include cost estimates.

- ▶ The design of the park will be handled by Velosolutions (see example pics below). They are an international bike park designer and builder with a good reputation. They have handled design and build projects both nationally and internationally. They will work with local materials and companies and have options for donated materials and labor to reduce overall costs, which we have started lining up. We are working on architectural design and have city resources for topographic maps and other site-specific resources. Our partners at the River's Edge Trail Foundation have agreed to lend support with paving equipment once it is needed for this project. The most current communication with Velosolutions indicated that a 30,000 sq ft bike park would be \$900,000 all included but depends on the design and the donated labor and materials.

5.7 Project supports or protects other resources and is consistent with or supports resource plans in the Project Area. Describe how this project will protect resource values (such as public access, water quality, fisheries, wildlife, habitats, and cultural resources) and support other resource and agency plans, including Project 2188 License plans and land use and land management plans in place in the Corridor. Management plans should provide justification for the project.



The Economic Development Plan for the City of Great Falls states that the Missouri River is the greatest cultural asset to the development and improvement of our city's future. Economic downturns and major industry departures have hurt the city center particularly hard. This park aligns with the City's initiative to reimagine the downtown district and make it a gathering place for the wider region.

The stretch of the Missouri river located above the falls has long been a gathering point for civilizations past and present. From the time the bison herds used it as a place to ford the great river to modern times when railroads spanned it for commerce people have gathered here. Recent economic shifts have left Great Falls with the problem of how to reinvent itself. Redevelopment of Riverside Park into a free and open public event space is a long-term goal of the City of Great Falls (see City of Great Falls Plan/Downtown Master Plan & City of Great Falls Parks and Recreation Master Plan). With this bike park and the other amenities currently located here, this space will once again welcome people to gather at the riverside as people have done there for thousands of years.

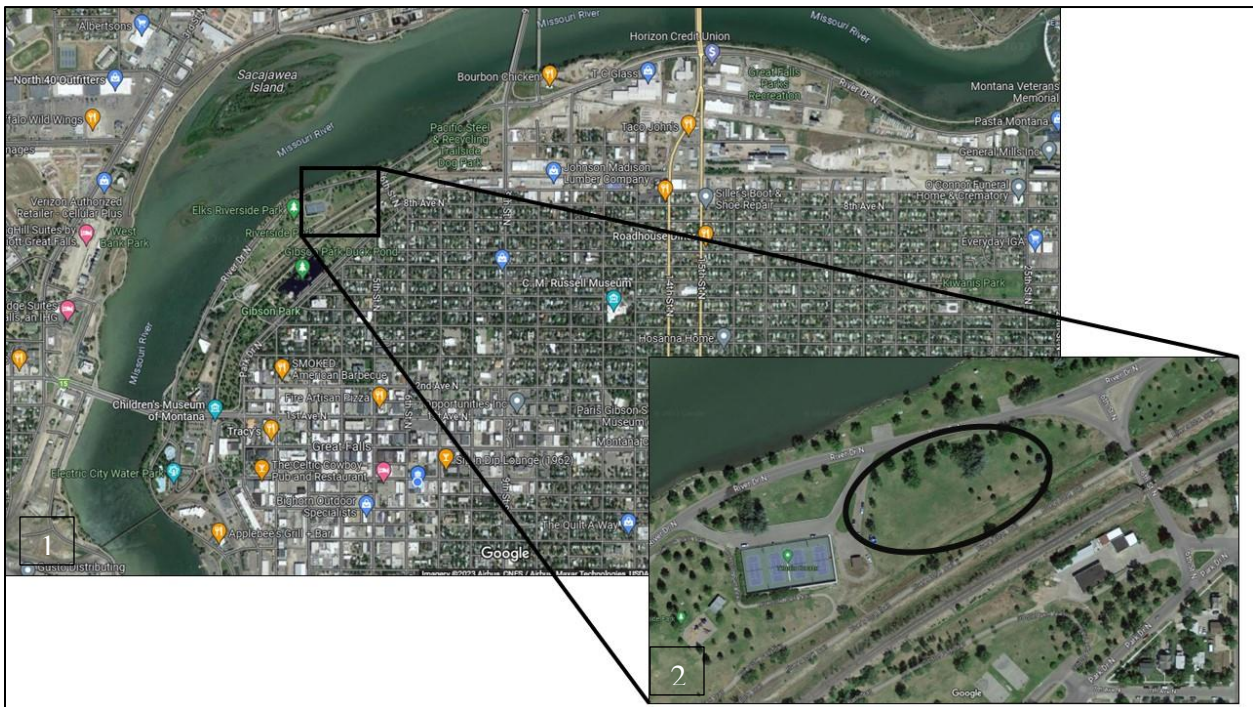
City of Great Falls Plan/Downtown Master Plan -

<https://greatfallsmt.net/planning/comprehensive-planning>

City of Great Falls Parks and Recreation Master Plan -

<https://greatfallsmt.net/recreation/park-recreation-master-plan>

6. Insert map(s) showing the location of the proposed project, drawings and design work related to the project, and a reasonable number of photos (as available) here.



Location Map: Overview map (1) showing park location on the South bank of the Missouri between the 1st Ave N bridge and the 9th St N bridge. Inset (2) showing more detail of immediate vicinity of park between River Drive and the River's Edge Trail.



Example design (1) provided by Velosolutions and pictures (2,3) of built tracks in use.