

Proposal Narrative

1. Organizational Information

- a) **Mission:** Page Valley Cycling (PVC) strives to promote bicycling in Page County and the surrounding region as a means of transportation, fitness, recreation, and athletic competition. Our club's long-term goal is to increase ridership in Page County and the Shenandoah Valley by people of all ages and skill levels. To meet this goal, we offer:
- **Education**, in the form of children's bicycle rodeos, bicycle maintenance clinics, beginner's instruction, safety courses, and community awareness campaigns
 - **Opportunity**, in the form of multi-level group rides, local racing and recreational events, and youth cycling programs
 - **Location**, in the form of safe roads, paths, and trails to ride

Founded in June of 2007 to unite local cyclists with the common goal of promoting bicycling in the region, we celebrated a stellar first year. Currently, club membership counts thirty-six and rising. With little to no overhead costs, we are able to use our monetary and human resources to focus on carrying out our aforementioned mission.

- b) **Past Successes:** Since Page Valley Cycling's founding just eighteen months ago, our members have put in countless hours bringing safe cycling opportunities to the community. In addition to leading regular weekly rides, members received sawyer certification by the National Forest Service, provided safety checks for over forty participants at bike rodeo, volunteered as bike course marshals at local triathlon, advised community college students during formation of their own cycling club, and fostered relationships with local politicians...and that is just the beginning!

We are proud to say that Page Valley Cycling received the "2008 Rookie Promoters of the Year" award from the Virginia Cycling Association for our two successful state-championship road races held in August. In conjunction with the two races, we hosted a community festival highlighting local musicians and artisans as well. By bringing approximately 500 cyclists and their families to the area, the races and festival generated revenue for area businesses and exposed Page County residents to the sport of cycling.

During the planning and execution of these two road races and festival, we:

- Sought out and received monetary and in-kind sponsorship from local businesses to make the races possible--Luray Caverns, Hawksbill Bicycles, East Coast Bicycle Academy, Hefler Performance Coaching, Pioneer Bank, and Shenandoah River Outfitters
- Worked with area cycling clubs to put together a volunteer force of over thirty individuals--Racing Union, Evolution Cycling, and Winchester Wheelmen
- Made valuable contacts with governing associations to make sure the race ran smoothly--Virginia Cycling Association (VCA), Mid Atlantic Bicycle Racing Association (MABRA), and USA Cycling
- Developed relationships with local town and county officials to ensure the success of this and future events--Page County's Sheriff's Department, Rescue Squad, Board

of Directors, Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Stanley's Manager and Police Department

2. Purpose of the Grant

SITUATION

- a) **Need:** What's the bottom line? *The Big Gem trails and pump track will offer an off-road cycling venue for beginning cyclists who are area residents and tourists alike. This will increase the rider base in our region considerably and bring much needed business to local bicycle retailers and other tourism-related businesses.*

The changing economy hit the Town of Shenandoah and Page County early on in its downward spiral. In the past, various manufacturing industries employed a large percentage of area residents. Those plants and factories are all but relics now. Since that time, the Town of Luray (the County seat) has made a concerted effort to shift successfully towards a tourism-based economy. However, the outlying townships, including Shenandoah, still struggle in this effort, The Town of Shenandoah knows all too well the importance of improving their existing Parks and Recreation offerings, not only to draw in tourism dollars, but also to reenergize their citizens. They work hard towards this goal, but with limited means, the improvements are few and far between.

This June, Page Valley Cycling presented the Town of Shenandoah with a proposal to construct mountain bicycle/ multi-use trails and a pump track in the largely undeveloped 68-acre area known as Big Gem Park. *The Town of Shenandoah, and indeed all of Page County, needs the Big Gem project to draw in tourist traffic and to give kids and their families a place to play. Page Valley Cycling, and indeed cyclists from across the region, need the project to remedy the lack of beginners' level off-road cycling opportunities and to get kids and their families passionate about bicycling.* In the end, everyone benefits.

Knowing the Town's limitations, we offered to acquire funding, arrange for professional trail design, provide volunteer construction crew, and assist in on-going trail maintenance. The Town was impressed with our proposal and agreed to collaborate with our organization on the Big Gem project. They gladly offered the assistance of their Parks and Recreation and Public Works employees and access to Town equipment, tools, and any surplus materials.

