

# Trail Accelerator Grant Program

Applicant Toolkit



INTERNATIONAL MOUNTAIN BICYCLING ASSOCIATION

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IMBA's mission is to create, enhance and protect great places to ride mountain bikes.

We understand that in order to grow the quantity and quality of mountain bike trail communities, we need to accelerate the pace of trail building. Trail Accelerator grants provide a jump-start to communities that have the interest and political support to develop trail systems, but need assistance to get projects up and running.

A Trail Accelerator grant offers awardees professional trail planning and consultation services to launch their trail development efforts, which can often leverage additional investment from local, regional, and national partners.

#MoreTrailsClosetoHome



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# Program Overview

This grant results in a planning process and documentation for your project. It is not a cash grant. Grants typically range from \$10,000-\$30,000 and they require a one-to-one match to reach the total project cost. For example, if you are awarded a \$10,000 grant, you must commit an additional \$10,000 to IMBA for a \$20,000 scope of work. Finalists will receive a call from IMBA Trail Solutions staff to clarify any questions and to discuss and define the scope of work, tasks, and final deliverables of the proposed Trail Accelerator grant project. **A phone call does not mean that a grant has been awarded.** For grant awardees, the agreed-upon trail planning process will be different for each site based on the desired outcomes and will be clearly documented in a contract between the applicant and IMBA. The deliverables will include trail plans in the form of written reports and maps, based on the scope of the project. You can see project and report examples on the [Trail Accelerator Grant homepage](#).

## What Types of Projects Will Be Considered?

- ❖ Projects that serve mountain bikers as the primary users, though multi-purpose human-powered trail uses are of course viable as well.
- ❖ Projects that will result in a visible and substantial increase in access, improved mountain bike experiences, and greater community benefit.
- ❖ Projects where the Trail Accelerator grant stands to leverage additional resources to ensure the success of the project.
- ❖ Projects that promote community development, volunteer recruitment, new rider development, youth riding, and engaging marginalized community members. Higher preference will be given to projects that demonstrate a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- ❖ A declined request does not imply that the project is not needed or valued. Those who do not receive a grant award may apply again in subsequent rounds (and we hope you do!).



# Impact to Date

[See the full report here](#)



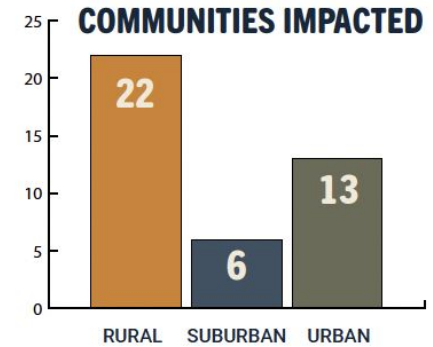
## IMPACT REPORT

### BY THE NUMBERS (2018-2022)



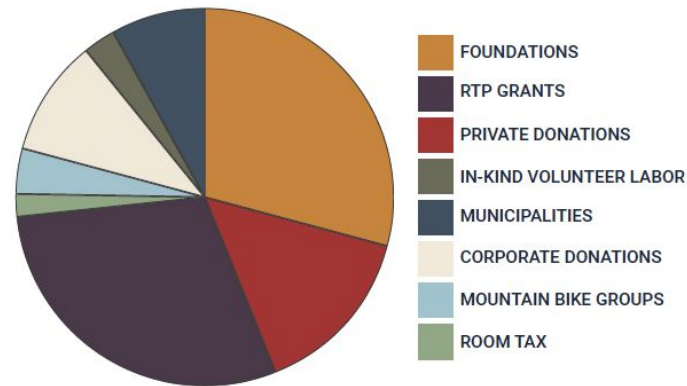
**118**  
APPLICATIONS  
RECEIVED

**42**  
APPLICATIONS  
FUNDED

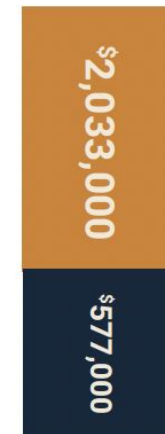


### THESE DELIVERABLES UNLOCKED \$12.8M IN ADDITIONAL FUNDING

#### SOURCES OF ADDITIONAL FUNDING



#### AMOUNT REQUESTED



**18** PROJECTS SUPPORT YOUTH PROGRAMMING & NICA VENUES



**AMOUNT FUNDED**

# Who Can Apply?

Local, municipal, state, or federal government agencies, and 501(c)3 nonprofits that actively manage parks and trails may apply. Mountain bike clubs and IMBA Local partners with the capacity to match and manage a grant of this scale are eligible to apply—this is new as of the Spring 2020 grant round.

