



Presidio
Trust

For Immediate Release:

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Presidio Demolishes Former Burger King Building to Make Way for the Tunnel Tops

*Public event kick-starts Presidio Tunnel Tops parklands project connecting the
Main Post and Crissy Field*

Presidio of San Francisco (October 24, 2018. Updated November 6) On November 15, the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, the National Park Service, and the Presidio Trust invite the public to come to watch the demolition of the national park's former military Observation Post building, gather for refreshments and contribute art work or selfies from "Your Point of View", beginning at 8:30am and lasting throughout the day. The leveling of the building, which is also remembered fondly as a beloved Burger King, will unlock new and breath-taking views, unveil the powerful potential of the Tunnel Tops project, and move it forward a step to completion in 2021. The project will create 14 spectacular new acres of parkland over the tops of the Doyle Drive tunnels, linking the Main Post to Crissy Field and reuniting the Presidio for the first time since the highway's construction in 1936.

Says Jean Fraser, CEO of the Presidio Trust: "With the tearing down of the old Burger King we are making way for the Tunnel Tops, unlocking the incredible bay and Golden Gate Bridge views. Come on by to enjoy a view that's been hidden for nearly 50 years."

Bay Area leaders, urban planners, and citizens had a vision 25 years ago when faced with replacing the seismically unsafe Doyle Drive highway. The Presidio Parkway with its expansive roadway tucked into tunnels, has now become a reality, allowing for a landscaping project over its tops. Designed by James Corner Field Operations, creator of the renowned High Line in New

York, the Tunnel Tops will join other such projects in the U.S. that seek to improve the lives of urbanites by turning derelict infrastructures into green space for all to enjoy. It will feature scenic overlooks, paths, gardens, a community plaza with food and amenities, a great campfire circle, picnic grounds and play spaces for residents and visitors alike to escape from it all, recharge, and reconnect with nature and each other.

Says Laura Joss, Superintendent of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area: “We’re grateful for this unique partnership with the Presidio Trust and the Golden Gate National Park Conservancy to make the Tunnel Tops project possible. Opening the Presidio Visitor Center in 2017 together was an important step in the project, and will remain a great place to view future progress on the site.”

The project contains a major education component. An historic building at the bottom of the bluff will be renovated and turned into classrooms, and two new buildings will be built, one for an art and science lab and the other as a drop-in environmental education facility. The Outpost, a nature play and learning landscape will bring a new kind of playground to the Youth Campus. Currently, the Presidio works with 64 schools and an additional 121 organizations that combined serve some 30,000 children. With the completion of the Tunnel Tops that number will more than triple to 100,000 per year.

“We can only create this beautiful new space with the support of generous donors and we’re delighted to have raised 80% of the \$90 million goal. We are so grateful for the visionaries who are helping to build this important San Francisco civic project,” says Greg Moore, President and CEO of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy.

The Process & Timeline

The Tunnel Tops project kicked off in 2014 with the *Imagine* phase, a community conversation that brought to light the public’s ideas and dreams. The *Design* phase began in 2015 with public input to lead designer James Corner Field Operations, to help shape the look and feel of the Tunnel Tops project. The design for 14 new acres of parkland and Youth Campus will be finalized in January of 2019 and incorporated into the project’s construction documents for permitting by July 2019—the *Build* phase begins later that year. Half of the native plant palette (100,000) is Presidio indigenous species currently being grown in multiple nurseries by the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy staff. The other half is ornamental species that have

adapted to our climate and will be commercially sourced. Opening celebrations are planned for 2021. For Tunnel Top news and updates, visit www.presidio.gov/tunnel-tops or stop in the Presidio Visitor Center.

About the Observation Post

The Observation Post, or Building 211, was constructed by the Army and Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) in 1968 as a cafeteria for Presidio personnel and the public. By the late 1980s, the cafeteria was operating at a net loss, and the AAFES turned it into a Burger King franchise, which opened its doors on April 27, 1989. In response to concerns from local conservationists and park advocates, the Burger King only advertised its presence with one small, plain outdoor sign. Views from the restaurant were touted in *Sunset Magazine* the year it was shut down in 2002, not long after the Army left the post. The Presidio Trust made it available as event space most recently.

About the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

The Parks Conservancy is the nonprofit membership organization that supports the Golden Gate National Parks—the most-visited unit in the national park system in the United States. Since 1981, the Parks Conservancy has provided over \$300 million in aid for site transformations, habitat restorations, research and conservation, volunteer and youth engagement, and interpretive and educational programs. The Conservancy's work is made possible through the dedication of its members and donors; contributions from foundations, businesses, public agencies, and generous individuals, as well as earned income from the operation of park stores, cafes, and tours. Learn more at parksconservancy.org or call (415) 561-3000.

About the National Park Service

More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 413 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. To learn more about the National Park Service, visit www.nps.gov

About the Presidio and the Presidio Trust

The Presidio Trust is a federal agency that manages the Presidio of San Francisco, a national park at the heart of the 82,000-acre Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In partnership with

the National Park Service and the non-profit Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, the Presidio Trust brings alive the park's historic, natural, and recreational assets for the inspiration, education, health, and enjoyment of all people at no cost to taxpayers. It is home to 3,000 residents and 200 tenant organizations, many of which welcome and serve the public. The Presidio Trust is focused on welcoming all to the national park experience, protecting and enhancing the environment, and operating in service to the public. Learn more at www.presidio.gov

Attention Calendar Editors

Make Way for the Tunnel Tops: Demolition of Former Burger King

Date: November 15, and ongoing

Time: Refreshments and gather at 8:30am; Remarks and demolition start at 9:00am

Place: 211 Lincoln Boulevard, San Francisco, CA 94129

Phone: (415) 561-4323

Price: Free

Join us to watch the Observation Post come down in a big smashing day of demolition, celebrating the next step in the Presidio Tunnel Tops project. Arrive by 8:30am for refreshments, to hear remarks by agency officials, and help them count down to the excavator's first blow. Stick around that day or throughout the week to contribute "Your Point of View" through selfies, drawings or sidewalk chalk. Contribute your renditions of the new views and what you imagine to be the ultimate outcome on social media at #TunnelTops and tag us @presidiosf or create and submit your art work in Presidio Visitor Center.

RSVP: <https://www.presidio.gov/events/make-way-for-the-presidio-tunnel-tops-watch-us-take-down-the-former-burger-king>

PRESS KIT: For information visit www.presidio.gov/tunnel-tops

Please contact us for additional information and photos, interviews, or a possible tour.

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