Time is of the essence for this project. We have worked hard over the last few months to gain the interest of our community, bicycle retailers, cycling clubs and organizations, and politicians alike. Now it is time to turn their "interest" into investment. *With tight budgets in mind, it is imperative for Page Valley Cycling and the Town of Shenandoah to begin trail construction as soon as possible in order to make the best of the momentum we have already worked hard to achieve.*

- b) **Environment:** Situated in the Shenandoah Valley between the Blue Ridge and Massanutten Mountains, Page County covers 314 square miles of rural land at various elevations between 570' and 4050'. The County's main highways and back

roads are very scenic but unfortunately offer little or no shoulder for a bicyclist's safe refuge. Although Page County is not a high traffic area, roads wind through hilly terrain and offer limited visibility between a cyclist and the generally fast-moving vehicles. These scenic country routes are often intimidating and sometimes dangerous for the beginning bicyclist. The local George Washington National Forest lands offer many trails for bicyclists' use, but the terrain is treacherous. These rocky off-road trails are suited for more advanced riders. ***Thus, the County is in need of acceptable locations for beginning cyclists to improve their skills safely both on- and off-road.***

Since 2004, the Page County community has overwhelmingly supported the Town of Luray in four phases of construction of a paved 2.25-mile multi-use path, the Luray-Hawksbill Greenway. The Luray-Hawksbill Greenway project generated over \$200,000 in local donations and over \$600,000 in federal, state, and private grant money. The Greenway offers a great location for beginning bicyclists to experience cycling on *paved* surfaces. It is now widely used by walkers, joggers, and leisure cyclists alike. ***However, to date, there are no natural surface off-road trails suitable for beginner bicyclists in the Page County area.***

The greater Shenandoah Valley region has the makings of a true cycling hub...but we are not there yet. IMBA Trail Solutions' Rich Edwards agrees. As a trail designer who lives in the Valley, Rich is one of this project's greatest allies. His vision of making the area an IMBA Ride Center aligns perfectly with the Big Gem trails and pump track project. Rich believes IMBA's "Gateway Trails" (see attachment) are the beginnings of a great bike park for the area and has offered his design services free-of-charge. ***IMBA, too, believes the addition of the Big Gem trails and pump track will put "more people on bicycles more often."***

We realize, however, that this project will take more than just the help of IMBA. We have developed strong relationships with many other organizations in order to make this project a reality. ***We will lessen our three possible obstacles, volunteer force, funding sources, and unauthorized motor vehicle use in park, through strategic partnerships.***

First, we will call upon the community and other local cycling clubs to help form our volunteer force. Of those organizations, the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition (SVBC) will be a particularly important resource. SVBC has a very strong mountain biking constituency and recently worked on a similar trails project with the City of Harrisonburg.

Second, we will utilize the marketing efforts of one of our projects biggest cheerleaders, the Page County Chamber of Commerce, to help us reach out to potential business donors and increase public goodwill. We will also consult with the Town of Luray Parks and Recreation Department to mirror their successful funding of the Luray-Hawksbill Greenway.

Lastly, we will work with Shenandoah's Parks and Recreation employees, police force, and concerned citizens to deter ATV's and motorized dirt bikes from using

the trails during construction and after completion. With their vigilant watch, the placement of signs in key locations, and most important, the implementation fines or vehicle seizures—unauthorized ATV’s and motorized dirt bikes will find elsewhere to ride.

SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES: Short-term Goals

c) Goals: The short-term goals of the proposed Big Gem Park mountain bicycle trails and pump track are as follows—

- Get permission from Town to use Big Gem Park
- Design and plan beginners’ off-road mountain bike trails and pump track
- Acquire funding for bike park
- Clear land
- Build trails and track
- Complete Big Gem mountain bike trails and pump track

d) Action Plan:

Goals	Action Steps	Persons/Groups Responsible	Expected Completion Dates
Get permission from Town of Shenandoah	Met with Parks and Recreation Department	David Duke and Kevin Kite (PVC president and secretary)	June 2008
	Prepared proposal for Town Council	Lois Duke (PVC member/volunteer technical writer)	June 2008
	Presented proposal to Town Council	David and Lois Duke, Kevin Kite (PVC)	June 2008
Acquire funding for bike park	Develop and implement community fundraisers;	Page Valley Cycling (PVC)	Ongoing May 2008- August 2009
	Bicycle Raffle with Hawksbill Bicycles at Luray Triathlon	Hawksbill Bicycles and PVC volunteers	August 2008
	Research and apply for grant support (including Bikes Belong, DCR’s Virginia Recreational Trail Funds Program, and various IMBA grants)	Lois Duke (PVC)	Ongoing May 2008- August 2009
	Town Council voted to officially partner with PVC for grant application process	Lois Duke (PVC)	August 2008
Design and plan mountain bike trails and pump track	Research IMBA’s guidelines for trail building and trail management	Lois and David Duke, Kevin Kite, Ken Koontz, Mark Benson (PVC volunteers)	Ongoing May 2008- August 2008
	Contact Rich Edwards at IMBA Trail Solutions	David Duke (PVC)	June 2008

