

# West Granite Creek Park ~ Restoration Coalition ~

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **West Granite Creek Park Threatened by Paved Parking Lot Plan**

Prescott, Arizona – October 15, 2024 – A treasured park near downtown Prescott is in danger of being paved over as a parking lot. West Granite Creek Park (WGCP) was designed and built as a critical section of Prescott’s car-free Greenways Trail by Prescott residents, nonprofits, and business supporters. The paving plan would raze the park’s trees and vegetation, leaving a wasteland of asphalt and endangering trail users with speeding cars thus severing this section of Greenways Trail. Already, cars speeding in and out of WGCP pose a serious danger to bicyclists and pedestrians, even before paving.

West Granite Creek Park (WGCP) is protected as a natural open space car-free park and Greenways Trail by Council Resolution No. 3274 July 2000, signed by then Mayor Sam Steiger.

In 2021, the City removed its own barriers at the end of Granite Street to allow parking in WGCP. Crews removed trees planted during the park’s creation, obliterated the Greenways Trail, and allowed cars to park over the native riparian vegetation painstakingly planted by volunteers. Concerned park users were told repeatedly that this parking was temporary until the City could find a better solution. Instead, in November 2023, although nearby paved areas offer better parking options, the City paid for a design to permanently pave WGCP as a parking lot.

A coalition of Prescott organizations, Dexter Neighborhood residents, concerned parents, and citizens has formed to restore WGCP to a natural car-free park and trail as it was originally built.

“As a working parent, I walk and bike this trail to commute and to bring our nine-year-old son to and from school,” said Colleen McHorney of Parents for a Car-free West Granite Creek Park. “The City’s plan to permanently pave our park as a parking lot would sever our trail, destroy our community park, and pose a serious danger to cyclists and pedestrians, including my son. Since the city opened this area to vehicles, I have witnessed reckless drivers, vehicles suspiciously parked overnight, and a notable increase in litter. These will only increase with paving.”

The coalition to restore the park is now calling for letters to be sent to all City Council members in support of restoring WGCP to a car-free park and trail. Coalition helpers are also investigating the consequences to the City of paving. The paving would cost tax payers \$500,000 and bring a backlash from horrified park supporters. There are also concerns regarding the legality of paving this open space riparian flood plain that was partially purchased with federal funding. Other resources that enabled the creation of the park, including grants, donors, volunteers, and donated materials, also came with restrictions and expectations.

Restoring the park to car-free would have minimal costs for the City. The coalition has engaged volunteers and donors of funds and materials, all ready to restore West Granite Creek Park to its original, natural, car-free splendor, including a fun kids’ trail from appropriate parking areas. Learn more at: [www.PrescottBikePed.com](http://www.PrescottBikePed.com) and click on West Granite Creek Park Restoration.

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