

2018 IMBA Ride Center Application

1. Introduction

Who is IMBA?

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit whose mission is to create, enhance, and preserve great places to ride mountain bikes. IMBA is the leader in mountain bike advocacy, education, promotion and trail creation worldwide. Since 1988, IMBA has taught and encouraged low-impact riding, grassroots advocacy, sustainable trail design, innovative land management practices and cooperation among trail user groups. IMBA U.S. is a national network of local groups and individual riders and passionate volunteers working together for the benefit of the entire community. IMBA is headquartered in Colorado, but the team is spread across the U.S., from California to Virginia and several states in between.



What is an IMBA Ride Center?

The Ride Center™ designation represents IMBA's Model Trail recognition for large-scale mountain bike facilities that offer something for every rider. Bring your full arsenal of bikes to these destination-worthy areas. From backcountry adventures to shuttle-served gravity trails, and from expert-only to family-friendly, you'll encounter the best the sport has to offer. Ride Centers range from renowned Gold Level destinations like Park City, UT, and Oakridge, OR, to smaller towns that totally revolve around the ride like McCall, ID, or Marquette, MI.

IMBA Ride Centers are designed for every type of mountain biker, provide a positive mountain bike experience with progressive skill building, and include facilities that break down the barriers for entry with bike rentals, quality maps, clear signage, and available instruction or guiding. These model trail systems broaden the demographic of the mountain bike community by providing a model beginner experience that is family-friendly on the same site that challenges an expert rider. A Ride Center demonstrates the best practices in mountain bike trail design and construction for grassroots replication.

Ride Centers also bring major economic benefits to their host communities. IMBA has compiled resources that describe the ways that mountain biking supports tourism and enhances economic development in communities around the globe.

What are the core components of the Ride Center Designation?

This designation is designed to support local stakeholders and land managers in their efforts to create the ultimate mountain biking destinations. This designation is just as much about the process as the award itself. The application criteria serves as the blueprint for improving trail networks and is comprised of multiple factors measuring both trail experiences and surrounding community amenities.

The designation and rating (and potential delisting or demotion) of a Ride Center is based on clear criteria. Some criteria are necessarily subjective, but in all cases they relate to providing great riding opportunities.

The Ride Center application process consists of a self-evaluation, an in-person onsite professional assessment and review, a report detailing the findings and a thorough evaluation of the existing conditions, opportunities for growth, and recommendations on next steps to improving the trail system status.

Whether you are confident you will score well in the process or highly motivated to develop a road map, this process will provide great benefit to your mountain bike community and beyond. The evaluation criteria is comprised of key aspects that make an amazing mountain bike destination and include, but not are limited to: Trail Experiences, Services, Community Involvement, Tourism, Promotion, Marketing, Evaluation and Measurement.

Who benefits from an IMBA Ride Center?

IMBA Ride Centers have the ability to benefit multiple community stakeholders:

The Global Mountain Bike Community

The mountain bike community needs an upsurge in riding to build critical mass. In the last decade, the mountain bike community has grown in numbers, strengthened its national political voice, built its grassroots capacity, maintained and gained access to thousands of miles of trails, been recognized as trail experts and increased its global economic impact. In the next decade, the mountain bike community needs to broaden its demographic, to engage the next generation, to increase its political effectiveness on the local and statewide levels, and to put model mountain bike trails on the ground for mass replication.

The maturation of the mountain bike community is dependent upon the numbers. Currently, one in five Americans (40 million) rides a mountain bike every year, but less than 20% of those riders get out for more than two rides each month. Increasing the accessibility to trails is the best solution to getting those 30 million riders out riding more often. Further increasing the number of regular riders provides:

- A larger, more politically powerful voice that can result in more open space preservation, greater trail access, and increased validation of the mountain bike community as part of the public process.
- Increased capacity of local, grassroots mountain bike organizations to achieve their goals through local and regional community development, stewardship, and fundraising.

The Trails Community

Over the last 30 years, IMBA has taught the trails community the basics of sustainable trails, best practices in mountain bike management, and built demonstration trails around the world. IMBA has published three, highly acclaimed books on trail design, construction and management: "IMBA Trail Solutions," "Managing Mountain Biking", and "Bike Parks."

The trails community needs comprehensive model trail systems that can be centers for teaching sustainable trail building and management, innovating and testing new techniques, and conducting trail research. IMBA Ride Centers are model trails for all of the above, and the trails communities are actively engaged throughout the process.

Ride Center Host Communities

The world-class recreational trails and facilities offered at Ride Centers stimulate local economies, heighten local quality of life, inspire natural resource conservation, and encourage active lifestyles. Ride Center host communities become model trail communities – communities with a sustainable trails-based economy, healthy residents, and a high quality of living.

According to the USDA (2005 study), rural tourism and recreational development spikes employment growth rates, buoys earnings and income levels, lowers local poverty rates, and shepherds in improvements in local educational attainment and health. The potential economic impact of IMBA Ride Centers is two-fold: tourism dollars and property values.

