



Honorable Mayor and Members of the Hermosa Beach City Council

APPROVAL OF A RESOLUTION DEDICATING A BLUE STAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY MARKER AT GREENWOOD PARK AND FINDING THE SAME EXEMPT FROM THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

(Senior Recreation Supervisor Brian Sousa)

Recommended Action:

Staff recommends City Council adopt by title a Resolution of the City Council of the City of Hermosa Beach, California dedicating a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker at Greenwood Park (**Attachment 4**).

Executive Summary:

At its July 23, 2024 meeting, City Council approved the City's participation in the Blue Star Memorial Marker Program, directing staff to proceed with the installation of a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker at Greenwood Park at an exact location to be determined. Staff completed a site review, identified the proposed location, and recommends Council approve a Resolution dedicating a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker at Greenwood Park. The proposed location would be subject to Caltrans review and final approval.

Background:

At its May 23, 2023 meeting, during public comment, the Hermosa Beach Garden Club (Garden Club) requested the City consider installation of a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker on the Community Center East Lawn along Pacific Coast Highway through the Blue Star Memorial Program. Councilmember Deto requested, and Mayor Pro Tem Saemann and Councilmember Jackson supported, directing staff to work with the Veterans Memorial Committee to consider whether the Blue Star Memorial Program proposed by the Garden Club, would be applicable in Hermosa Beach.

At its July 23, 2024 meeting, Council approved the City's participation in the Blue Star Memorial Marker Program, directing staff to proceed with the installation of a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker at Greenwood Park at an exact location to be determined.

The Blue Star Memorial Program (**Attachment 1**) was created by the National Garden Clubs organization approximately 80 years ago and serves to honor the nation's armed forces through the following:

- A Blue Star Highway Marker on highways and highway rest areas;

- A memorial marker on the grounds of national cemeteries, veteran administrative medical centers, or a civic location deemed appropriate; and
- A by-way marker in parks, historical sites, and other civic locations.

There are currently more than 3,000 such markers throughout the country. The State legislature has deemed Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) as a Blue Star Memorial Highway.

The program requires a State, District, or local garden club to purchase the chosen marker. The Hermosa Beach Garden Club raised funds to purchase a Blue Star Highway Marker.

Past Council Actions

Meeting Date	Description
May 23, 2023	City Council directed staff to work with the Veterans Memorial Subcommittee to consider if the Blue Star Memorial Program proposed by the Hermosa Beach Garden Club would be applicable in Hermosa Beach.
July 23, 2024	City Council received and filed a report regarding the Blue Star Memorial Program; and approved a highway sign on Greenwood Park as a first option and Community Center Lawn as a second option; and directed staff bring back a resolution for approval with determined location.

Discussion:

Following the July 23, 2024 City Council meeting, staff completed a site review and identified the proposed location for a Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker (Highway Marker) at the Northwest corner of Greenwood Park (**Attachment 2.**) The location was selected based on the following considerations:

- The location must be within a designated segment of highway authorized by State Legislative resolutions.
- The location must be fully accessible under current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements.
- The seven-foot post to support the Highway Marker would not impact utility lines or underground infrastructure. The pole requires a three-foot insertion in the ground.
- The highway marker would not obstruct any public right-of-way or vehicular point of view.

As PCH is under Caltrans jurisdiction, the following steps must be taken to allow a Highway Marker to be installed at the aforementioned location by Caltrans:

- First, the Garden Club and staff must apply to the City Council to obtain a local resolution to express approval for the highway marker to be installed on PCH at the designated location. Through this agenda item, City Council would consider approval of the resolution.
- Next, if the City Council resolution is approved and provided to Caltrans, the Garden Club must purchase and place the order for the highway marker.
- Finally, once the Highway Marker is purchased, the Public Works Department would provide Caltrans an engineering site layout plan and apply for, and obtain, an encroachment permit.

If approved, staff resources would be required to ensure the project's completion. This would include the Community Resources Department and Public Works Department oversight with the following items:

- Creation of an agreement between the City and the Garden Club, including purchasing responsibilities, and installation and maintenance responsibilities.
- Execution of the following items:
 - Design of an engineering site plan.
 - Completion of the application for the Encroachment Permit.
- Coordination with Public Works Operations and Maintenance staff.
- Review by Public Works Engineering staff to ensure Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance is met.
- Review and approval of a licensed contractor to complete marker installation and permit issuance by Public Works Engineering staff.
- Supervision of on-site construction of the marker installation by the Public Works Inspector.
- Planning of a dedication ceremony at the site after the marker is installed.

The Garden Club submitted a letter of intent resolution (**Attachment 3**) to the City of Hermosa Beach requesting a local resolution. The Blue Star Memorial Program requires California Garden Clubs to initiate and sponsor Legislative resolutions through its local legislators.

General Plan Consistency:

This report and associated recommendation have been evaluated for their consistency with the City's General Plan. Relevant Policies are listed below:

Governance Element

Goal 1. A high degree of transparency and integrity in the decision-making process.

Policy:

- **1.6 Long-term considerations.** Prioritize decisions that provide long-term community benefit and discourage decisions that provide short-term community benefit but reduce long-term opportunities.

Goal 2. The community is active and engaged in decision-making processes.

Policy:

- **2.6 Responsive to community needs.** Continue to be responsive to community inquiries, providing public information and recording feedback from community interactions.

Fiscal Impact:

The Garden Club would be responsible for purchasing, installing and maintaining the highway marker, priced at \$2,350.00.

If the marker is vandalized or accidentally damaged, the Garden Club would be responsible for its restoration, replacement, or removal. Staff resources to assist with overseeing the marker installation and assisting with the dedication ceremony can be calculated after the project completion.

Attachments:

1. Blue Star Memorial Program
2. Blue Star Memorial Highway Marker Location
3. National Garden Clubs Inc. Resolution
4. Draft Resolution

Respectfully Submitted by: Brian Sousa, Senior Recreation Supervisor

Concur: Lisa Nichols, Community Resources Director

Concur: Joseph SanClemente, Public Works Director

Noted for Fiscal Impact: Brandon Walker, Administrative Services Director

Legal Review: Patrick Donegan, City Attorney

Reviewed by: Angela Crespi, Deputy City Manager

Approved: Suja Lowenthal, City Manager