

# Natural History Institute

Dear Prescott Mayor and Council,

Feb. 8, 2025

As a 28-year resident of Prescott, deeply invested in our community's well-being, I urge you to prioritize the restoration of West Granite Creek Park as a car-free zone. This space is vital for several key reasons, and I believe its conversion to a paved parking lot would be a detrimental loss.

My family, like many others, has cherished this park and its trails for decades. We've used it as a safe pedestrian and bicycle route connecting our Prescott Heights neighborhood to downtown events, fostering a connection to the heart of our city. More importantly, it has provided a unique natural escape within our urban environment. Our children, and countless others, have explored the creek, built imaginative play spaces, and simply enjoyed the wonder of nature amidst downtown Prescott – a treasure that makes our city so special.

Beyond recreation, this park serves as a crucial link for students traveling to Mile High Middle School and offers a tranquil retreat for visitors at the nearby hotel. It's a testament to community effort, with citizens having invested time and resources in planting trees and developing the trails long before its temporary use as a parking area.

Reinstating West Granite Creek Park as a car-free space would not only provide a safe haven for children and families to play, but also offer a dedicated cycling route through the city center. Furthermore, it would preserve a vital semi-quiet roosting area for local wildlife, including Cooper's and Black hawks, contributing to the ecological health of our community. Finally, as residents age, these calm, contemplative green spaces become even more essential for maintaining physical and mental well-being. Please consider the long-term benefits of preserving this invaluable community asset and reject its transformation into a parking lot.

Respectfully,

**BOB ELLIS**

**Executive Director**

**Natural History Institute**

**He/His, Emeritus Faculty Prescott College**

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