Mountain bikers will travel hundreds of miles for high quality trails. According to a 2003 study, 80% of mountain bikers surveyed reported taking at least one trip that year exclusively to mountain bike, and the average trip length as 4.6 days (Green, 2003). According to most recreation studies, recreation-based tourists typically spend at least \$25 a day. Mountain bike tourism has the potential to redefine the economies of Ride Center communities:

- Following the development of a trails plan for the area surrounding the small town of Oakridge, OR, mountain bike tourism generated \$98.6 million in goods and services a year for the town in 2016.
- For a community of only 108 people, Copper Harbor, MI, (located at the farthest tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula) sees approximately 20,000 visitors a year to ride the trails in the area.
- Bike trails in the Moab, UT, area, a long-time mountain bike destination, produce a consumer surplus value of between \$197 and \$205 per trip, and the annual value of the trails is between \$8.4 and \$8.7 million (Fix and Loomis, 1999). Today, that number is likely much higher.

The economic impact of trails reaches beyond bike shops, gear rentals, guided tours, coffee shops and local restaurants; trails are also the most desired amenity of prospective homeowners (National Association of Homebuilders). Property values were 6% higher for homes adjacent to greenways in Seattle; 25% higher for homes in Boulder, CO, that are within 4,000 feet of a greenway; and 61% of Minnesota residents noted a property value increase due to the presence of a nearby trail.

Additionally, there is a national movement that has tied childhood obesity, attention deficit disorder, impaired social skills and a culture of depression with less time spent outdoors, more time using electronic technology, and little free and unstructured time. The benefits of getting kids outside have been well documented – and “nature deficit disorder” can be directly tied to lack of access to safe and fun places to exercise and play outdoors (Children and Nature Network website).

Who should apply to become an IMBA Ride Center?

Interested applicants can be land managers, IMBA chapters or local mountain bike groups, tourism or convention and visitor bureaus, and any stakeholder group in an area that desires to develop their community and trails system into a mountain bike destination. We highly recommend that applications are submitted by one organization or individual who is the lead on the project. The project lead should be part of a larger community group or committee working collectively to elevate the area’s status and engage all aspects of the surrounding region. It is also recommended that the land management agency is supportive of the community seeking the Ride Center designation.

2. Guide Notes - Read this first!

Application Timeline

1. Application and updated process and criteria will be made available to interested applicants in the spring of each year.
2. IMBA will accept applications within a specified timeframe each year.
3. Once applications are submitted, each community will be assigned a project manager to review the application and schedule on-site reviews to happen as reviewer capacity and weather permit.
4. Following the professional review process, a report will be developed.
5. After the completion of each review and report, the Ride Center review committee will assess all documents and reviews to make a recommendation for the current year's Ride Center class awards.
6. The designation award announcement will be made at a date to be determined each year.

Fees

Information on the program and the application criteria is available to anyone on imba.com. Should a community decide to participate in the program and work to receive a Ride Center designation there are fees associated with certain steps.

Application Fee: Following a self-evaluation, if an applicant determines they are a candidate for a Ride Center designation or that they intend to utilize the process as a road map to help them further develop their trail network, they can submit their application via the IMBA website along with the application fee of \$250. The fee covers the administrative cost of review and setup.

Professional Review Fees: Each applicant will be set up with a project manager who will work with them through the professional review process. The review process, as detailed above, includes a multi-day professional assessment of all the trails in the system; surrounding amenities; and trail management, tourism, and marketing best practices. The report and recommendations created will be extremely valuable in not only the Ride Center scoring and designation process but to help stakeholders evaluate next steps and plan for continued improvement.

Each review will be custom designed to the needs of the applicant and the range of fees associated with that contract will be clearly defined in a proposal before any costs are incurred. The following cost estimates are a range for new designations at each level:

- Bronze: 4-5 days at \$1000-1500 per day plus travel expenses and report generation

- Silver: 6-7 days at \$1000-1500 per day plus travel expenses and report generation
- Gold: 8-10 days at \$1000-1500 per day plus travel expenses and report generation

Renewals: Renewals of current designations will be completed based on a submission of existing conditions remaining concurrent with trail options, quality, and best practices measured in previous application. A renewal at the same level, if the applicant meets the current qualifications, will be good for an additional 4 years. The renewal process and award fees are \$1000 due during the application and review period of the current year Ride Center application class. If a current designation lapses more than 24 months from initial award expiration, they will be required to perform a full new designation review process.

Upgrades: Upgrades will be facilitated similar to new designation process with the time and trails evaluated being focused on the additional trail types and best practices the applicant is submitting for upgrade. An upgrade will require an in-person, on-site review and the fees associated with that process will be developed with the applicant prior to any expenses being incurred.

Existing Ride Centers: Ride Centers awarded their designation in 2014 or later will receive a 24-month extension to evaluate their current conditions based on the new criteria, and to develop steps necessary to achieve a designation under the new process and scoring.

