



WILDWOOD

September 20, 2022

MEMORANDUM

To: Planning and Parks Committee Members

From: Department of Planning and Parks

**Re: The Wall That Heals Site Visit in Warrenton, Missouri on Friday, September 9, 2022
(Wards – All)**

Cc: The Honorable James R. Bowlin, Mayor
Steve Cross, City Administrator
John A. Young, City Attorney
Rick Brown, P.E. and P.T.O.E., Director of Public Works
Melanie Rippetoe, Assistant Director of Planning and Parks
Travis Newberry, Senior Planner
Kristen Naeger, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation
Stacy Chanski, Recreation Specialist

BACKGROUND >>> At the March 2022 meeting of the Committee, the Department of Planning and Parks presented an update regarding the “The Wall That Heals” and the City’s planned application process for it to visit this community. The Committee noted its support for this application process, given the information that had been developed in 2021, when the City began its effort to bring this memorial to Wildwood. With the Committee’s support, the Department scheduled to contact the “The Wall That Heals” organization, when the application process opened on May 31, 2022.

The Department of Planning and Parks did contact the organization shortly after the application process opened. The intent of the contact was to obtain any new information regarding the application process and seek any suggestions to ensure the City’s submittal would be as complete as possible and successful. The contact was made on June 6, 2022 and a summary of this contact is as follows:

Cynthia Long, the coordinator in this regard, indicated that a submitted application by the City in 2023 would be denied due to the Wall coming to Warrenton in September 2022. The event timing would be too close to each other. She suggested the City wait until 2024, or even 2025.

Ms. Long recommended that City representatives plan on traveling to Warrenton in September to meet with the site manager on a Thursday or Friday, after 3:00 p.m., to avoid school field trips or on Saturday. Ms. Long agreed to contact the Department for scheduling the meeting in August.

The cost for 2023 has increased by \$1,000.00 to \$11,000.00. Suggestions for fundraising include the following:

1. Soliciting pledges from community members and businesses, prior to submitting the application. The pledges can be collected when Wildwood is accepted to host.
2. In-kind donations are needed to offset an additional \$10,000.00 for volunteer support.
 - a. Examples are portable toilets, trash cans, generators from construction companies, banners from a printer, waters or lunches from a business, and t-shirts for volunteers.
 - b. The most successful communities have utilized in-kind donations.
3. Sponsorships
 - a. Consider car dealerships and grocery stores for sponsorships.
 - b. Veteran groups.
4. Volunteers are needed for six (6) days total, which includes set up and disassembly of exhibit.

SITE VISIT >>> During the Warrenton site visit on September 9, 2022, arrangements were made for City representatives to tour the trailer, look behind the Wall to see how it is set up, and discuss the pros and cons of Warrenton's site for helpful insights in determining potential locations for consideration in Wildwood. The tour was informative and the site manager, Vic Muschler, provided a great deal of insight on what would be needed for the initial set-up, as well as ongoing operations.

Mr. Muschler went over details to consider, when choosing a location that included:

- The location will need to be approximately the size of a football field.
- A grass surface is required for the stakes used to construct and secure the wall.
- Given that this structure is a memorial that people are visiting loved ones lost, a quiet location is ideal.
- The wall and associated informational trailer will need electricity twenty-four (24) hours per day and, therefore, need an electrical source. The City will likely need to provide generators.
- Choose a location with ample parking or provide temporary parking at said location.

He also emphasized the importance of volunteers and provided suggestions, such as local high schools, veterans associations, the Fire Department, and business organizations. Volunteers will be required to attend training and would be for tasks such as:

- Organize, promote and collect sponsorship for the event. He recommended having a committee in place well in advance.
- Thirty (30) to fifty (50) volunteers would be required for initial set-up and break-down and both would be completed in one (1) day. Many of these panels are heavy and may need to be carried a distance. These conditions should be taken into consideration when seeking volunteers.
- Additional volunteers would be required to assist visitors looking for names of their loved ones, provide tours, and general information for the entirety of the display. The display will be open

twenty-four (24) hours a day and would need four (4) to six (6) volunteers on day shifts and two (2) volunteers for overnight shifts. Police presence is not required, but most cities have a police presence during late hours. Retired teachers make excellent tour guides.

Additionally, the Site Manager provided suggestions of other details that should be considered by the City, such as:

- Signage - Some people will be travelling great distances to visit and may not be as familiar with the area. Additionally, signage can be used to promote the event and welcome home our Vietnam Veterans.
- Time of Year - The City may request a certain time of year, and it will be taken into consideration. However, ultimately "The Wall that Heals" leadership team has a schedule to maintain and will have to be prepared for the time slot given, if chosen. Veteran's related holidays are most frequently requested.
- Amenities - Restrooms and, at minimum, bottled water will need to be provided for volunteers.
- Community - This installation is intended to bring a community together. Those cities that are most prepared and demonstrate the ability and willingness to generate the community support needed are more likely to be chosen.
- Display Additions - Additional displays, such as flags of valor, may be permitted at some locations but not at others. Any additions to the display will first need to receive approval from "The Wall That Heals".
- Seating - Providing temporary benches or a choosing a location with benches is a welcome addition, but not required.
- In Memory Program Video - This video that is played in the display trailer is tailored to those lost from the host city and surrounding communities. Wildwood was incorporated well after the Vietnam War and St. Louis County may be too large of an area.
- Opening Ceremony - When the Wall is travelling to the City, a ride escort is required. Veteran groups, police, and the community should be invited to witness its arrival. The display will be installed on a Wednesday, and will be open to the public upon completion, but most cities do a formal ceremony on Thursday to 'officially' mark the opening of the wall. This is a somber event and that should be taken into consideration when planning the ceremony.
- Memories Left Behind - Similar to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C., in every city that "The Wall That Heals" visits, items are left in memory of loved ones. All items left at the Wall become the property of Wildwood and the City should consider creating a display for these items.

NEXT STEPS >>> The Department, as recommended by the organization, has not pursued the application process for "The Wall That Heals" for 2023, but will focus on a possible visit in 2024 or, if preferred by the Committee, 2025.

CONTACT INFORMATION >>> If any of the Committee Members have questions or comments regarding this process, please feel free to contact the Department of Planning at (636) 458-0440. A presentation on this matter is planned at tonight's meeting. Thank you for your review of this information.