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Bike Park set to open north of downtown Sacramento

Grand opening Saturday for park with jumps and trails

Location at Township Nine development is temporary, but permanent site could open elsewhere



A worker waters down the jumping area at the new off road bike park set to open on Saturday.

BY BOB SHALLIT

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A 6-acre bike park designed to hone off-road riding skills is set to open Saturday, thanks to an unusual partnership between the city and the developer of the Township Nine housing community just north of downtown Sacramento.

The park will feature mounds of dirt for jumps, a pump track for fancy spins and a half-mile cross-country trail.

“This is something that’s going to activate the neighborhood, bringing people from downtown and midtown and elsewhere,” said Steve Goodwin, developer of the 65-acre Township Nine, where a 180-unit apartment has been built and more apartments, townhouses and retail operations are being planned.

Goodwin said he agreed to let the city use the land and pay for construction of the park at North Seventh and Vine streets after being approached with the idea by Terry Cox, owner of College Cyclery in the Land Park neighborhood and an avid off-road rider.

Goodwin is offering the land to the city under a “no rent” one-year renewable lease. Eventually Township Nine will reclaim the land for development and a new location will be found for the park if there’s enough demand, said Councilman Jeff Harris, who helped negotiate the deal.

“I think it’s going to be well-used and well-loved,” Harris said of the interim operation. When development occurs there, “We’ll look for a new permanent place and make it part of the city’s park system.”

WE REALLY HOPE IN THE LONG TERM THAT THIS WILL SHOW THERE’S DEMAND FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS CLOSE TO THE CENTRAL CITY.

Patty Kleinknecht, executive director of The River District

Cox, who later this year is opening a combination bike and coffee shop at Township Nine in partnership with Goodwin and local restaurateur Chris Jarosz, said progressive skills bike parks are becoming increasingly popular across the country.

“It’s such a great way to spend time with family and break down the generations,” he said. “Kids from 5 to 105 can enjoy the same thing.”

The new Sacramento park was designed by Randy Spangler, a trail specialist with the International Mountain Bicycling Association. It includes jumps and skill tests for beginning, intermediate and advanced off-road riders, Cox said.

The most prominent feature is the dirt jump area, where riders coast down a steep slope and then often go airborne as they navigate “tabletop” berms of varying difficulty. The adjoining pump track is like a skate park facility, Cox said, where riders glide up and down hills, executing spins, turns and jumps.

The perimeter cross-country loop has logs, rocks and other challenges that bicyclists can choose to take on or bypass. Also included is a short “strider loop,” where beginning riders can learn balance on bikes without pedals.

Saturday’s grand opening festivities start at 9:30 a.m. with a skills clinic and continue through the day with riding demonstrations and opportunities for visitors to try out the trails. Loaner bikes will be made available by College Cyclery, but riders must bring their own helmets.

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