

**CITY OF LA VISTA
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL REPORT
APRIL 21, 2015 AGENDA**

Subject:	Type:	Submitted By:
BLUE STAR MEMORIAL	RESOLUTION ORDINANCE ◆ RECEIVE/FILE	RITA RAMIREZ ASSISTANT CITY ADMINISTRATOR/ DIRECTOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

SYNOPSIS

An update on the status of the Blue Star Memorial project.

FISCAL IMPACT

Lottery Fund provided funding for this project.

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

BACKGROUND

There has been a desire on the part of the Mayor and City Council for some time to establish an area in the City to honor Veterans. Consequently, as part of the Civic Park Master Plan process, a significant area in the Belvedere section of the park was earmarked as a Veteran's Memorial. This project is, however, a major undertaking and construction cannot be initiated until the park improvements are underway. As the timeline for park improvements is uncertain, City officials felt it was important to do something in the interim that would provide recognition and honor Veterans. It was determined that the installation of a Blue Star Memorial marker was a meaningful way to accomplish this goal.

The Blue Star Memorial program began with the planting of 8,000 Dogwood trees in 1944 as a living memorial to veterans of World War II. In 1945, the National Council of State Garden Clubs adopted the program and began a Blue Star Highway system, which covers thousands of miles across the country. A large metal Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker was placed at appropriate locations along the way.

The program was expanded to include all men and women who had served, were serving or would serve in the armed services of the United States. Memorial Markers and By-Way markers were added to the Highway Markers, to be used at locations such as National cemeteries, parks, veteran's facilities and gardens.

The Parks Committee has been working on the details of this project over the last several months. A rendering of the proposed installation is attached. La Vista's Blue Star Memorial has been ordered and is scheduled to arrive this month. We are proposing that it be installed in the grassy area between City Hall and the Annex building, south of the sidewalk. A raised landscape bed would be constructed providing seating around the monument. Appropriate plantings would be put into place to provide for a pleasant experience during each of the growing seasons. The Blue Star Memorial could be moved in the future if we chose to make it a part of the Civic Park improvements.

The Memorial area would be unveiled and dedicated during the Salute to Summer Festival taking place over Memorial Day weekend. An event is being planned for Thursday evening, May 21st, to showcase this new Memorial and honor our Veterans. We envision that a ceremony would be held each year at this location as part of the Festival. The unveiling this year coincides very nicely with the Hometown Heroes Banner Program and we are planning to use the "Hometown Heroes" tagline to brand this event.

