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trail design-consultancy-construction

HOW TO GET A MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL/FACILITY IN YOUR TOWN: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

As mountain biking continues to boom in popularity, dedicated riding facilities are being developed at an unprecedented rate around the world. At Dirt Art our vision is to provide every Australian with access to a dedicated mountain bike facility. If you are feeling left out, and want a riding facility in your town, below is our brief step-by-step guide to getting started. Dirt Art have the expertise to help you with your project every step of the way, contact us for more information or assistance.

1. **ORGANISE YOURSELVES:** Gather a group of enthusiastic, dedicated trail users who show real interest in your project. You may have a tight group of riding friends, or you may also gather interest through a local cycling club. Search out others in your area with experience in these type of projects. If you can find a government insider, such as a council natural areas manager or sport and recreation manager who supports your cause, you're off to an even better start. Local councillors/alderman are also worth investigating, their contact details are readily available on all council websites. Councillors/alderman are the people who will ultimately vote to support/dismiss your project so getting them on side is an excellent starting point.
2. **DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT:** Get together and decide what it is you actually want. Aim high, but be realistic. You probably won't be able to get a 4 million dollar bike park in a small country town. Aim for trail infrastructure which suits your area, i.e. you can't build a downhill track in a flat paddock. Contact Dirt Art for help deciding on what type of facility will best suit your user demographic and site.
3. **EXPLORE SUITABLE SITES:** Finding a suitable site can be difficult, and that is without even considering ownership/management the site. Below are a few suggestions when searching for the ultimate site for your park. For more detailed information see our "choosing-you-site" PDF:

- (a) **LAND OWNER-** crown land will always be easier to acquire trails on. If possible crown land is typically a good place to start. Parks and Wildlife (or similar local agency), and private land is not a no-go, but will usually involve much more work. National parks are very hard to build new trails in.
- (b) **SITE SPECIFICS-** Consider the following points, access, elevation, soil type, potential for future development, ecological values (you are more likely to get a degraded site), water supply, etc.

4. **WRITE A COVER LETTER & PROPOSAL:** We suggest writing a cover letter introducing yourselves, and outlining what it is you are after. Be succinct, clear, and ensure you have your spelling and punctuation covered. Attached to your cover letter should be a fairly detailed proposal. Start with a brief introduction to the sport, as some people may still not know what this sport is all about. Your proposal should outline what you are hoping to achieve. Outline what sort of tracks you are after, and the predicted size of the project. Discuss the benefits your project would provide the environment, and the surrounding community. Attach the Dirt Art land managers information PDF. Please contact us if you would like assistance writing your letter and proposal, or would like Dirt Art to approach council on your behalf.
5. **MAKE CONTACT:** If you do not have a link to your local council give them a ring and state who you are and why you are calling. Ask to have your call directed to an appropriate staff member. It will most likely be their sport and recreation officer, and/or a naturals areas manager/officer. Once you get through, introduce yourself, and your proposal, and ask if you can send in your proposal to them. Send your nicely packaged proposal in. Call them around a week later to see what they think.
6. **HOW MUCH DO TRAILS COST?** Dirt Art can only provide an accurate quote once we have surveyed your site. When quoting for trails we will quote you a per metre cost, which can be reduced by using some volunteer labour. When quoting for jump parks, four cross tracks, and other such facilities, our fee will depend on the size of your project. Very small mountain bike facilities can be built from \$30 000 plus, though you will generally need to aim for at least \$50 000 plus. Please contact us for more information on costing, or for a detailed quote.
7. **WHERE TO FIND FUNDING:** Often a good portion of your funding can be obtained from local government. This funding source will generally need to be supplemented by applying for government grants. These grants will often match the funding you have already obtained, thus doubling your money. Have a look at www.grantslink.gov.au for an idea of available grants. Your local council will also be aware of local grants, which may be available. Large private enterprise companies may also be worth approaching, particularly if they stand to gain some positive publicity from the development of the facility.
8. **CONTACT DIRT ART:** Now you are ready to go, contact us at Dirt Art. We will help you design and build a world-class facility in your town.