The organization applying must be able to provide the matching funds. Please see information later in this document to learn more about how agencies disburse grant funds.

- ❖ Projects which are primarily based on private land are not eligible to apply.
- ❖ Private organizations including ski resorts, HOAs, or property developers are not eligible to apply
- ❖ Religious organizations for religious purposes, private foundations, and political causes/candidates/legislative lobbying groups are not eligible to apply.



# Filling Out the Application

You can help us by supplying the most thorough answers possible, which will help move your project to the top of the list. There are two critical things we want to understand:

- ❖ How your project involves and benefits your community (the vision behind the project).
  - I.e., will your project provide access for underserved communities? Tie in with youth programs?
  - Before you apply, think through the ways your project will align with broad community needs.
- ❖ The true scope of your project (the nitty gritty of what you want to build)
  - We'll ask a lot of detailed questions about what you're trying to accomplish.
  - Be sure to think through how your project timeline will unfold, how you plan to get to the next steps, etc.

*\*\*Please know that even if you don't have a lot of knowledge about the trail development process, we still want you to apply! If you're confused or get stuck anywhere in the application process, don't hesitate to reach out. Let's work together to make your trail dreams a reality.*



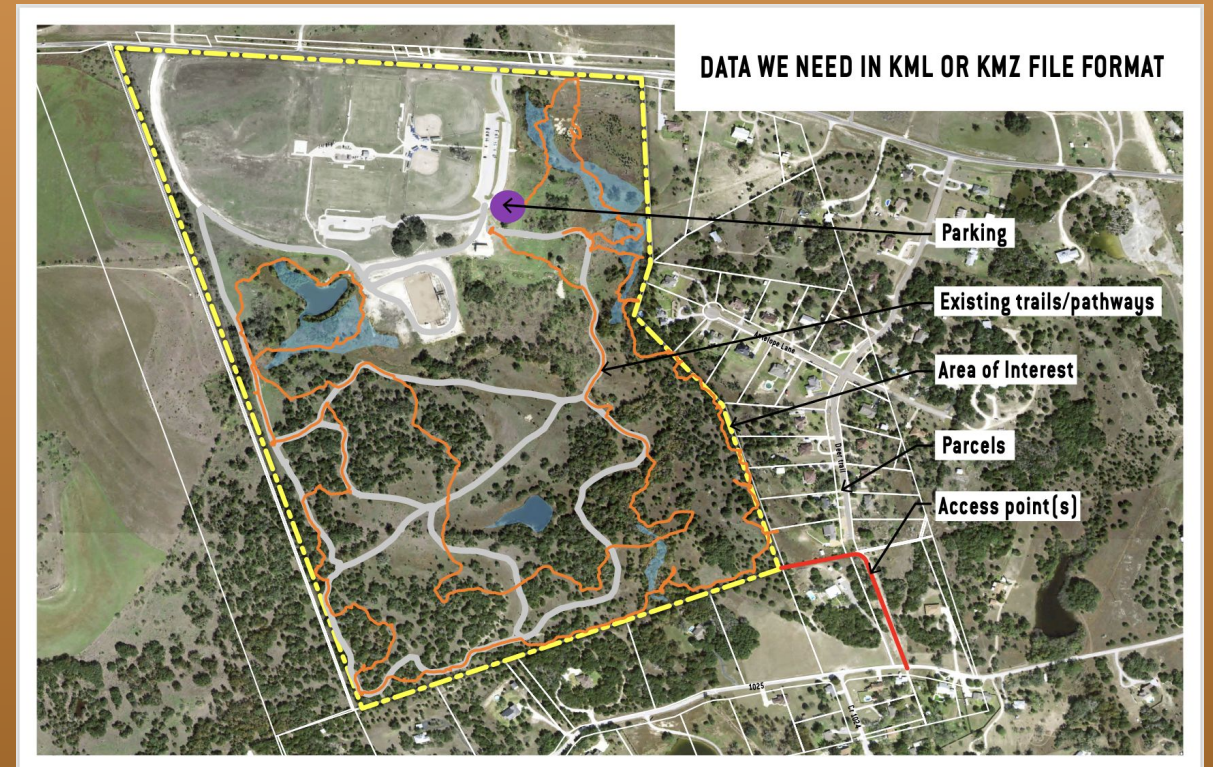
# What You Will Need

## 1. A .kmz file of your project area

[Click here for a tutorial](#) on creating a .kmz file from an area of interest:

In your file, please include things such as:

- ❖ project area delineation
- ❖ property boundaries
- ❖ hydrology
- ❖ areas of cultural significance
- ❖ existing amenities like trails, parking, etc





**DATA WE NEED IN KML OR KMZ FILE FORMAT**

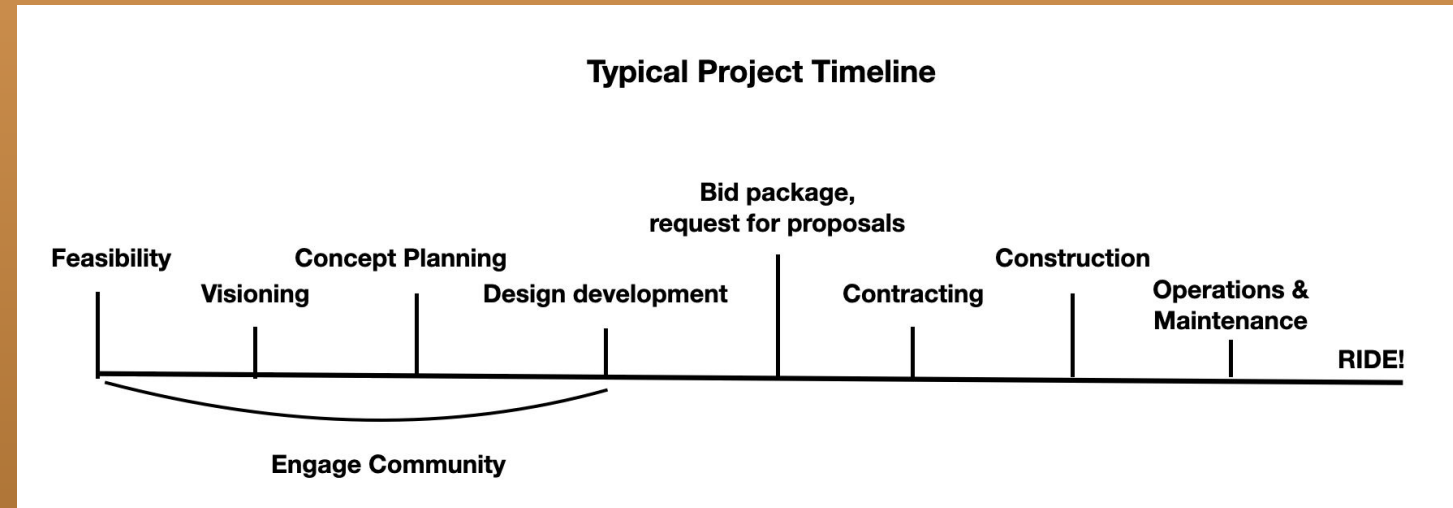


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# What You Will Need

## 2. Timeline of your project

Most trail projects follow a general timeline from start to finish. We'll be asking you to give us an idea of when you think your project might hit these milestones.