	Acquire access to GIS data for IMBA	Lois Duke (PVC), Juanita Roudabush (Assistant Town Manager)	June 2008-August 2008
	Meet with Rich Edwards (IMBA) for Big Gem walk-through and preliminary design discussion	David and Lois Duke, Kevin Kite (PVC), Keith Sampson (Town Chair of Parks and Rec. Committee), town volunteers	June 2008
	Request IMBA Trail Care Crew Visit	Lois Duke (PVC)	November 2008
	Purchase tools	David Duke (PVC)	December 2008
	Trail design completion	Rich Edwards (IMBA)	December 2008
Clear land and build trails	Flag trails	Rich Edwards (IMBA), David Duke (PVC)	January 2009
	Clear trail corridor and track ground	Town employees, community volunteers, PVC	January 2009-April 2009
	Host IMBA Trail Care Crew Trailbuiding School	PVC, IMBA, Town, volunteers	April 2009
	Complete trails and pump track	PVC, IMBA, Town, volunteers	June 2009
	Install signage	PVC, IMBA, Town, volunteers	July 2009
Complete Big Gem trails and track	Plan and implement Grand Opening Celebration	PVC, Town	July 2009

IMPACT OF YOUR WORK: **Long-term Goals**

e) Deliverables: Measurable outcomes of this project begin with the successful completion of the Big Gem trails and pump track. The completed bike park will include approximately two miles of beginners level off-road bicycle trails around the perimeter of the park, an additional mile of intermediate trail criss-crossing the park’s center, and a pump track for use by BMX or mountain bicycles.

Successful completion of the bike park means the club will have accomplished action steps in a timely manner and within the set budget parameters. In the event that we cannot meet the action steps on schedule or complete the project within budget due to unforeseen circumstances, adequate plan adjustments (complete only perimeter trail or use less contracted labor) should compensate for the changes in order to meet the completion date and overall budget.

Another prospective outcome of the completed Big Gem bicycle trails and pump track is an increase in the number of beginner mountain BMX bicyclists in the area. We will gauge this increase in one of several ways. First, Big Gem Park will draw a growing number of riders in the first year it is open to the public. Second, local bike shops will notice an increase in entry-level and other mountain bike sales. Last, the club will draw an increased number of members from exposure to group activities at the park.

- f) **Ridership:** The estimated population within Page County is currently close to 25,000, and within a fifty-mile radius from the county's center, the current population estimate is around 250,000. Although decidedly not an accurate indicator of the total number of cyclists in the vicinity, the club's current membership base (36) is used here as a low projection of *active* cyclists in the immediate Page County area. Page Valley Cycling feels this number is painfully low and strives to see club membership at least double over the next two years as an indicator of parallel increased ridership.

3. Evaluation

- a) **Measurability:** The number of people who are using the Big Gem Park bicycle facilities both immediately after completion and at various points in the future will undoubtedly be the greatest indicator of this project's success. The club's strategy for determining these numbers is threefold.

First, designated club members and Town workers will ride/walk the trails and take counts at different times of the day at various points in the week over a specified period of time. Additionally, all members of the club will informally track the dates, times and number of users at the park when they ride the trails or perform trail maintenance. Twice annually, club members will poll park users with a satisfaction survey to determine areas of success and possible improvement.

Second, the club will maintain records of the number of riders who participate in beginners group rides, skills clinics, and trail maintenance sessions at the park once it is open. We will also track the number of bicyclists interested in group rides and trail maintenance at more advanced mountain bike trails in the George Washington National Forest. Finally, we will record new membership numbers carefully as well.

Third, we will ask local bike shops to provide annual data regarding mountain bike, BMX and accessory sales. In addition, we will utilize the same bicycle retailers as a valuable resource for user feedback.