Chapter Discount: A discount will be provided to Ride Center applicant communities that demonstrate strong engagement and connection with their local IMBA chapter.

Self-Evaluation Process

Communities interested in becoming a designation IMBA Ride Center should first complete a self-evaluation and assessment to determine their viability as a candidate. The following steps will help stakeholders better understand the process.

1. Thoroughly review this entire Application Guide.
2. Download the Ride Center Application Spreadsheet and thoroughly review all of the criteria and tabs in the application.
3. Schedule (and complete) a Ride Center orientation phone call with an IMBA representative.
4. Gather all pertinent information from stakeholders and complete the self-assessment. This helps applicants to determine if they are a potential candidate and want to take the next step.
5. If a formal review and Ride Center designation is desired, the applicant must submit the completed self-evaluation, supporting files, application fee, and contact information.

Each applicant who decides to engage in the professional review process will be investing in a thorough assessment of the strengths, opportunities, constraints, and quality evaluation of the trails in the proposed Ride Center. The report will detail an evaluation of existing assets to support a better understanding of what each community has to complement enhanced future marketing and differentiate one Ride Center from another. Throughout the process, an exposure of the potential weaknesses or room for improvement will allow community to focus on areas and issues that prevent them from attracting larger visitation, broader demographics, and identify what might limit a potential designation or upgrade.

Geographic Area: A Ride Center's geographic area shall be all the facilities within a 30-minute drive time radius (as determined by Google Maps) from a center point determined by the applicant. The legal trail and bicycling opportunities that start within this area are considered the trail system that is being evaluated in the application. Individual Ride Centers cannot have overlapping territories and must stand alone on their own merits.

3. Ride Center Application

Overview (tab #1 of application)

Ride Center scoring is multi-faceted. Here we will go over each qualifying category and how it is calculated. Please note that the Ride Center level the applicant is awarded is only equal to the lowest qualifying level. Below we explain the scoring on the Overview tab of the application.

Location Name and Center Point

The first thing the applicant will do is to fill in the location name and the center point the Ride Center evaluation will be based from. The center point is determined by the applicant and may be coordinates or a nearest address. The legal trail and bicycling opportunities that start within a 30-minute drive from the center point may be evaluated in the application.

Mileage

The first qualification is for total singletrack trail mileage at the Ride Center applicant's location. *All*

Rad Riding Spot Somewhere In The World			
Minimum Qualification Levels	Minimum Singletrack Trail Mileage Qualification Per Level	Minimum Quality Trail Experience Points Per Level	Minimum Objective Scoring Total Per Level
Gold Level Ride Center	100 Miles / 160 Kilometers	30	90
Silver Level Ride Center	75 Miles / 120 Kilometers	20	75
Bronze Level Ride Center	50 Miles / 80 Kilometers	10	60

Self Evaluation	
Singletrack Trail Mileage	Qualification Level Per Points
Total Mileage	79 → Silver Level Qualified

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Minimum Qualification Levels	Minimum Singletrack Trail Mileage Qualification Per Level	Minimum Quality Trail Experience Points Per Level	Minimum Objective Scoring Total Per Level
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Self Evaluation	
Singletrack Trail Mileage	Qualification Level Per Points
Total Mileage	79 → Silver Level Qualified

Qualitative Results			
	Available Points	Reviewer Score	Qualification Level Per Points
Quality Trail Experience Score	40	0 → Reviewer Score TBD	

Qualitative Results			
	Available Points	Self Score	Qualification Level Per Points
Trail Types	50	34	Bronze Level Qualified
Services	20	17	
Destination Best Practices	30	23	
	100	74	

trails submitted to be considered must be natural-surface singletrack trails. Double-track, roads or paved pathways are not eligible. Total singletrack trail length is calculated via the trail entries on the “Trail Types & Experience” tab of the application as well as any additional singletrack trails added to the “Trail Index” by the applicant to be considered as part of the Ride Center application and to meet qualifications. The applicant will qualify for Bronze, Silver or Gold Level depending on the singletrack mileage total. Instruction for completing the “Trail Types & Experience” tab and the “Trail Index” tab are in the next section of this guide.

Quality Trail Experience (QTE)

Quality is difficult to define but easy to identify. In the context of mountain bike trails, excellence is realized when a trail design merges the desired outcomes and difficulty that a rider seeks with the setting in which the outcomes are realized. This process allows the reviewer to add some subjectivity into the process and measure more than just whether or not you have a required trail type.

This QTE score will be counted toward the overall score and has the potential to help or hinder a community’s scoring based on the quality of the riding experience. The “Quality Trail Experience” evaluation will be performed only by the professional reviewer during onsite evaluation and is not included in the applicant self-evaluation.

