

PRESS RELEASE

Citizens for an Open Greenbelt (COG) Files Lawsuit Against the State of Idaho and City of Garden City

Garden City, Idaho November 17, 2010. For almost three years, the Citizens for an Open Greenbelt (COG) have attempted to reverse the bike riding ban in Garden City through collaboration and negotiation. This disputed 1 ½ mile bike path is located along the Boise River in Garden City west of Glenwood to Arney Lane. COG has been unwavering in our commitment to eliminate an unjust Garden City bike ban ordinance. Countless hours have been spent with officials from Garden City and the State Land Board to resolve the issue. Unfortunately the State and Garden City are resolute in maintaining no bike riding along this pathway in the Riverside Village area; the same section (our public trust lands) had been designated a “bicycle path” in public documents by the State and Garden City for many years.

Having exhausted our efforts to resolve this out of court, this last Friday, November 12, our attorneys filed a complaint on behalf of COG in the Fourth District Court, in Ada County. The defendants in this case are the City of Garden City; the State of Idaho, Idaho Land Board; and the Idaho Department of Lands. Essentially we are arguing that:

1. This disputed section in Garden City (Riverside Village area) was intended, designed and created to include bike riding.
2. The State and Garden City have arbitrarily and wrongfully limited the citizens’ right to utilize a public bike path for bike riding.
3. Garden City enacted an ordinance that is unreasonable, arbitrary and in violation of prior agreements for which they were a party to.

This was not an easy decision for COG as we had hoped either the State or Garden City would respect the interests and needs of the bicycle riding public in the Treasure Valley. But they chose not to. As much as we’re glad this case is moving ahead, it’s unfortunate that we could not resolve this without the need for legal action. Unfortunately both the State and Garden City will be committing taxpayers’ money and resources to defend this lawsuit that could have been resolved out of court.

COG is a nonprofit grassroots advocacy group dedicated to supporting the stated goal of the Treasure Valley Greenbelt... “to provide continuous open space along the river for non-motorized, mixed use for the citizens of Idaho.”

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