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Recreation Services Newsletter

824 E. Gurley St. Prescott, AZ 86301

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



MASTER PLANNING & COZY WEATHER

Happy fall, everyone!

I'm excited to share that the first draft of our Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Connecting People, Parks and Possibilities, is ready!

This draft represents months of work—and, most importantly, the voices of our community. It brings together the input you shared with us this spring, a comprehensive inventory and condition assessment of our parks and facilities, national benchmarking, and a vision for what Prescott's parks and recreation system could look like over the next ten years.

The draft will be presented to City Council during a study session on Tuesday, October 13 at 1 p.m. and will be available on our Master Plan project page beginning October 8. We'll also have a community feedback survey open October 8–16.

Please take a look and tell us what you think! This truly is your plan, and one of my goals throughout this process has been to make sure everyone has an opportunity to participate. Following community and City Council feedback, we'll make final revisions and bring the plan back to Council for consideration on November 3.

And now—finally—cool and cozy weather! Fall is my favorite season in Prescott. Temperatures cool down, leaves turn those magical colors, cozy sweaters come out of the back of the closet, and it seems like there's a special event happening every weekend. It's also a great time to get outside, and our team has been busy creating and improving places for you to enjoy.

By Kristy Diaz-Trahan - Recreation Services Director

If playgrounds are part of your world, check out the newly upgraded playground at Watson Lake, featuring some of the latest in playground design—including a zip line! We've also added lighting under the ramada at Kayla's Hands Playground, giving families more opportunity to enjoy the space as the days get shorter.

New LED lighting has also been installed at the hockey rink, providing a more consistent playable space while improving energy efficiency.

Out on the trails, our incredible Over the Hill Gang volunteers have been hard at work helping complete the Prescott Circle Trail. We're getting close, so watch for news about a ribbon-cutting celebration before the end of the year!

Whether you're enjoying a playground, exploring a trail, attending one of our community events or simply soaking up a beautiful Prescott fall day, I hope you find a reason to get outside and enjoy this wonderful season.

And as always, I look forward to running into you at the farmers market, out on a trail—or sipping a pumpkin latte at a local coffee shop.
Enjoy the fall!

Prescott Parks & Recreation Master Plan Project Page

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FEATURED PARK:

PARK SPOTLIGHT: A.C. WILLIAMS GRANITE CREEK PARK

By Devin Dennis- Recreation Supervisor

The creek corridor had a history long before it became a park. Railroad workers once camped nearby, and a community known as “Long Beach” later stood on land that became part of the park. Acquiring the properties and developing the space took years of work by Williams, City staff and community partners. Williams later identified the land acquisition and opening of Granite Creek Park as his greatest accomplishment.

That “Central Park” vision still feels right for this place. Close to the heart of town, a large green lawn shaded by mature cottonwood trees offers room to picnic, play or relax. The ramada is one of the park’s most popular gathering spaces, and families can spend time at the large playground. Visitors can take a short walk within the park or follow the connected Greenways trails along Granite Creek toward downtown. They can also play a game on the sand volleyball court or stop to see the mural beneath the bridge.



The park’s restrooms were recently renovated, and we intend to keep adding to the park over time. Williams imagined a place where the whole community could come together. You can see that idea in a child discovering the next page of a story, friends gathering under the ramada or someone enjoying a quiet walk beneath the cottonwoods.

People come to Granite Creek Park for different reasons, and each of them makes the place their own. Caring for that space—and finding new ways for people to enjoy it—is how we hope to carry Williams’s vision forward while honoring its history and creating new memories for generations of Prescott residents and visitors to come.



Over the past several years, Recreation Services has added new ways to enjoy the park, including the bicycle pump track and StoryWalk. Created in partnership with Prescott Public Library, StoryWalk displays a children’s picture book one page at a time along a path that ends at a small play structure. The Library changes the featured story periodically, giving families a new book to discover on a return visit. The Friends of the Prescott Public Library also support the project.



PROGRAMMING

FROST FEST - *PRESCOTT ON ICE*

By Ryan Harlow - Recreation Supervisor



The City of Prescott Recreation Services Department is excited to introduce Frost Fest: Prescott on Ice, our inaugural winter holiday event celebrating the magic of the season in Everybody's Christmas City! Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 19, from 3–9 p.m. and join us for an afternoon and evening packed with festive fun for the whole family.