Objective Qualification

Objective Qualification consists of three categories:

- Trail Types
- Services
- Destination Best Practices

Rad Riding Spot Somewhere In The World

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Self Evaluation			
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Total Mileage	79	Silver Level Qualified	
Qualitative Results		Reviewer Score	Qualification Level Per Points
Quality Trail Experience Score	40	0	Reviewer Score TBD
Qualitative Results		Self Score	Qualification Level Per Points
Trail Types	50	34	
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Rad Riding Spot Somewhere In The World

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Total Mileage	79	Silver Level Qualified	
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Qualitative Results		Self Score	Qualification Level Per Points
Trail Types	50	34	Bronze Level Qualified
Services	20	17	
Destination Best Practices	30	23	
	100	74	

There is a tab for each of these categories in the application. The self-score entered into each tab determines the total Qualitative Results. The level of qualification is based on the total of these results.

Scoring

Again, please note that the Ride Center Level the applicant is awarded is only equal to the lowest qualifying level.

Trail Types & Experience - (tab #2 of application)

Trail Difficulty Rating System

The trails chosen by the applicant to be reviewed for Ride Center qualification should generally comply with the IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System. See graphic at right.

The difficulty rating of each trail should be a reflection of what is marked on the ground. If it is not marked on the ground or does not have an official rating, please use the IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System to best estimate the trail difficulty rating.

All trails submitted to be considered must be natural surface singletrack trails. Double-track, roads or paved pathways are not eligible.

The ridership within each category can be divided into the following groups: novice, intermediate and advanced. Using basic bell curve distribution, it can be assumed the majority of mountain bicyclists in any category and as a whole are intermediate riders. Novice riders correspond with (GREEN) rated trails, Intermediate with (BLUE) rated trails and Advanced with (BLACK) rated trails. More advanced trails, double blacks, are typically required by a relatively small but very passionate contingent of ridership at any one trail system. A reasonable percentage of black trails should be built as double black as follows demand.

IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System				
	EASY GREEN CIRCLE	MORE DIFFICULT BLUE SQUARE	VERY DIFFICULT BLACK DIAMOND	EXTREMELY DIFFICULT DBL. BLACK DIAMOND
TRAIL WIDTH	36" (900 mm) or more	24" (600 mm) or more	12" (300 mm) or more	6" (150 mm) or more
TREAD SURFACE	Firm and stable	Mostly stable with some variability	Widely variable	Widely variable and unpredictable
AVERAGE TRAIL GRADE	Typically 5% or less	Typically 8% or less	Typically 12% or less	Typically 15% or less
MAXIMUM TRAIL GRADE	Max 15%	Max 15% or greater	Max 15% or greater	Max 15% or greater
NATURAL OBSTACLES AND TECHNICAL TRAIL FEATURES (TTF)	Unavoidable obstacles 2" (50 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present Unavoidable bridges 36" (900 mm) or wider	Unavoidable obstacles 8" (200 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present Unavoidable bridges 24" (600 mm) or wider TTF's 24" (600 mm) high or less, width of deck is greater than 1/2 the height	Unavoidable obstacles 15" (380 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present May include loose rocks Unavoidable bridges 24" (600 mm) or wider TTF's 48" (1,200 mm) high or less, width of deck is less than 1/2 the height Short sections may exceed criteria	Unavoidable obstacles 15" (380 mm) tall or less Avoidable obstacles may be present May include loose rocks Unavoidable bridges 24" (600 mm) or narrower TTF's 48" (1,200 mm) high or greater, width of deck is unpredictable Many sections may exceed criteria

Categories and Examples:

CATEGORY: The first column of the “Trail Types” tab in the application is the category. The category describes which type of trail(s) and the level of difficulty the trail(s) entered should reflect. Please note that the trails used in the singletrack categories must be a unique trail(s) from all other responses within the “Traditional”, “Bike Specific” and “Bike Specific Gravity Oriented” Singletrack Trails categories and may only be duplicated as a response in the “Climbs & Descents” section and cannot be used in any of the other trail type categories.

CRITERIA: The second column describes the criteria the trail(s) chosen should generally comply with. Here are some examples and descriptions of the criteria to follow:

- Trail type (see detailed descriptions next).
- Trail features, this includes natural obstacles and technical trail features like rocks, roots, logs, holes, ledges, drop-offs, elevated bridges, teeter-totters, berms, drops, jumps, or rollers.
- The trail(s) comply generally with the IMBA Trail Difficulty Rating System. See graphic on previous page.
- Minimum total length of the trail(s). In the self-evaluation, the applicant must enter a trail or adjoining group of trail segments for each trail type category the applicant would like IMBA to consider for Ride Center qualification to meet the minimum total length criteria. The group of trail segments must be adjoined by an easy and short connection to the next trail segment to qualify.
- Minimum adjoining trail length. If the applicant submits a group of adjoining trail segments, the criteria states the minimum length of each segment to qualify.

POINTS AVAILABLE: This column shows the total number of points available for each category.

SELF EVALUATION: In this column, the applicant will enter a point value (no more than the points available) if a trail is submitted for this category.

