

From: **Jeff Williams**

Date: Wed, Aug 4, 2021 at 8:47 AM

Subject: Public Input for Council

For City Council:

As City Council is poised to vote on further restricting access to the City boat ramp, I would suggest they read our Comprehensive Plan to ensure they are voting in a manner that is consistent with the Plan.

From our Comprehensive Plan: "The Leonard & Edith Stark boat ramp allows public access to the Tualatin River. **66.2%** of respondents to the 2008 Rivergrove City Survey¹ said that the boat ramp "is a great asset to Rivergrove," and **52.3%** said that they "regularly access the river." 52.3% regularly access the river. What proportion of our City now wants to further restrict access to this ramp by way of limiting hours of access? What proportion of our City now wants to limit parking near this ramp? What proportion of our City wants to continue to use gates to control access? It is safe to assume that 10% or less of our population supports restricting access to the boat ramp, which is a far cry from the 52% of citizens the City notes regularly access the river. The City is looking to directly violate its own Comprehensive Plans when voting on restrictive measures on this boat ramp.

Further, our **City Comprehensive Plan** states **Goal 5** as: To protect natural resources and conserve scenic and historic areas and open spaces. Policy 14 within this Goal adds: "**The City shall make an effort to improve public access to the Tualatin River.**" The City has since installed a restrictive gate, has arbitrarily locked the gate on busy weekends without Council approval, and is now looking to limit the hours of the park, and limit parking around the park. How does the City Council reconcile these actions, both present and past, as being consistent with our own Comprehensive Plans? The City is continuing to restrict and punish the majority of the citizens, to appease a small number of home owners who chose to buy homes next to a boat ramp.

Further, our **City Comprehensive Plan** states **Goal 8** as: "To satisfy the recreational needs of the citizens of the Rivergrove area and visitors.". Policy 4 of this Goal states "Work with affected agencies to improve the Tualatin River and **allow access to its recreational opportunities.**". Again, the City has since installed a restrictive gate, has arbitrarily locked the gate on busy weekends without Council approval, and is now looking to limit the hours of the park, and limit parking around the park. How does the City Council reconcile these actions, both present and past, as being consistent with our own Comprehensive Plans? By making it more difficult to actually use the ramp, how is the City allowing access for the recreational opportunities?

The City Council is yet again contemplating another set of changes to the Stark Boat Ramp that would further violate our own Comprehensive Plan. This is in addition to measures that already violate our Comprehensive Plan and the Americans With Disabilities Act. If the City of Rivergrove wishes to treat the Tualatin River the way our neighbors treat their lake, I would submit that our best option would be to clear a path to annexation to the City of Lake Oswego, as we would clearly share common goals....the restriction of access to public waterways in favor of those who happen to own the properties along said waterway.

Enough is enough The citizens of this City can set our watches by the frequency of the boat ramp debates. What was once "Covid concerns" have now morphed into "safety of children" concerns now that Covid has subsided. Our City has an incredible resource, and the City should support its citizens ability to access and enjoy that resource. If safety is the true concern, we would also be erecting fences/gates around the playground to prevent unsupervised children from using the equipment, and also protective barriers around the bench in Heritage Park the is on the river bank and could also pose a significant safety risk for unsupervised children.

Additionally, the complainants will submit that "things have gotten worse", but there is no 3rd party evidence to support this. The complainants want to restrict parking, but they nor the City have researched what the impact would be to other neighbors as clearly neither party cares, so long as the complainants get their way. This is not the way our City government should work. It should work to support the entire community, making fact-based decisions.

Lastly, the gate itself. When citizens of Rivergrove wish to erect fencing on their properties in the flood plains, they are required to follow Type III Development Permit and Conditional Use Application procedures, such as the Klossner fence last year. When the City erected the gate, was this process followed? Was there a formal determination that the gate would meet all of the County and FEMA regulations?

Sincerely,

Jeff Williams
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