Frost Fest will feature an ice rink, exciting rides, interactive activities and games, music, and a very special visit from Santa Claus, who will be on hand for photos and holiday memories. Whether you're ready to lace up your skates (don't worry! skates will be available on site if you don't have any), enjoy the rides, challenge your family to a friendly game, or simply soak in the holiday atmosphere, there will be something for everyone.

And the best part? Admission is FREE! All rides and activities are free! So grab your family, grab your friends, grab your neighbors, and join us at Ken Lindley field on Dec 19th to celebrate the season. Local vendors will also be on hand offering food, holiday treats, and gifts available for purchase, giving attendees a chance to support local businesses while finding that perfect last minute Christmas gift.

So throw on your ugly Christmas sweater, put on your mittens and tie on your scarf as we get everything merry and bright. Together let's make some new holiday memories at Frost Fest: Prescott on Ice- Saturday, December 19, from 3–9 p.m. We hope to see you there so we can ring in the holidays together in Everybody's Christmas City!

A TIMED-HONORED TRADITION - CELEBRATING AMERICA'S VETERANS

By Michelle Stacy-Schroeder- Administrative Supervisor

Every year, on November 11, the nation pauses to honor and pay tribute to the veterans of our nation and its long military history. The City of Prescott is no different. Since 2013, the City of Prescott has hosted the annual Veterans Day Parade in downtown Prescott. Prior to that, the parade was hosted by the Northern Arizona VA Medical Center at the Bob Stump Center (formerly Fort Whipple).

This year's theme is "Remember the Past, Serve the Present, Inspire the Future." As the Administrative Supervisor and an eight-year Army veteran, I have had the privilege of coordinating this parade for the last ten years. The experience has been both humbling and therapeutic, allowing me to bring a veteran's perspective to a celebration that honors those who served before, with, and after me.

Veterans Day is a special time to remember the sacrifices made by the men and women who have served our country. It is also an opportunity to bring our community together and teach future generations about the importance of service and sacrifice. Veterans Day festivities begin Tuesday, November 10, at 10:00 a.m. at the All-Soldiers Memorial statue on the west side of the Yavapai County Courthouse. Cadets from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Air Force and Army ROTC will begin a 24-hour guard of the memorial, followed by the ceremonial wreath laying.

The celebration continues Wednesday with an opening ceremony at 10:30 a.m. at Cortez and Union streets, followed by the parade at 11:00 a.m. The parade begins at Willis Street and Cortez Street, travels past the Yavapai County Courthouse, and returns up historic Whiskey Row.

Prescott has a proud tradition of honoring those who have worn the uniform. This celebration is one way our community says "thank you" to our veterans and their families. All are encouraged to come out in patriotic colors, bring family and friends, and show appreciation for our nation's veterans. We hope to see you there!



PARKS | LAKES | TRAILS

CLOSING THE LOOP: THE PRESCOTT CIRCLE TRAIL

By: Chris Hosking - Trails Supervisor

The Prescott Circle Trail (PCT) is nearly complete. The Over the Hill Gang (OTHG) and I have been working to complete the final 2-mile section from Williamson Valley Road to Prescott National Forest Trail 341 in Granite Basin.

The work is a combination of machine and muscle power. I am cutting the trail, removing large rocks and roots, while the OTHG is shaping and finishing the trail.



This final section has been a long time coming. I first laid out this area in 2010 as a desired location for the PCT. From 2015 to 2017, the OTHG and I built the Badger, Sundog and Longview trails. Since then, the PCT has been “connected” through the Ho-Kai-Gan subdivision to the Katahn Trail. However, this was not ideal because the trail connection followed roads rather than a dedicated trail.

The Stringfield Ranch development materialized in 2024, providing the opportunity for the new trail to finally be designed.

The new trail will be called the Full Circle Trail, and as the name implies, it completes the Prescott Circle Trail.



The OTHG and I are proud to see the PCT nearing completion, but there is still more work to do to make the PCT even better. My hope is that we can showcase the Granite Dells more and create some reroutes through future development to accomplish this.

The Full Circle Trail offers some of the best views along the PCT and provides a great connection from Williamson Valley Road to Granite Basin. It will also give hikers and outdoor enthusiasts a new way to experience the landscape and enjoy the beauty of Prescott’s trail system.

Happy Trails!