APPLICANT RESPONSE: The applicant will enter trail information in this section. Each trail segment must be a name or number (or both). There is no maximum total length of trail segments. There is space to enter 4 segments to meet the total length criteria. If there are additional trails that meet the criteria, the applicant may enter them on the Trail Index (see Trail Index instructions). Please note, the values the applicant enters for all trail type categories on the “Trail Type” tab will automatically be entered into the Trail Index.

Some of the categories have more than 1 point available. The points are cumulative for these trail types. Points will be rewarded depending on the size and variety of features and amenities.

The applicant should take some time to review the examples of trail types on the next few pages.

There are several trail types that require the applicant to provide maps, links to websites (i.e. Trailforks or MTB Project) or a KMZ data file to show the route. The trail names submitted are required to match the trail name in the link. This additional information should be included if possible on the application and also can be included in a separate document included with the submission.

Traditional Singletrack

- Natural-surface singletrack trails
- Trail does not generally have bike-specific enhancements or man-made technical features.
- Complies generally with IMBA Trail Rating guidelines.

These natural surface trails are built using sustainable trail construction techniques. Routes are typically constructed and maintained using techniques that will minimize user conflict and maximize a natural surface texture and trail corridor. This type of trails should be narrower than 75cm (29.5in) to reduce speed. All user types will use these routes, so care should be taken to avoid obstacles that might exclude an allowed user type such as jumps, rollers, or water-bars. Turns will be constructed sustainably but will not be cambered to optimize cornering traction



Bike Specific Singletrack Description

- Purpose-built or modified natural surface singletrack trail that maximizes the fun and efficiency of riding a mountain bike.
- Majority of trail contains a high density of specific features to enhance the rider experience and provide challenge.
- Enhancements may include berms, rollers, consistently wide turn radii, technical features, rock gardens, jumps, drops, etc.
- Complies generally with IMBA Trail Rating guidelines.

These natural surface trails are built using sustainable trail construction techniques. They should be purpose-built for MTB users. This type of MTB-optimized trail is constructed



with features such as rock areas, berms, larger grade reversals, wider cambered turns and skill level appropriate jumps. These trails should make use of gravity and are managed primarily for descending riders to provide a more enjoyable experience. This type of trails should be narrower than 100cm (~39in).

Bike Specific Gravity Oriented Singletrack Description

- Purpose-built or modified natural surface trail that utilizes gravity to enhance the descending experience.
- The majority of the trail must contain a high density of bike specific features to enhance the rider experience, provide challenge and maximize the fun and efficiency of riding a mountain bike.
- Enhancements may include berms, rollers, consistently wide turn radii, technical challenges, rock gardens, jumps, drops, etc.
- Complies generally with IMBA Trail Rating guidelines.

These natural surface trails should be purpose-built for MTB users only. These trails are usually steeper than Bike Specific Singletrack trails, have features that require more skill and equipment that will handle more abuse. Jumps and drops are a key feature of these gravity-powered trails. This type of trail should be wider (up to 200cm) in segments that have jumps or technical features but can be narrower (as little as 30cm) in other segments.

Singletrack Descent

Descending route with an average trail grade between 5%-10%



Technical Singletrack Descent

Descending route that possesses a high density of technical features. Features may include rocks, roots, steps and/or other challenges.



Long Climb

Singletrack trail ascent with a minimum average grade of 7% and a maximum sustained grade of 20%.



Technical Climb

Ascending route that possesses a high density of technical features. Features may include rocks, roots, steps and/or other challenges.



Trail Index (tab #3 of application)

The “Trail Index” serves as a reference guide to all trails the applicant is submitting for consideration as part of the Ride Center application and to meet qualifications. All trails submitted must be natural surface singletrack trail, not double-track, roads or paved pathways. The trail names and length that fill in automatically from the “Trail Types” tab are the trails that will be assessed in the onsite review. The applicant may also manually enter additional trails to be included in the mileage qualification total as well as use as options if the reviewer finds problems on the ground and needs to consider a different trail to meet trail type criteria.

The applicant must also enter some additional information about each trail. For manually entered trails, the applicant also needs to input the trail length and difficulty as these cells do not autofill. Trailhead Access Location, Land Manager, Trail ID # and the Trail Start and Trail End Description columns also need to be filled in manually.

Trailhead Access Location: This is a short description of the trailhead access point, i.e. “FS 131” or “intersection of Florence and 5th Street”. This can also be links to websites (i.e. Trailforks or MTB Project) or a KMZ file to show the route.

Land Manager: The entity that manages the land the trail is on.

Trail ID #: Trail number given by the land manager or other government entity.

Trail Start and End Description: A short description of the trailhead and end of trail, i.e. “marked 450, 10 ft before FS 131, N side” or “unmarked, south end of Bradley snow park”.

