



# Camp Fresno Annual Report Summer 2021



## Mayor Jerry Dyer's Vision and Youth Priority

When I took office in January, building a 'One Fresno' vision was my top priority. This vision developed from campaign trail conversations across the City, where residents were clear that they desired an "Inclusive, prosperous, beautiful and safe city where people take pride in their neighborhoods and community." They wanted a "government that listens, keeps its promises and is owned by the people." I believe this vision is desired by all of our people, including our youth. Because of this, I made youth investment one of my six Mayoral priorities, and since taking office, I have continued to listen to their needs.

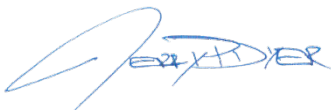
According to a recently conducted resident sentiment survey<sup>1</sup>, **only 17.5% of Fresno residents believe the City of Fresno sufficiently invested in its youth**. Aside from the empirical data, this sentiment is much more real as it pertains to our youths' physical, emotional and mental health.

*"An inclusive, prosperous, beautiful and safe city where people take pride in their neighborhoods and community. A government that listens, keeps its promises and is owned by the people."*

Over the past few months, I – along with my administration – have conducted a series of listening sessions where our young people have been given a platform to share their thoughts and concerns. During these sessions, Fresno youth repeatedly shared their concerns about their own mental health. Already challenged by society's ills, pandemic driven isolation has further tested our young people.

In response to what I heard, I formed the **One Fresno Foundation**<sup>2</sup> as a means to invite private partnership and funding for youth facing initiatives. Additionally, after touring Camp Fresno on April 9<sup>th</sup>, I was convinced that revitalizing and leveraging the City-operated camp would support our youths' desperate and immediate cry for help.

The following is an overview of Camp Fresno and early wins from investing in our city's most valuable asset – young people.



**Jerry P. Dyer**  
Mayor | City of Fresno





# Camp Fresno

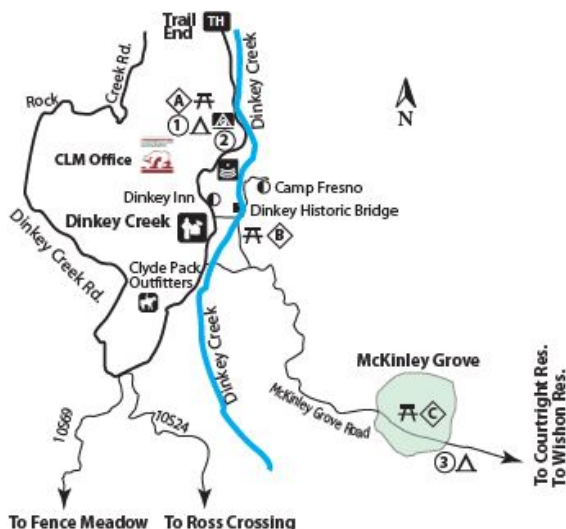
Nestled in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Camp Fresno is a 35-acre site located near Dinkey Creek that has been operated by the City of Fresno since the 1920's. It has provided a retreat for thousands of campers in its 60-plus cabins and shared facilities. After touring the camp, Mayor Dyer instructed his administration to work in earnest to prepare it for the City's youth starting in the summer of 2021. One challenge was the camp's dilapidated state. A 2015 Blair Church and Flynn site study<sup>3</sup> revealed the camp needed approximately **\$5.3M** in investments to restore it to its former glory.

Lacking a repair budget for youth camps, Mayor Dyer nevertheless forged ahead, intent on providing the experience to hundreds of Fresno youth aged 8 – 17. The Mayor was particularly driven to focus the camp on changing the trajectory of our disadvantaged, and often marginalized, youth. Campers would receive:

- **Access to free 1 and 3-day camps**
- **Free transportation from City Hall**
- **Sleeping bags, toiletries and other camp necessities**
- **Instruction in Leadership, Career Readiness and Civic Engagement**
- **A full experience of camp food, hikes, bond fires, story telling and making new friends**

