

## **Project Narrative**

### **Project Description**

The City of Jonesboro will install a pumptrack bicycle course at Craighead Forest Park where bicyclists of all ages alike can gather and test their skills and abilities on this three-mile course. This pumptrack project will consist of a rubberized/dirt tracks with ladders, bumps, rollers and turns that will provide different terrains to the individual's experience. In addition to the pumptrack course request, the Parks and Recreation Department will request the purchase of a water bottle filling station, benches, trash receptacles, ADA compliant sidewalks and a six-space parking.

### **SCORP Priorities**

#### Priority:

- *Conserve natural and recreation resources for future generations.* Craighead Forest Park is considered as the hidden jewel for not only Jonesboro but for all of Northeast Arkansas. This park consists of 680 acres of fishing, boating, paved and unpaved pedestrian trails, playgrounds, camping grounds, ATV trails, ballfields and other amenities. The City of Jonesboro has designated one full time employee as overseer of this park to ensure the maintenance and security is in place at all times. However, there is always more that can be achieved. This project would allow the City to maximize the park's usage by offering more bicycle tracks along with the trails constructed for pedestrians, to provide a variety of exercise and skills enhancement for those individuals of all ages. The pumptrack course will significantly increase the awareness, safety, and skill sets to an already large population of bicyclist in the region as a recreational and healthy activity. This course will be preserved for years to come for our future generations of bicyclists in Northeast Arkansas.

#### Goal:

- *Ensure adequate care, protection and maintenance of existing recreational facilities and areas.* The City of Jonesboro has a full time staff within the Parks and Recreation Department that manages and maintains the Craighead Forest Park daily. In fact, there is 24/7 on-site supervision of this park. This staff member will maintain the pumptrack course and the amenities on a weekly basis. If additional staff are required, the City of Jonesboro will send other personnel to the site in order to ensure adequate coverage of services have been provided, or to hire additional employees to ensure the project is maintained, protected, and in good working order.

#### Strategies:

- *Allocate funding for facility development.* The City of Jonesboro has allocated the \$98,966 cash needed to construct this course track. Annually, the City of Jonesboro allocates about \$1.8 million for the Parks and Recreation Department to maintain all of its many parks and recreational centers throughout the city.
- *Engage volunteers and support organizations to provide assistance in park preservation, protection, and maintenance.* City Water and Light (CWL) – a public corporation that the

City of Jonesboro collaborates with regularly will provide in-kind contributions through its utility connections for the water bottle station to ensure proper services are provided to the citizens of Jonesboro. In addition, the Jonesboro Engineering Department will provide some in-kind services for the site plans for the pumphtrack course prior to installation.

Craighead Forest Park covers over 680 acres of fishing, boating, paved and unpaved trails, playgrounds, camping grounds, ATV trails, ballfields and other amenities, as well as, the headquarters for the Northeast Arkansas Game and Fish Commission offices. An average of 750,000 visitors come to the park on annual basis. This project will be utilized and will have a large return on investment for the funds, time, equipment, or labor applied to this project.

### **Need for Assistance**

Currently, Craighead Forest Park has several trails for bikers and runners; however, the trails do not provide different tracks for the bicyclist looking for a challenge. This project would be considered as an inexpensive cost that will have an enormous impact on Jonesboro by attracting visitors to spend their money in our economy. This activity increases recreational and healthy activity for residents and visitors alike while preserving for future generations.

This pumphtrack project will consist of a rubberized/dirt tracks with ladders, bumps, rollers and turns that will provide different terrains to the individual's experience. In addition to the pumphtrack course request, the Parks and Recreation Department will request the purchase of a water bottle filling station, benches, trash receptacles, ADA compliant sidewalks and a six-space parking. The utility connections will be provided by CWL as an in-kind contribution and have been estimated. The items for the Pumphtrack Project will be required in order to complete the course for gain its full effect. The site chosen was primarily based upon the availability of open space and the vicinity to utilities and roads for easy access and to other amenities.

The City of Jonesboro has not had addition revenues through sales taxes nor does the City have a hamburger tax for its parks. This lack of revenue has reduced the funding levels for implementation of new activities and/or facilities for the Parks and Recreation Department. However, quality of life is a high priority for the City; therefore, maintaining and improving the parks and recreation sites and facilities are important to establish and offer the amenities residents' desire and deserve. This request for \$98,966 in cash to match shows the City's commitment to this project and to its residents. This assistance allows the City of Jonesboro to maximize the \$98,966 cash match for the total project of \$197,931 excluding the in-kind services to the project.

### **Benefits Expected**

Bicyclists from Northeast Arkansas will come to ride the trails at Craighead Forest Park, but with the additional bicycle track course, more cyclists will come and more often. Currently, Northeast Arkansas does not have this type of course track for the cyclist looking for adventure and

healthier recreational activities. There will mostly likely be a sharp increase of usage of the course and the overall park amenities for those wanting a multi-activity park that caters to their recreational activities. This pumptrack project will provide additional amenities not only for Jonesboro bicyclists, but also for others making this 680 acre park their jeweled destination. Visitors will come to Jonesboro and will spend the weekend, stay in our hotels, eat in our restaurants, and shop in our stores. There is both a quality of life benefit, as well as, an economic development benefit from this project. The return on investment will be a significantly increased quality of life, as well as hundreds of thousands in sales tax revenue in the years to come.

### **Agreements**

The City of Jonesboro owns all property related to the proposed project. There is no lease agreement on the property. The City of Jonesboro Parks and Recreation Department manages the daily operations of the entire 680-acre park; therefore, there is no operational agreement associated with this project.

### **Income Produced**

This is a city owned and operated park managed by Parks and Recreation Department with sales tax funds provided annually. There are no activities from this project that will produce income.

### **Competition**

The closest mountain bike trails are at Village Creek State Park in Wynne, Arkansas, which is not same as a pumptrack course. The closest pumptrack trail is in Clarksville, Tennessee in their Rotary Park Loop. In fact, the eastern half of the State of Arkansas is bare in terms of mountain bike trails. According to <https://www.arkansasstateparks.com/biking/>, there are 11 such mountain bike trails in Arkansas and 1 pumptrack course in Fort Smith, Arkansas, most of which are located in the northern and northwest section of the state. Craighead Forest Park is a great location for this type of course with its numerous trails. Unfortunately, due to the lack of variety of course tracks, it has not been considered of among cyclists as a “destination,” however, this project will inevitably change the perception of the park making it a great destination for Eastern Arkansas, Western Tennessee, and the Missouri Bootheel bicyclists.

## **Parks & Recreation Department Director's Information**

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Wixson has served the City of Jonesboro as the Director of Parks and Recreation Department for six years.

## **Directions**

4910 S. Culberhouse Road, Jonesboro, AR 72404.

Turn right onto Parker Road from Southwest Drive/Highway 226 then turn right at the red light onto South Culberhouse (approximately 0.01 miles from Parker Road). Continue on South Culberhouse until you reach the park entrance, turn left into Craighead Forest Park. Drive to the stop sign, make a right then turn left onto Access Road #5. The destination is on the left about 0.02 miles.

## **Overhead Utility Lines Statement**

There are no overhead utility lines in the project area. There are lines located outside of the project area, but there are no plans to extend the lines within the project boundary.