# What You Will Need

## **3. Assurance from your agency or organization that this grant is compatible with your financing processes.**

- ❖ If you represent a municipality or other agency that goes through procurement, contact that department and ensure that they can disburse the funds for your half of the match. We will be asking you to confirm that the funds will be available at the time of contract signing.
- ❖ If you're with a mountain bike or trail organization, you can simply confirm that your secretary or accountant will make the funds available at the time of contract signing.

# Other Things to Think About

## **Partners:**

Robust trail projects come to life through partnerships. We'll be asking you about the organizations or agencies you're partnering with to bring this project to fruition.

## **Community Engagement:**

Every project needs to be filtered through the community for feedback and improvements. This is often how you find financial partners, too. We'll be asking you how you plan to approach this part of the process.

## **Implementation:**

Just like you, we want to see this project become reality. Think about how you and your partners will get to the next steps, whether it's fundraising, design, or construction. We'll be asking you how you'll get there.

## **Funding:**

We'll be helping you talk through how much your project will cost. **But don't be worried if you don't have large sums of funding already.** These grants are here to help in that exact situation. Once planning documents are made, they are the perfect marketing tool for fundraising, because they bring a lot of ideas into focus. The visual nature of a planning document gets people excited about the possibilities.



# Social Media Requirements

A requirement of receiving funding is to post about the grant and how it's helping your project/community. Take a few minutes to decide which social media channels will work best, since we'll be asking for those links in the application.

## ❖ Hashtags to Use:

- #trailacceleratorgrant
- #moretrails closetohome

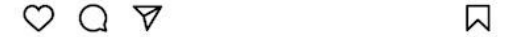
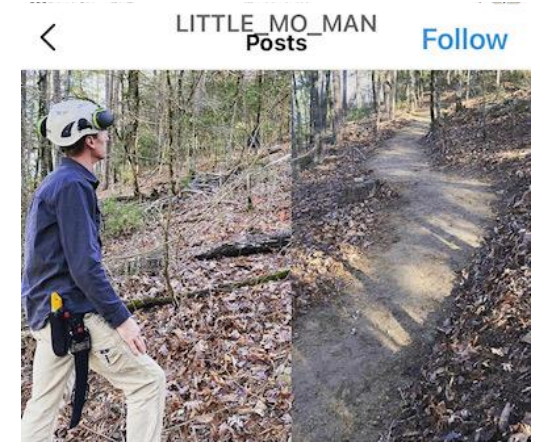
## ❖ Our Handles

- Instagram @IMBA\_US
- Facebook @IMBAonFB



Liked by **patrick.kell** and 177 others

**visitelynevada** @unclejoeyklein from @imbatrailsolutions enjoying one of our gnarliest trails while out this week scouting the Garnet Hill/ Squaw Peak area for another sweet new trail system coming soon to Ely.  
#trailacceleratorgrant @imba\_us



Liked by **adam.reitz** and 43 others

**little\_mo\_man** Before and After  
Day 1 of field work went very well. Thanks to @imbatrailsolutions and to the @waltonfamilyfdn for making this project possible through the TAG. This is a shining example of what is possible when a community steps up and works together.

#trails #southwestarkansas #mtbtrails #mountainbiking #bikearkansas #roguehoe #pulaskitool #moretrails closetohome #imba #cycling #seviercycling #dequeenarkansas #trailacceleratorgrant #accessibletrails

# And Finally... the Questions

We have a new requirement as of the 2025 round: Each applicant must [complete our self-assessment](#) as part of their application. We'll look for your result there before diving into your application.

Section 1 asks for basic contact information such as name, address, email, etc. Then we'll ask you about your project in Section 2.



