

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

NO. 05-150

DATE June 1, 2005

C.D. _____

BOARD OF RECREATION AND PARK COMMISSIONERS

SUBJECT: **CAMP RADFORD – DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND SPECIAL USE PERMIT WITH THE U. S. FOREST SERVICE**

J. Combs	_____	H. Fujita	_____
*S. Huntley	<u>SH</u>	B. Jensen	_____
J. Kolb	_____	F. Mok	_____
K. Regan	_____		


_____ **General Manager**

Approved _____ Disapproved _____ Withdrawn _____

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board:

1. Approve the scope of work titled the "Camp Radford Development Plan" (attached), which is the basis for issuing the Special Use Permit by the U. S. Forest Service.
2. Authorize the Department to execute a new Special Use Permit with the U. S. Forest Service for the use of the Camp Radford site (on file in the Board Office), located in the San Bernardino National Forest with a formal address of 3250 Radford River Road, Angelus Oaks;
3. Direct the Board Secretary to transmit the Special Use Permit to the City Attorney for review as to form and concurrently to the Mayor for review and approval in accordance with Executive Directive No. 16;
4. Upon obtaining the necessary approvals, authorize the General Manager to execute the Permit; and
5. Authorize the Chief Accounting Employee to pay the annual rental of \$8,453.88 from Fund 302, Account 6030.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 2

NO. 05-150

SUMMARY:

The origins of Camp Radford date to 1917. At that time, a portion of the U. S. Forest Services' property off Highway 38, south of Big Bear Lake and two miles from Jenks Lake, was leased to the City of Los Angeles. The site is 95 miles east of Los Angeles at an elevation of 5,700 feet and had been used as an experimental tree farm called the Converse Flats Forest Station. The leased site was open for camping by 1920, and soon the camp had a wood and fieldstone lodge and an open-air amphitheater. Over the years tents gave way to cabins; other buildings were added, plus a swimming pool, sports field, a ball court and foot/vehicle bridges over Converse Creek, which runs through the middle of the camp. Care was taken to follow a rustic, Craftsman-Bungalow style for the buildings. Eventually the leasehold consisted of 33.69 acres surrounded by another 50 acres of undeveloped Forest Service land.

Radford was the second of five camps developed by the Department in the 1920s, all of which still exist. Only one other, Camp Seely, which is also on Forest Service land in the San Bernardino Mountains, was designed to provide both family and youth camping, and it is a smaller site with fewer amenities.

The most recent agreement with the Forest Service was a Special Use Permit that expired at the end of 1992. Camp Radford has been closed since then due to damage from the Little Landers earthquake. The Forest Service was reluctant to issue a new Permit until the camp could reopen, so the Department has had a "hold-over" status, paying the same fee that is proposed for the new Permit. Several attempts were made to secure funding for repairs and improvements, including making structures accessible to the disabled. Renovation was complicated by the determination that the three oldest structures are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; therefore, special treatment is required in order to preserve the distinct architectural style.

In 1998, the City Council approved \$1,060,397.00 from the Seismic Bond Program (Prop. G) for use at Camp Radford (C. F. No. 98-1960). This sum will allow partial rehabilitation so that the lower half of the camp can reopen, which will allow for a 100-person occupancy (Development Plan, Phase I, attached). When additional funding is secured and all the renovations are complete, Radford will be able to accommodate 350 campers (Development Plan, Phase II, attached).

In preparation for the renovation and after reviewing the Development Plan, which was drafted by Department staff and the Bureau of Engineering, the Forest Service offered the Department a five-year Special Use Permit (No. SGD1025A, expiring 12/31/09). The City Attorney advised that a term of at least twenty years would be required for the expenditure of the bond funds. In response, the Forest Service included in the Permit a provision that if the work planned for Phase I is completed within the five-year term, the Permit shall be extended for an additional twenty years until 2029. At the time of the renewal, the annual rental fee will be open for renegotiation.

REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

PG. 3

NO. 05-150

Staff determined that the Permit and the restoration projects in the Development Plan are exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Article III, Section 1, Class 1 (1, 4, 11d, 32) and Class 2 of the City CEQA Guidelines.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT:

Phase I of the camp's renovation is funded from the previously approved appropriation from the Seismic Bond Program. Before reopening the camp after the completion of Phase I, operating and maintenance costs for Radford will be assessed and considered in the context of the Department's overall camping program.

The Assistant General Manager of Operations East, the Superintendent of the Griffith-Metro Region and the head of Camping Section concur with staff's recommendations.

This Report was prepared by Joan Reitzel, Senior Management Analyst in Real Estate and Asset Management.