Under the leadership of Deputy Mayor Matthew Grundy, Assistant City Manager Francine Kanne, PARCS Director TJ Miller and Assistant PARCS Director Aaron Aguirre, a strategic plan was quickly created to ensure that:

1. The Mayor's newly established One Fresno Foundation could successfully solicit significant private donations to sponsor youth at the camp
2. Camp infrastructure was sound
3. Contractors were secured to support faciliation of the camp
4. Community volunteer opportunities were created and enacted
5. Partnerships with youth serving organizations were forged to market the camp
6. A call/contact center was created to perform community outreach; and
7. Parents and guardians were fully engaged to provide a memorable and life-altering experience for their campers



## Camp Fresno Fun Facts:

- Located in Sierras near Dinkey Creek
- City operated since 1920's
- Over 60 structures on site
- Provides an annual rustic getaway to thousands of individuals





# Camp Progress

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*"The best part was making new friends. I will always remember nights in the cabin. They were funny and amazing." – 16-year-old camper*



## A 'One Fresno' Camping Experience

As of August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, 408 youth have attended 17 1-day or 3-day camps at the reborn Camp Fresno. Campers aged 8 – 17 (average age 12 years old) participated in camps specifically geared to grow their civic engagement, leadership, career readiness and appreciation of the outdoors. Per post camp youth surveys:

- ▶ **91%** of youth survey respondents have said their experience at camp Fresno has improved their mental health.
- ▶ **99%** have shared that they have made new friends.

For the remainder of the summer, Camp Fresno is partnering with local CBO's to host youth gang intervention camps.

## Volunteer Support

While City of Fresno Department of Public Works (DPW) and Department of Public Utilities (DPU) staff work annually on addressing camp infrastructure needs; volunteer support has been essential to the new Camp Fresno's success. Both unskilled and skilled volunteers have conducted basic cleaning and camp ground preparation along with cabin restoration and repair activities. Led by Community Coordinator George Ordway, to date we have realized the following results:

- ▶ **246** individuals have volunteered year to date
- ▶ **1687** hours have been given year to date with an estimated value of \$50,525
- ▶ **>\$200k** has been donated by individuals and entities, making the camping experience accessible to our youth.



**"The best part was being able to make new friends and knowing that I can let my hair down & be myself... Be able to relate to other kids my age."**

- 14 year old camper

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The background of the image is a close-up of a wood grain, showing concentric rings of various shades of brown, tan, and dark blue. A white rectangular box is centered on the image, containing the text "Camp Fresno forward...".

***Camp Fresno  
forward...***

The logo for Camp Fresno, featuring a large white number "1" on a purple background, with the word "FRESNO" in white capital letters to its right.

**FRESNO**





*"Our youth are not just the leaders of tomorrow, they are the leaders of today."*  
- Mayor Jerry Dyer

## Current Partners



Just months ago the prospects of utilizing Camp Fresno to serve our youth seemed nothing more than a dream. Today, young people from across the city have been forever changed by their camping experience.

By establishing the **One Fresno Foundation**, we now have a non-profit foundation able to harness the generosity of time and treasure of our community members/organizations. Our greatest asset is our youth. For an sponsorship investment of **\$532** per child, the future of our city will forever be changed.

Thank you in advance for your ongoing support and investment in our youth.



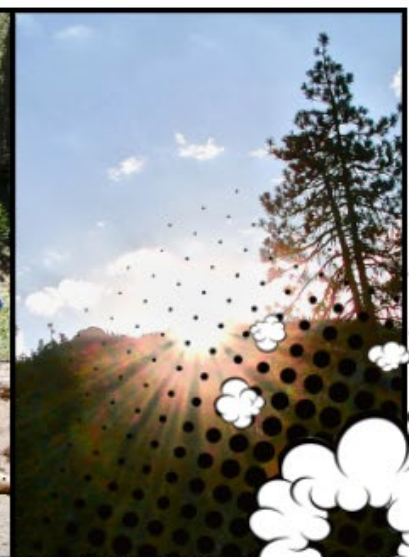
For more information visit us at:

[www.OneFresnoFoundation.com](http://www.OneFresnoFoundation.com)

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