



Office of the City Manager

April 7, 2015

To: Honorable Mayor and City Council Members

From: Christine Daniel, City Manager

Subject: Berkeley Tuolumne Camp Update

Over the next three months the City of Berkeley in collaboration with the United States Forest Service (USFS) will be undertaking a public process that will help shape the Berkeley Tuolumne Camp Master Development Plan (see Attachment 1, Press Release for April 10, 2015). This public process will consist of four Public Meetings and a series of presentations the first week of Echo Lake High Sierra Camp. Additionally, staff will be meeting with many former Berkeley Tuolumne Camp staff members and the Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp (FOBTC).

Background

The City's Berkeley Tuolumne Camp (BTC) has been in operation since 1922. The camp has been a summer tradition for generations of Berkeley residents as more than 4,000 individuals have annually enjoyed fun-filled activities and heart-felt traditions at Tuolumne Camp. On August 25, 2013, the camp was largely destroyed during the Rim Fire, one of the largest and most damaging wildfires in California's history, burning an estimated 257,000 acres. During the next six months the City and its contractor, American Integrated Services, Inc., carefully assessed and remediated the approximately 15 acre site while protecting the many natural resources. In April 2014, the USFS completed the Rim Hazard Tree Environmental Assessment (EA) for portions of the burned area which included the BTC site and subsequently removed many of the hazardous trees throughout the burned area.

In order to rebuild camp, the City must complete a new Master Development Plan for this location. During the past year, staff have worked with USFS officials to determine the guidelines for that plan. Additionally this process has and will continue to include the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the State of California Office of Emergency Services, the State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Tuolumne

County and the City's insurance representatives. On March 2, 2015, the City received a tentative approval of a conceptual plan from the USFS that both the City and USFS believe will be a road map for the successful redevelopment of camp (see Attachment 2)

The Master Development Plan guidelines will allow the City to keep many of the existing elements of BTC, but also includes some changes to the physical nature of camp that will protect both the environment and the historic nature of the site moving forward. Much of the heart of camp, including the Dining Hall, Recreation Hall, chair circle, store, sport courts, amphitheater, Kiddie Kamp, the playground, and many of the family tent cabins and related facilities can be rebuilt essentially in place. However, current laws, policy and regulations will result in three additional parameters that will change some of the physical nature of BTC: no overnight accommodations in the 100 year flood plain, limited use of the north section of BTC (Sun City), and the development of parking areas off of Hardin Flat Road, the County Road providing access to the site.

After several follow-up meetings with the USFS, the City is now ready to move forward with the public process with the hope that we can complete a draft design by the end of July. This draft design will be used as the City's and USFS' submittal for both the Federal (NEPA) and State (CEQA) Environmental analysis and decision making processes. Further information will be available to the general Public on the City of Berkeley Website on Friday, April 10.

Attachments

cc: Scott Ferris, Director of Parks Recreation & Waterfront