Rad Riding Spot Somewhere In The World		Total Trail Mileage	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Miles <input type="radio"/> Kilometers		Gold Level Qualified		Enter detailed trail info below for all trails which are relevant to your Ride Center application. Required trail types auto fill from entries on "Trail Types & Experience" Sheet.				
Ride Center Evaluation		107.4	Trail Type	Trail Name	Length	Skill Level	Trailhead Access Location	Land Manager	Trail ID #	Trail Start Description	Trail End Description
Traditional Singletrack	Lookout Mtn 450 Trail	2.1	Easy	intersection FSR131 & FSR3874	USFS - Mt. Hood National Forest	#450	marked 450, 10 ft before FS 131, North side	unmarked, south end of Bradley snow park			
	8 Mile Loop Trail	3.6	Easy	https://www.mtbproject.com/trail/7	USFS - Mt. Hood National Forest	#496	NE end of 8 mile campground	parking lot at FSR4420, North side			
	Bottle Prairie	2.5	Easy								
Traditional Singletrack	Knebal Springs	3	Easy								
	Super Connector	4.2	More Difficult								
	Surveyors Ridge	5.2	More Difficult								
	Dog River	4.6	More Difficult								
Traditional Singletrack	Oak Ridge	7	More Difficult								
	Gunsight Ridge	4.5	Very Difficult								
	Gumjuwac	6.1	Very Difficult								
	Cooks Meadow	5.2	Very Difficult								
Traditional Singletrack	15 Mile Loop	8	Very Difficult								
	Cedar Creek	2.6	Extremely Difficult								
	North Section	2.25	Extremely Difficult								
	Badger Mountain	3.5	Extremely Difficult								
	High Prairie	2	Extremely Difficult								

Services (tab #4 of application)

Like the “Trail Types & Experience” tab, the “Services” and “Destination Best Practices” tabs are organized by category. The applicant will use the criteria outlined in the criteria column to select and enter information for the services and amenities they are submitting for Ride Center qualification. Points available are shown in the 3rd column. The applicant will use the Self-Evaluation column to enter points for the services and amenities entered. There are 20 points available for “Services” and 30 points available for “Destination Best Practices”. Read below for a description and any special instructions for the categories in Sheet 4 and 5. There is space in the applicant response section of the application to list the names, links and contact info for the categories listed on the “Services” tab.

Retail:

Bike Shop Goods and Services: Bike shop(s) within the community has/have a significant stock of mountain-bike-based merchandise and can service mountain bikes. Some important features of the bike shops are:

- Ability to service walk-ins for immediate services i.e. change brake pads, fix flat tire, adjust suspension, etc.
- Availability of items visitors may have forgotten or need, i.e. gloves, sunglasses, accessories, tubes, brake pads, tires, snacks, maps, etc.

MTB Guide Services / Outfitters: Availability of free or fee-based guide services. It is important to offer guide services to new visitors to the area that are not comfortable navigating new areas on their own. Guides and outfitters should have:

- Modern gear
- Reliable vehicles



- A vast knowledge of the Ride Center area and the services available
- First Aid

Bike Rental: Availability of mountain bike rental services. Bike rentals are a great way to get visitors out on trails. Not everyone can travel with a bike or owns a bike.

- Rental stock cannot be older than three years and must be serviced regularly
- Availability of mid-level or better full-suspension bicycles
- Sizes small through extra-large
- Ability to process credit cards
- Trail maps and ride suggestions available on-site or through referral

Shopping: There are opportunities to shop for general merchandise. Pharmacy, department store, hardware store, automotive supply shop, etc. Visitors rely on area shops for supplies for their vehicles, kids, equipment repairs, health and general needs.

Lodging:

Primitive Camping: There are primitive camping locations within 3.0 miles/5.0 km of the trail system. Primitive camping is a campsite with few or no basic creature comforts that is farther away from civilization and charges a nominal fee for tent camping. Creature comforts could include potable water, electricity, picnic table, fire ring, pit toilet, firewood, etc.

Camping with Potable Water and Showers: There are camping sites with potable water and hot showers within 5.0 miles/8.0 km of the trail system. After a few days on the trails, a lot of visitors will be ready for a hot shower before they head out to the local brew pub. Campsite should have more creature comforts available including:

- Potable water, restroom and showers
- Picnic table and fire ring
- Paved or graded drive



Camping with van/RV hookup: There are camping sites with van/RV hookups within 5.0 miles/8.0 km of the trail system. Mountain bikers love to take time off work or work remotely, load up a camper with gear and bikes, and explore new territory. Camping available to this subset is key to them returning. They want to wake up, brew some coffee from the local coffee shop and get ready for a day of biking. When they get back, they want to shower, check their email, post on social media and either cook up some food they bought at the grocery store in town or go out to a restaurant and come back to their comfy camper bed to rest up for another day on the trails. This type of camping should include:

- Potable water, restroom, sewer, electrical hookups and showers
- Picnic table and fire ring
- Paved or graded drive that will accommodate a van, RV, camper or trailer

Hotel / Motel: There are hotels and/or motels within 5.0 miles/8.0 km of the trail system. Not everyone has the ability or preference to camp on his or her visit. There should be hotels and/or motels in the area that will accommodate mountain bikers. Visitors appreciate it if the lodging is in walking distance to shops, restaurants and trails.