The club will record and compile this information for at least a one-year period. After one year, we will evaluate these methods of measurement usability. We will make changes to the methods as necessary and then collect further data.

- b) **Replicability:** Our project could serve as a model for other communities wishing to develop small-scale bike parks in several ways. The partnership between the Town and Page Valley Cycling is a perfect solution for a community with lots of will power but little funding. We will accomplish together what would have been close to impossible for either one of us alone. In addition, the design concept itself encourages bicyclists to ride, not drive, to the park with community access trailheads outnumbering parking areas. This gets people to think about bicycling as a form of recreation, exercise *and* transportation while making the features at Big Gem even more family-friendly. Lastly, we plan for Big Gem to make the concept of mountain biking accessible. Many times, non-cyclists think of mountain biking as dangerous or intimidating. The trails and pump track at Big Gem will be an opportunity for even the timid to get out and give bicycling a try!

4. Project Budget

a) Total Budget:

Big Gem Trails and Pump Track Total Budget \$53,300	
Trail Design and Flagging	Total \$10,000
Services to be donated by Rich Edwards of IMBA Trail Solutions	
Labor	Total \$29,300
Project labor will be a hybrid of contracted trailbuilders, Town employees, and volunteers	
Professional trailbuilders (IMBA Trail Solutions)	\$16,000
Town employees	\$3,500
Skilled volunteer labor	\$4,400
Unskilled volunteer labor	\$6,100
Tools	Total \$5,000
Trails will be built with both mechanized and hand tools	
Mechanized tool use and fuel	\$3,000
Hand tool purchase	\$2,000
Materials	Total \$
Bridge decking	\$2,000
Trailhead kiosks	\$6,000
Trail markers	\$300

b) Other Funding:

Service Donations (committed)	Total \$10,000
IMBA Trail Solutions (trail design and flagging)	\$10,000
Foundation Grants (proposed to match above)	Total \$10,000
Money requested form Bikes Belong (pending)	\$10,000
Other Grants (received)	Total \$500
Clif Bar/ IMBA Trail Preservation Grant	\$500
Materials and Equipment Use (committed)	Total \$3,000
Town of Shenandoah	\$3,000
Labor (committed and proposed)	Total \$14,000
Town of Shenandoah (committed)	\$3,500
Page Valley Cycling, community members, and other organizations	\$10,500
Page Valley Cycling Fundraising (completed and proposed)	Total \$6,350
Bicycle Raffle	\$850
Page Valley Road Races	\$1,500
TBA (proposed)	\$4,000
Other In-Kind Donations (proposed)	\$6,000
Other Direct Sponsor Contributions (proposed)	Total \$3,450

5. Additional Information

FINANCIALS

a) Financial Statements

Page Valley Cycling has low overhead costs and thus has no need to generate large amounts of revenue. During the 2007 fiscal year, the club collected \$500 in membership dues and \$1,750 in sponsorship funds for the Page Valley Road Race. The total revenue

generated in 2007 was \$2,250. The club's expenses for the year were \$286. Page Valley Cycling was exempt from tax payment for this period. For detailed bank records, contact Pioneer Bank at 540-743-7181 and speak with the business department.

b) Organizational Budget

Page Valley Cycling 2008 Organizational Budget	
Office supplies and printing	\$300
Post office box	\$35
Website fees (annual)	\$100
Insurance	\$240
Organizational memberships	\$100
Jersey design and printing set-up	\$500
Page Valley Road Races and Festival	\$11,732

OTHER SUPPORTING MATERIALS

c) Support Letters

See attachments.

d) List of Board Members

See following for Page Valley Cycling Officer list.

See attached for information provided by Town of Shenandoah.

Page Valley Cycling 2008 Officers	
David Duke	President (Owner Hawksbill Bicycles)
Brad Arehart	Vice President (Vice President Pioneer Bank)
Gary Drum	Treasurer (Owner Appalachian Outdoors Adventures)
Kevin Kite	Secretary (Kiariz Coffee)

e) Maps

Rich Edwards is not scheduled to complete the design for the Big Gem Park project until December. Please see attached preliminary plan for the Park provided by the Town without the inclusion of trails and pump track in conjunction with this link http://www.imba.com/news/news_releases/10_08/GatewayTrails.pdf for an idea of what our project will entail. The trails will primarily skirt the perimeter of the park and the pump track will be constructed within view of the baseball fields.

f) Media Articles

Not applicable at this time.