

Elsen, Nikki

From: Randi Pueschner | Smith's Bike Shop <randi@smithsbikes.com>
Sent: Friday, August 12, 2022 9:33 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: CIP Funding for Trails

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Dear Council Members,

As a business owner in the City of La Crosse and the President of ORA Trails, I am asking you to support CIP funding for our trail systems. Not only do our trails benefit our entire community by allowing our trail users a free option to get outdoors, destress, and enjoy quality time away from electronics, they have a huge impact on our local economy. Our trail systems have so much opportunity to bring in tourists who will spend money at our local shops, hotels, and gas stations. Trails also help attract top talent for our hospitals, universities, corporate businesses, and small businesses and make our community a more attractive place to start new businesses.

I grew up on French Island, a little too far away from the Hixon trails to get to them myself. As soon as I was able to make the trek to our trails, I've been immersed in them. At first, I was avidly running them every chance I could. This time away from the hustle and bustle of the city gave me a chance to slow down and reflect, and even think through some difficult decisions. If these trails weren't here, where would I have gone? I'm not really sure.

As I got older, I tried and fell in love with mountain biking. It's a hard skill that keeps me on my toes, growing confidence that bleeds over into my personal and professional life. When I'm on a bike, it's ok to learn and grow and tackle hard things without the scrutiny my professional life carries with it. Now, I bring my 6-year-old daughter with me and she has just blossomed! Instead of looking at things and saying, "that's too hard, I don't want to do it," she says, "Mommy, can I try that? Do you think I can do it?" What an awesome transformation.

Beyond that, my family travels all over Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan on family trips in search of cool towns with trails systems and we take our vacation budget with us and support those local towns. Recently, we've fallen in love with Marquette, MI and Hayward, WI. La Crosse has far more to offer than both of those places. Just imagine if we became known as a city with a cool trail system and how many visitors we would attract. Mountain bikers and hikers love adventure, and they love the amenities cities have to offer, like restaurants, breweries, and shops. Why not showcase our community the same way other trail-centric cities do?

I see nothing but possibilities. Support CIP funding for trails and help us invest in our future.

Randi Serres Pueschner, Owner | 608.386.3446



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