



CITY NOTES

January 18, 2018

Update on Mill Site Remediation>> At the end of November, the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) held an “agency meeting” with representatives from the City of Fort Bragg, Coastal Commission, Division of Safety of Dams (DSOD), Regional Water Quality Control Board, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the US Army Corps of Engineers. The purpose of the meeting was to share information regarding the status of the environmental remediation process for the former Georgia Pacific mill site and to troubleshoot potential regulatory issues. City staff shared the City Council’s resolution expressing community preferences for remediation of the mill pond. Much of the discussion centered on agency concerns and mitigation requirements for various remedial alternatives for the mill pond. A couple take-away messages regarding the mill pond were as follows:

- 1) DTSC will not require removal of the mill pond dam under any clean-up alternative.
- 2) If contaminated sediments are to remain in place in the mill pond, DTSC will rely on DSOD to help identify long-term operations and maintenance requirements to ensure that the dam will adequately contain the sediments. DSOD’s analysis will be based in part on potential public safety impacts resulting from dam failure during a seismic event. Coastal Commission and City representatives indicated to DSOD that covenants prohibiting public access on the beach below the dam would not be acceptable as beaches are part of the public trust.
- 3) If contaminated sediments are removed from the mill pond, DTSC will not be concerned about the stability of the dam as it would not be used for containment. DSOD (and the City), however, would continue to have concerns about the dam stability.
- 4) Partially or completely filling in the mill pond would require a considerable amount of mitigation for disturbance to and loss of wetland habitat. Enhancement of a vegetative “cap” may not require additional mitigation if there is no net loss in wetland habitat. The Coastal Commission will not allow any remediation work in the mill pond unless it is related to a restoration project.

Representatives from DTSC, the City and several agencies met with Georgia Pacific’s remediation team last week. We discussed a schedule for moving the last 10% of the remediation process (Operable Unit E) to completion. DTSC is planning to hold a community meeting this spring when the draft Feasibility Study is released for public review. The Remedial Action Plan will be released for public review in the fall.

New Data Regarding Local Homeless Population>> Mendocino County has contracted with a “homelessness expert,” Dr. Robert Marbut, to help develop an action plan to more effectively address homelessness throughout our county. Earlier this month, Dr. Marbut shared some initial data and findings for Ukiah and Fort Bragg. More work will be conducted to collect data from local encampments outside of the city limits and in other locations throughout the County. The initial data for Fort Bragg revealed a total of 81 homeless individuals living within the city limits, 49 of whom are temporarily housed in the Mendocino Coast Hospitality Center’s emergency shelter or transitional housing. The remaining 32 were adults experiencing street-level homelessness- i.e., living/sleeping on

the streets, within encampments, parks, etc. Interesting findings about the street-level homeless population include:

- 1) The male/female split is 61% male/39% female. The average age is 44.4 and the median age is 46.0. The average age an individual starts experiencing street-level homelessness is 39.6, with a median age of 41.0. According to Dr. Marbut, overall, this is a younger population than would be expected by about 3-4 years and the percentage of females is slightly higher than would be expected.
- 2) 78.1% of the population had been living on the streets for more than one year. This is considered chronic homelessness. The average time experiencing homelessness was 4.8 years and the median was 2.3 years. According to Dr. Marbut, the chronic-ness of our homelessness is very high.
- 3) On average, individuals experiencing street-level homelessness have lived in Mendocino County for 18.6 years, and a median of 14.5 years. On average, 51.4% have family members living in Mendocino County and, when you add in family members who have passed on who had been living in Mendocino, the numbers move up to 61.9%. Relative to other communities, local family connectivity is very high among our street-level homeless population.
- 4) 81.9% of the street-level homeless do not have a job now and 53.3% did not have a job in Mendocino County before experiencing homelessness. These are extremely low levels of employment both before and after the onset of homelessness.

Mark Your Calendars>> Information on upcoming public meetings can be found on the “Upcoming Agenda Items” pages on the City’s website or by signing up for meeting notifications using the “Notify Me” feature at <https://city.fortbragg.com>.

- **City Council Meeting – Monday, January 22, 2018** at 6 PM, Fort Bragg Town Hall. Agenda includes Quarterly Report from Visit Fort Bragg; Noyo Center Biannual Report; Discussion of Noyo Center Parcel Transfer; Discussion regarding Mill Site Reuse Plan and Sustainability Policies.
- **Planning Commission Meeting – Wednesday, January 24, 2018** at 6 PM, Fort Bragg Town Hall. Agenda includes: Discussion regarding Mill Site Reuse Plan: Open Space and Design Guidelines.

City Notes is usually published on the second and fourth Thursday of each month. If you have questions or suggestions regarding this column or any matter of City business, feel free to contact City Manager Linda Ruffing at LRuffing@fortbraqq.com or (707)961-2829.