

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA  
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	December 5, 2022
Action Required:	Approve Resolution
Presenter:	Lisa Robertson, City Attorney
Staff Contacts:	Samuel Sanders, Jr., Deputy City Manager
Title:	<b>Expressing support for a Capital Project to establish Handicapped Access to the Charlottesville Dogwood Vietnam Memorial (1 reading)</b>

**Background**

The Dogwood Vietnam Memorial was the first civic/ public memorial in the United States to be dedicated to those who served and sacrificed their lives in service to their country in the war in Vietnam. The idea for the memorial was presented by members of the City's Dogwood Festival, in the mid-1960s. A site was selected within McIntire Park (a knoll close to the U.S. 250 Bypass) and the memorial was constructed on City property, without any funding from the City government. The purpose of the memorial, which was first formally dedicated on April 20, 1966, was stated as follows: "The Dogwood Memorial dedicated to the lasting memory of these men and all who served our country in Vietnam." The 50th year anniversary of the memorial occurred in April 2016, and over 750 people attended a rededication ceremony.

More recently, when the City decided to construct the John Warner Parkway, the Dogwood Memorial was resituated as part of that project. (It is not clear, based on public records, why handicapped accessibility was not addressed during the Parkway Project). The memorial was reoriented by 180 degrees and individual plaques were added for each veteran killed during the Vietnam War.

**Discussion**

Years ago, the Memorial was able to be constructed without the use of any public funding; all the City government needed to do was allow the Memorial to be placed on City-owned public park land. Today, however, it is acknowledged that a project to construct a surface parking lot, as well as a pedestrian bridge over the John Warner Parkway, is most likely a project having a scope, level of risk, and cost that would require some amount of involvement by the City government, both fiscal and otherwise. That being the case: when City Council wishes to "partner" with private entities, including non-profit entities, to accomplish particular types of public improvement projects, especially infrastructure, some type of competitive process may be required, either under the Virginia Public Procurement Act, or the Virginia Public-Private Education Facilities *and Infrastructure* Act of 2002.

The City Manager's Office recommends that City Council should continue to explore its options as to how to select and commence a competitive process by which a project to establish a new surface parking lot, and a handicapped accessible pedestrian walkway from the parking lot to the Memorial,

can be officially scoped out and added to the City's Capital Improvements Program, to be funded by private as well as state or local funding. At this time the Veterans' Foundation has been discussing with Senator Deeds the potential for state funding for establishment of handicapped accessibility to the Memorial. Senator Deeds has expressed the need for City Council to adopt a Resolution communicating its commitment to the project.

### **Alignment with City Council's Vision and Strategic Plan**

Yes. This Project would serve City Council's vision(s) to be flexible and progressive in anticipating and responding to the needs of its citizens and to be a united community that treasures diversity.

### **Community Engagement**

Since at least 2019 the issue of handicapped accessibility to the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial has been discussed at the Council level, including within a working group established by City Council

### **Budgetary Impact**

None at present. It is anticipated that the ballpark cost of the needed improvements is \$2.5 million, at least some of which would be funded by private donations, and some by public (either state or local) funding.

### **Recommendation**

Approval. Suggested motion:

***"I move the RESOLUTION expressing support for a Capital Project to establish Handicapped Access to the Charlottesville Dogwood Vietnam Memorial."***

### **Alternatives**

N/A

### **Attachments**

1. Resolution 12 5 2022