

Memo

Carmichael



RECREATION AND
PARK DISTRICT

To: Advisory Board Directors
From: Mike Blondino, District Administrator
Date: February 27, 2024
Subject: Honoring Sharon Ruffner

Introduction/Discussion:

The recently formed Ad Hoc Committee, using Carmichael Recreation and Park District's Naming Policy as a guide, has carefully considered the contributions and legacy of the late and longtime resident, Sharon Ruffner. The Committee believes naming the area at Carmichael Park near the future location of the waterpark (formerly the pool) and skatepark as the "Sharon Ruffner Plaza," is a fitting tribute to her remarkable life and community service.

Her contribution to CRPD started when she was hired in 1987. Throughout her time working for the District, she actively promoted health and holistic well-being, teaching water aerobics at the old pool and aerobics and yoga classes at the Veteran's Memorial Building.

Sharon Ruffner was a beloved figure in the Carmichael community, known for her dedication to enhancing the quality of life for residents and her tireless efforts in rolling up her sleeves and making things happen! There are numerous examples of how she made things happen when she was President of the Carmichael Parks Foundation. The Foundation's fundraising under her leadership led the youth scholarship program to a point where no requests are now turned down. She also played a key role with Dinner in the Park at the Sutter Jensen Community Park and the new Bocce Ball Courts at Carmichael Park. Sharon was the co-president of the Kiwanis Club of Carmichael which partners with CRPD on funding for programs and special events. Whatever Sharon was involved with, she played a pivotal role in fostering a sense of unity and camaraderie among residents.

The proposed name, "Sharon Ruffner Plaza," not only honors Sharon's memory but also serves as a reminder of the values she embodied and the positive impact she had on the Carmichael community. The location of Sharon Ruffner Plaza (see drawing of

area from Master Plan) holds particular significance, as it will serve as a hub of activity and community engagement, much like Sharon herself. The various activities planned for this area, including water-based recreation and skateboarding for all, are a testament to Sharon's legacy and her passion for enriching the lives of others.

Financial Analysis:

Naming the area after Sharon Ruffner entails future signage costs for the waterpark and skatepark, currently unquantified but to be included in the two amenities budget.

The immediate proposal, for example, could be installing a bench in the area where the plaza will be located with a dedication to Sharon and collaborating with her husband, Bob Ruffner, on artwork. These initial steps would require manageable expenses. The Ad Hoc Committee would work on a final concept for the immediate tribute, along with working with members of the community on raising the funds needed.

Recommendation:

Staff and the Ad Hoc Committee strongly recommend naming the area in Carmichael Park as "Sharon Ruffner Plaza" in honor of her enduring contributions to the community. We believe that this will serve as a lasting tribute to Sharon's memory and will inspire future generations to follow in her footsteps of service and dedication.