# Section 2: Project Background and Details

1. Project title
2. Project location/name of parcel. Please attach a GoogleEarth .kmz file that delineates your project area(s). We gain a much better understanding of your site if you include all the information you can. We'd like to see property boundaries, existing trails, parking, buildings, water bodies and streams, areas of cultural significance, ecological concerns, etc. (A sample image can be viewed earlier in this document, along with a video tutorial.)
3. What is the approximate size of your land parcel?: multiple choice - 1-15, 15-50, 50-250, 250-500, +500
4. What is the total project area acreage?: multiple choice - 1-15, 15-50, 50-250, 250-500, +500. \*Projects under 15 acres in size are not well-suited for trail projects. They are much better used for bike parks, pump tracks or skills areas.
5. Who owns this land? Select all that apply: federal agency, state, city, county, private, other
6. What type of grant outcome are you looking for? Multiple choice: feasibility study, planning document, design document, construction bid package. (These are explained in the application.)
7. Describe the area where you wish to see trails and/or bike park facilities planned. Include details about topography, vegetation types, resource concerns; proximity to local and regional population centers; proximity to local schools; proximity to campgrounds, parking lots, day-use areas, and other recreation infrastructure.
8. What previous natural surface recreational trail planning processes have been completed in this area? Please describe the type of planning effort, who led it, what agencies were involved and how it was funded. What was the outcome? Please attach any relevant planning documents, which could include a detailed description or deck of the project; including details on location, community impact, need, trail plans and/or maps.
9. Trails that are easily accessible by residents provide high value in terms of recreation, health and community engagement. How will your project provide those benefits?
10. Does this project create opportunities for youth mountain bike programs, or have the potential to integrate with existing programs? Please describe.
11. Does this project increase diversity, inclusion, and equity among trail users? How will this project address equity in access? For example, will the project create a venue for after-school programs or offer access to riders with disabilities? If you answer yes, please list the names of any partner groups and explain your partnership with them.
12. We want to learn how you intend to take this planning work to the next level. If awarded this grant, how does your organization plan to implement the project?



## Section 3: Scope of Work - See the [grant FAQ](#) for examples

1. What are you trying to build? Multiple choice: bike park, trails, both
2. What bike park amenities? Select all that apply: pump track, skills features, drop zone, slopestyle line, dirt jumps, other
3. What style/s of trails? Select all that apply: traditional singletrack, bike-optimized trails, flow/jump trail
4. Who will use the trails in addition to mountain bikers? Select all that apply: pedestrians, horses, adaptive equipment, motorcycles
5. Will any of the trails be single-use? Select all that apply: yes, hiker only; yes, biker only
6. What is your best guess of mileage of the proposed trails?
7. What other amenities already exist in your project area? Select all that apply: existing trails, parking, signage, restrooms, sports fields, other
8. Have you identified potential funding sources for the next steps? Yes, no
9. If yes, provide general range of fundraising to date, estimated cost required to implement, and costs for maintenance/management.
10. Do you have construction phases in mind? Give us an idea of how you envision construction unfolding.
11. What kind of construction team will you use? Select all that apply: volunteer, professional, in-house, hybrid
12. What kind of construction methodology do you plan to use? Mechanized, hand built, both
13. Are you looking for field-based trail design and flagging at this point in your project? Yes, no
14. Does your organization typically include public engagement efforts (open meetings, public comment sessions, surveys) in projects like this? yes, no
15. Describe what kind of public engagement you usually employ.
16. Do you wish to have IMBA facilitate any of these efforts? Yes, no





