

Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL

DATE: November 24, 2003

FROM: CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: AMENDMENT OF THE MASTER PLANS FOR CENTRAL AND MEMORIAL PARKS AND APPROVAL OF THE PLACEMENT OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL IN MEMORIAL PARK

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the City Council amend the Central and Memorial Park Master Plans to allow the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be placed in Memorial Park in lieu of Central Park.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE RECREATION AND PARKS COMMISSION:

The Recreation and Parks Commission recommended that the City Council approve amending Central and Memorial Park Master Plans to allow the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be placed permanently in Memorial Park in lieu of Central Park.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DESIGN COMMISSION:

The Design Commission recommended that the City Council approve amending Central and Memorial Park Master Plans to allow the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be placed permanently in Memorial Park in lieu of Central Park.

BACKGROUND:

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial was created as a result of the efforts of the Pasadena Vietnam War Memorial Committee, Inc., which was formed in 1989. The triangularly shaped granite and bronze structure, honoring Pasadena service personnel killed or missing in the Vietnam War, was dedicated on Veterans' Day in 1993. The memorial has been placed in a temporary location in the Rotunda of City Hall since that dedication.

The Pasadena Vietnam War Memorial Committee considered several options for a permanent location, including Central Park. As a result, the Central Park Master Plan now provides for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the North Garden section of the park. Since that time, members of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee have expressed concerns about security and visibility of the memorial at that site.

In response to these concerns, the Veterans War Memorial Committee has considered alternative sites at Memorial Park and the Sister Cities Garden located in the Civic Center. That committee suggested that the Civic Center location would be highly visible and least prone to vandalism. The Vietnam War Memorial Committee requested advisement from the City Center Task Force at its July 22 meeting. The Task Force recommended against placement of the memorial opposite the Robinson Brothers Memorial as suggested. The Task Force stated that the Sister Cities Garden was not an appropriate location because the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is much smaller than the Robinson Brothers Memorial and thus would not provide a visual balance to the larger memorial as recommended on a Beaux Arts plan. The Task Force recommended that staff explore other locations within the Civic Center. Staff subsequently reviewed the Civic Center plans and could not identify a location that would meet the objectives of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee.

Memorial Park has several important memorials, including the site of the first free library in California and an important memorial to the Union soldier. The park has been substantially renovated with enhanced security lighting and receives substantially more pedestrian traffic. The location is close to an MTA station and parking is convenient for easy access by visitors. Placement of the memorial at this park reaffirms the intent for this park to house important memorials in a visually appealing, respectful, and accessible central civic space.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is inscribed with 31 names of Pasadena residents who served in the Vietnam War and either died or were missing in action. As such, staff, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Committee, Pasadena's veterans, and family members of the veterans represented on the memorial have concurred that Memorial Park would be an appropriate permanent placement for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.


FISCAL IMPACT

The approval of the amended Central and Memorial Park Master Plans will allow the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to be permanently placed in Memorial Park in lieu of Central Park. The cost to move the memorial and construct a permanent site for it will be approximately \$68,000. The construction of the permanent memorial will need to take place prior to the City Hall seismic renovation starting in June 2004. Funds for this project will come from a combination of in-house services and the City Hall Seismic Renovation project.


Respectfully Submitted,


CYNTHIA J. KURTZ
City Manager

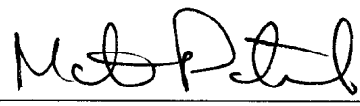
Prepared by:


BRANDI GOOD
Management Analyst, Parks and Natural Resources

Reviewed by:


KATHLEEN WOODS
Administrator, Parks and Natural Resources

Approved by:


MARTIN PASTUCHA
Director, Department of Public Works