Bike Friendly Lodging: Bike friendly hotels, motels and campgrounds must feature:

- Bike wash station (an area outside with a hose and spray nozzle to rinse bikes)
- Secure bike storage and/or allow visitors to store bikes in rooms
- At least 25% of available rooms/sites must be bike-friendly

Food:

Quality & Variety of Restaurants: Mountain bikers love to eat. It takes a lot to fuel them for a day of biking and they will return from rides hungry. There should be a variety of eating establishments that feature different cuisines. Visitors will appreciate having a variety of restaurant options. More than six different types of restaurants are ideal, i.e. Italian, Thai, BBQ, farm-to-table, Mexican, Chinese, Japanese.

Brewpub: Brewpubs/breweries add significant value to a locale in the mind of many mountain bikers. A good local draft and a big plate of food after a full day of riding is typically sought out. A brewpub is a bar or restaurant that is owned by the brewery and serves their product directly to the people. Brewpubs should offer:

- Craft beer and/or cider on draft. A draft beer is a beer that's "on tap," as opposed to bottled.
- Bottled and/or canned beer available
- Full-service restaurant

Coffee Shop: This one is also very important. Mountain bikers love a good cup of coffee to start their day. Some important features of a good coffee shop are:

- Espresso and brewed coffee available
- Quality, locally roasted beans are a plus
- Pastries, burritos and other takeaway goods available
- Walk-in and outdoor seating
- Wireless Internet and outlets for computer charging
- Restrooms
- Welcoming ambience and great service

Grocery Store: A grocery store is very important for the purchase of snacks, beverages and supplies for a meal cooked while camping or renting a house with a kitchen. The store should offer a good selection of:

- Energy bars and snacks
- Beer, wine and cider
- Groceries and supplies like paper towels, toilet paper, aluminum foil, etc.

Natural / Organic Food: Mountain bikers tend to be healthy eaters and will appreciate the availability of local, organic and natural foods being available at the grocery store or other natural food retailer or restaurant. Some great features are:



- Restaurants with farm-to-table (local) ingredients
- Gluten-free options
- Grocery store with selection of organic produce and natural food products
- Availability of healthy snacks for energy

Other:

Airport: An airport is key to growing the number of visitors. There should be an airport within one hour by public or private transportation. The airport needs to have daily commercial jet service to destinations around the world or another airport that will bridge the destination to wherever visitors reside.

Medical Services / EMS: This one is a no-brainer and it is important to really think through what is available to visitors and how they will find it. While we hope that visitors ride safely, accidents and injury can be unavoidable. Visitors will feel more comfortable if there is a hospital emergency room or clinic within 40 miles of trail system, and/or backcountry EMS providers are established in the area. EMS providers can be trained land management agency staff, organized volunteer Search and Rescue teams, etc. Personnel need to be familiar with the trail systems and have an understanding of access points and evacuation routes. The applicant should list the contact information on the application and include any additional information on a separate sheet with their submission.





Destination Best Practices (tab #5 of application)

Trail System Characteristics and Features:

Signs / Wayfinding: Signs, maps, and markers allow persons unfamiliar with the trail system to navigate it with relative ease. A comprehensive trail signage and mapping effort should be employed at a destination trail system. This would include integrated trailhead kiosk, print materials, online mapping platform like mtbproject.com, and systematic signage throughout the trail system and at intersections. Signs must be placed at all trail entrances and intersections. The reviewer will assess this category onsite.

- **Regulatory and Warning Signs:** visitor rules and regulations signs, allowed and prohibited activities, direction of travel, road/trail intersections, and emergency signs.
- **Educational Signs:** guidelines for responsible recreation and trail etiquette, natural or cultural resources, and interpretive signs.



Trailhead Amenities: Major trailheads possess key support elements that provide a quality experience for trail users and mountain bikers. Major trailheads must have defined parking, bathrooms, water, and mountain bike-appropriate signs (that indicate trail system info, rules, trail map, and EMS info). The reviewer will assess this category onsite.

Trailhead Access by Bike: Ease of access by bicycle from bike shop/food & beverage to trailhead. Factors to consider

include: easy grades (5% or less); short distance (less than 3 miles/5 km); presence of a bike lane, path, trail, or wide striped shoulder; and traffic volume on shared routes. Is the trail system in a designated Bike Friendly Community and does it provide a well-signed and supported bicycle route to and from surrounding amenities? The reviewer will assess this category onsite.

Shuttle / Uplift Options: There are opportunities to hire a shuttle or use uplift services to access trails. Includes established helicopter shuttles, vehicle shuttle services, public transport, chairlift, or gondola. Shuttle hire/uplift options must cover at least 90% of the accessed trail vertical and allow access to 50% of the trail system. **Must provide regular scheduled services.** There is space in the application to list these options.



