



Memorandum

TO: RULES AND OPEN
GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

FROM: Councilmember Rose Herrera
Councilmember Nora Campos

SUBJECT: VIETNAM WAR MEMORIAL

DATE: August 12, 2009

Approved

Nora Campos Date 8/12/09

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend the Rules and Open Government Committee enact the following:

- 1) Direct the City Manager to work with veterans' organizations that serve within the City of San José with the goal of erecting a Vietnam War Memorial in San José. The discussion should include:
 - appropriate locations
 - public art criteria and process
 - budget and source of funding
 - maintenance
- 2) Direct staff to return to the Rules and Open Government Committee at an appropriate time with a status report that should include the outcome of those discussion items listed above. If appropriate at that time, a discussion item should be placed on an agenda for full Council consideration.

BACKGROUND:

In Washington DC, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, commonly referred to as "The Wall," has evolved into a place of healing, education, and perspective. First and foremost, it honors the soldiers that sacrificed their lives in the war.

San José is currently home to a veterans' memorial that provides an important place where veterans and families can assemble to pay tribute and remember those who have not returned home and whose fate remain unknown. The Veterans' Memorial, located on Park Avenue at the Guadalupe River, is a tribute to the men and women from Santa Clara Valley who have served the United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy. It was dedicated, fittingly, on Veteran's Day of November 11, 1997. The Memorial consists of 76 white flags and etched glass panels. These panels display images of veterans and letters written from various

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military personnel, spanning from the Civil War to the Vietnam War. The design conveys a message of peace, bravery, and the great sacrifice veterans made for our country.

Here in San José, 143 servicemen made the ultimate sacrifice during the Vietnam War. San José has no permanent memorial to honor the sacrifice that these brave servicemen and their families made on behalf of our country.

Our offices have met separately with members of the San Jose Vietnam War Memorial Foundation (VWMF) to discuss their endeavor to erect a memorial dedicated to these servicemen. The VWMF has committed to privately raising the money to pay for the memorial. They are requesting City support and participation in finding the appropriate location for the memorial. Although we defer to the public art framework as developed in the adopted 2007 New Public Art Master Plan, the Foundation's preference for the location of the memorial is in a public space downtown.

In conclusion, we look forward to discussing the recognition of San José's Vietnam War veterans.