# Section 4: Your Organization and Partners

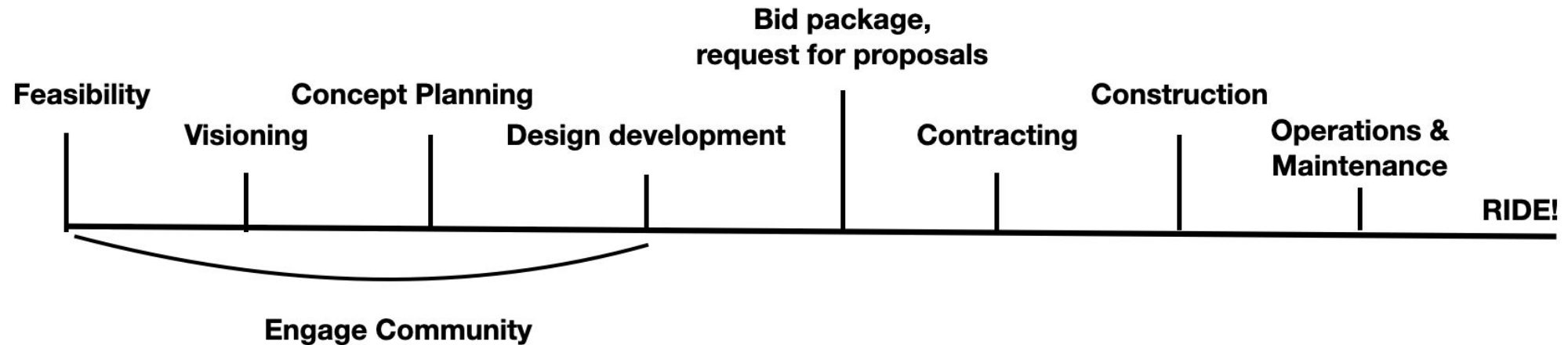
1. Describe your organization/department including numbers of staff or volunteers, board members, and mission statement.
2. Do you have written support from three local officials for this project? This includes both land managers and elected officials. Please list their names, positions, and phone numbers.
3. Describe another community project your agency or coalition has undertaken and has seen success with. Tell us about the larger community impacts.
4. What other community organizations are you partnering with on this project?
5. Has a representative from your committee or community attended an IMBA Trail Lab or will they be attending an upcoming Trail Lab?
6. Part of your requirement as an awardee requires you to post about the grant on social media. Please provide the social media feed(s) you will use to promote your project and the TAG grant.
7. Part of your requirement as an attendee is to provide follow-up information to IMBA about the grant and its impact. Please provide the name and email address of the best person to contact.



# Section 5: Project Timeline

1. What is your preferred timeline to start and complete this project? Give us a general sense of when you see your project hitting the milestones in the timeline shown. (Please note that location, weather and seasons will influence start times and completion dates. For example, field work in some places may not be possible from November to April due to snow cover. In extremely hot and/or humid environments it may not be efficient to perform fieldwork between June and August due to dense vegetative growth.)

## Typical Project Timeline



# Section 6: Funding Needs and Understanding

1. This is an in-kind grant, and if successful, your project will be awarded staff time from IMBA Trail Solutions department (and qualified subcontractors), who will complete an agreed-upon trail planning process in your community. This is not a cash grant. Do you agree?
2. This is a one-to-one matching grant. For example, if you request and are awarded a \$5,000 grant, you must commit an additional \$5,000 payable as a check or electronic payment to IMBA. If you are awarded a \$30,000 grant, you must commit an additional \$30,000 payable as a check or electronic payment to IMBA. Twenty percent of your match is due within 30 days of the award and you will receive progress invoices at project milestones. Do you agree?
3. To be awarded this grant, you must understand how your agency will disburse your share of the funds. Within municipalities, for example, the funds must be obtained through a process called “procurement.” Before submitting this application, contact your procurement or accounting department and learn what steps are required to access the money. Do you agree?

Finalists will receive a call from IMBA Trail Solutions to clarify any questions and to discuss and further define the scope of work, tasks, and final deliverables of the Trail Accelerator Grant project. A phone call does not mean that a grant has been awarded. For grant awardees, the agreed-upon trail planning process will be different for each site based upon the desired outcomes and will be clearly documented in a contract between the applicant and IMBA.




# We are here to help!

If you have questions about the application, or are feeling overwhelmed by the process, reach out to us! We want to see your trails and bike parks come to life, and we can guide you anywhere you're stuck on this application. No trail-nerd skills needed.

A great resource regarding the trail development process is our free e-book, [Mountain Bike Trail Development Guidelines](#). Check it out on us!

Marty Caivano  
Community Engagement Coordinator  
(303) 588-1530  
[marty.caivano@imba.com](mailto:marty.caivano@imba.com)



An aerial photograph of a mountain trail winding through a landscape of red soil and green vegetation. A hand-drawn black sketch is overlaid on the image, depicting a mountain biker in a teal jersey riding a trail. The sketch uses bold, expressive lines to define the terrain and the rider's path.

Thank you for applying, and  
supporting IMBA as we accelerate the  
pace of trail building.  
[#MoreTrailsClosetoHome](#)



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