



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and City Council

**From:** Mike Land, City Manager

**Date:** June 8, 2021

**Reference:** Discuss request for memorial installations for placement on city owned property

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City of Coppel staff was recently presented with a request by a group of residents to install, at no cost to the City, a memorial and education installation on city owned property. City staff has had several discussions with the group since their initial contact.

The broader policy issue for City Council and direction being sought from City Council is not just about this one request.

Currently, the City has no policy in place that guides staff on how to respond when these types of requests are brought to our attention. The City does have a program in place if a resident wants to honor an individual or family with a bench on a walking trail with a plaque affixed to the bench. In these cases, the donor purchases the bench and affixed plaque, and the City installs the bench.

I understand there have been times in the past where residents could make donations that resulted in their respective names being etched into pavers, and other situations where donations were recognized with a plaque, at the Biodiversity Education Center for example.

The City currently has a successful partnership with the Coppel Arts Council for placement of sculptures in both Andy Brown East and in the Old Town Square area.

In the situations noted above there are guidelines in place on how the requests are addressed.

The distinguishing factor in this case, as with the possibility of others coming forward, is that without a policy in place, the City doesn't have a definitive way of either permitting or denying the installation of any type of public request for any purpose.

An example of a similar situation occurred when City Council determined to eliminate bandit signs around town a few years ago. At the time, bandit signs were permitted in certain locations within the City's right-of-way. As a result of various legal cases regarding signage and freedom of speech, the City was prohibited from regulating sign content even though prior to these cases the signs were allowed to promote local not-for-profit activities going on in the city. With the new case law City Council was left with a choice of either allowing all bandit signs no matter the message or purpose, or not permitting them to be placed at all. City Council chose to not permit them at all.

In speaking with the City Attorney, the cleanest way to address this and other similar type of requests, much like was done with the bandit signs, is to have a policy that states no private art/education installations are permitted on city property.