Three or More Days of Riding: A cyclist can spend three or more days riding the trail system and enjoy a different ride each day. Each ride does not necessarily need to be on completely different trails but should provide a unique experience. *The applicant must have a minimum of 50 miles of singletrack trails open to mountain bikes and should list the total mileage from the “Trail Index” tab in their application.*

Long Distance Adventure: There exist opportunities to do a long-distance (50 miles/80 km) and possibly multi-day singletrack tour within or as part of the trail system. A route that uses a collection of trails that provides users with an opportunity to see a broad range of the area's terrain, nature, and culture. Camping can be a major component of the experience for many users. Minimum length of 40 miles/64 km route. Can be no less than 80% singletrack trail. Cannot be merely a collection of trails within a dense trail system. Provide link to website that shows this route, i.e. MTB

Project or Trail Forks or include a Google Earth KMZ data file with your submission. The trail names submitted are required to match the trail name in the link. This additional information should be included if possible on the application and also can be included in a separate document included with the applicant's submission. All KMZ data files should be named in the following format: “criteria_skilllevel_trailname.kmz” i.e. “traditionalsingletrack_moredifficult_surveyorsridge.kmz”

Backcountry Experience: Opportunities to find a sense of solitude or a backcountry experience while riding. The trail experience will result in a ride that will provide a remote, undeveloped, isolated, or difficult-to-access adventure that will encounter few other users while being further than 5.0 miles/8.0 km (by trail) from the trailhead. Must occur during a minimum of 10 miles/16 km contiguous route. Provide link to website that shows this route, i.e. MTB Project or Trail Forks or include a Google Earth KMZ data file with your submission. The trail names submitted are required to match the trail name in the link. This additional information should be included if possible on the application and also can be included in a separate document included with the applicant's submission. All KMZ data files should be named in the following format. “criteria_skilllevel_trailname.kmz” i.e. “traditionalsingletrack_moredifficult_surveyorsridge.kmz”





Community Involvement:

Mountain Bike Club: A local or regional mountain bike user club has a presence in the community. Local club must be IMBA chapter or supporting organization and must be engaged in supporting the stewardship of the trail through regular trail work. Applicant should list the name and contact info for the club organizers.

Group Rides: There are regularly scheduled group rides. The rides can be hosted by the local community, bike shop, guide service, or other entity. Rides are free or available for a minimal fee. Applicant should list the name and contact info for group ride organizers.

Mountain Bike Related Events: Local community or other entity hosts or helps with races, festivals, trail work, or other bike-related social activities (e.g., fundraisers). Applicant should list the events and contact info for the event organizers.

Community Support: The Ride Center's development and maintenance are supported by government entities, businesses, stakeholders, and the general community. Can be shown through letters of support, economic support, grants, etc. Can also be shown with strong advocacy support. Applicant should include at least one letter of support each for the Ride Center bid from a land manager, local government entity, a local business owner and a local mountain bike club.

Land Manager / Landowner Support: Legal or official instrument that defines responsibilities, maintains mountain bicycling access to trails, provides for trail system development, and guides trail system management. Examples include adopted trail plan, operations and maintenance plans, contracts, memorandums of understanding. Applicant

should list the name, agreement, plan, description, entities involved and contact info in the application.

Data Capture & Evaluation: Trail system managers or volunteers actively assess usage, evaluate trends, survey riders, and develop reports on key trail system factors. I.e. trail counters, user surveys and annual reports. Applicant should list these methods and include any results with the submission.

Tourism & Marketing:

Recreation Variety: There are a variety of recreational opportunities within one hour by public or private transportation. Additional recreation opportunities are important to provide a diverse experience. Activities include rock climbing, skiing, snowboarding, mountaineering, kayaking, kiting, rafting, hiking, running, surfing, etc. Points are cumulative and are awarded depending on the amount and variety of activities and amenities. Applicant should list the recreation opportunities in the application.

Online Presence: Easily accessible mediums (e.g., website and social media) used for marketing the trail system. Information should include details about where to ride, where to stay, where to eat, local MTB organization, Chamber of Commerce/visitors' bureau, etc. Applicant should list links in the space provided on the application.

Ride Center / Trails Marketing and Promotions Group: There exists a local community group that has made a commitment to promoting and marketing the Ride Center. Group can be comprised of Chamber of Commerce, visitors' council, government agencies, land manager/owner, marketing alliance, etc. Applicant should list these organizations and their contact info in the space provided on the application.

Tourism Riding Season Under 8 Months: The riding season is typically eight months or longer. Assumes the trail system is managed and promoted for tourism purposes for the specified tourism season. Can include winter-groomed singletrack. Applicant should include any details in the space provided on the application.

4. Next Steps

Submitting the Application

A few things the applicant should double-check:

1. The final application document must be submitted in the original XLSX spreadsheet format
2. All links should be checked before application is attached to email
3. *KMZ data files for each trail type and/or criteria should all be named as explained on page 23
4. Applicant should include all of their contact information in the email: address, phone, email, name and position

Now that you have the application completed and all supplemental files compiled, email your application to shane.wilson@imba.com.

*If the applicant does not have KMZ data files to provide for each trail, the applicant may contract IMBA Trail Solutions to develop this information for a fee.