

**Written Narrative to Accompany McKinney Community Development Corporation Grant Request by
the City of McKinney Armed Services Memorial Board**

I. Applying Organization

The McKinney Armed Services Memorial Board (MASMB) is a board of seven citizen volunteers, appointed by City Council, with the expressed purpose of maintaining the Veterans Memorial Park and hosting annual ceremonies to honor our fallen warriors and veterans during annual ceremonies held on Memorial Day and Veterans Day weekends. We meet regularly once a month and are supported by staff of the McKinney Parks and Recreation Department. We have no paid staff members other than the two members of the Parks and Recreation Department that assist us.

II. Details of the Proposed Project

As part of our duties to maintain the City owned Veterans Memorial Park located in Craig Ranch, we are proposing to enhance the existing memorial park by adding a monument to honor the sacrifices made by Gold Star Families. Gold Star families are the surviving family members of our fallen warriors whom we have honored on our Veterans Memorial "Wall of Honor." In addition, we propose to erect a series of flags of both our nation, state and each branch of the armed services to call attention to the Veterans Memorial Park.

The Gold Star Memorial we intend on installing is furnished by the Herschel "Woody" Williams Medal of Honor Foundation (HWMOHF). Herschel, or Woody as he is known, is the last surviving Medal of Honor Recipient from the Battle of Iwo Jima in World War II. As a surviving warrior, he would like to call attention to and honor the surviving family members of our fallen warriors by erecting the memorial his foundation has designed in each of the 50 states. Currently, there are two other cities in Texas, Cedar Park and Gainesville, who have similar initiatives; however, in consultation with the HWMOHF, McKinney is currently in the lead to be the first city in the State of Texas to have a Gold Star Memorial built. The Gold Star Memorial will complement our existing Veterans Memorial in that it is composed of the same black granite material. Further, it will reinforce within the minds of the public who visit the park that the sacrifices born by the names of the men and woman who are on our Wall of Honor, are also carried by the parents, siblings, spouses, and children of our fallen warriors. Although the community has typically responded honorably to honor the loss of a fallen warrior at the time of death, as time passes the sacrifices of the family at home can soon be forgotten. At a place where we honor our fallen, we would like to strategically locate the Gold Star Memorial such that it reminds the public that family members on the home front also sacrificed much. There will be a time in the future when our nation is at peace and the drum beat of war has subsided, this memorial will serve to remind those future generations, who are hopefully devoid of knowing first-hand the sacrifices of war, that the family members of our fallen warriors are to be remembered and honored for their sacrifices as well

In addition to erecting the monument, we also propose to construct a flag plaza by erecting eight flag poles on the far northern most end of the park to honor our nation, state and each branch of the armed services. Since there are five branches of the armed services, a sixth flag to honor our Prisoners of War and Missing in Action (POW/MIA) personnel will also be flown. The POW/MIA flag is recognized by the United States Congress and several of our fallen warriors that we honor on our Wall of Honor are listed as MIA. The flags will further reinforce the special status of the Veterans Memorial park as a place of honor for all who served which is in keeping with our mission to honor and remember our fallen warriors and veterans. Photographs of existing Gold Star Memorials in other states are provided in Appendix A.

In regards to the time frame, it is the intention of the MASMB to initiate a fund raising campaign in 2016 to raise money to erect the Gold Star Memorial and Flags. Once funding has been attained we intend on procuring the memorial and initiating construction. Since there are two significant dates being Memorial Day in May and Veterans Day in November that coincide with our mission, it is intended that construction initiation and/or memorial dedication coincide with at least one of those dates so that we can enhance public awareness of our memorial park and honor the Gold Star Families and Veteran dignitaries and who may attend such events.

The proposed project aligns with one of the two primary missions of the MASMB, which is to maintain and improve the City of McKinney's Veteran's Memorial Park. As for fulfilling the guidelines of the McKinney Community Development Corporation (MCDC) the project will serve as an improvement to the city's open spaces as an over arching quality of life improvement goal of the MCDC. The addition of a permanent monument honoring the sacrifice of Gold Star Families of McKinney and Collin County provides a lasting recognition of these families and the heroes they loved and supported who gave their lives protecting the freedoms that the citizens of McKinney enjoy every day. The MASMB is charged with raising funds to accomplish continued improvement for the memorial park and MCDC has an opportunity to come alongside in a special effort to bring the first such Gold Star monument to the state of Texas. In keeping with our city's "Unique by Nature" theme, McKinney is currently in the lead to become the first city within our state to erect such a memorial further reinforcing our "uniqueness" by giving us the opportunity to show our respect for the families of the patriots who gave their last full measure of devotion for our nation. The proposed Gold Star Monument will be a beautiful addition to the park and is in keeping with the solemnity of the grounds and the original purpose of the park itself.

In so far as long term financial planning, ongoing expenses associated maintaining the existing memorial and grounds, including electricity service, are funded by the city through a cooperative agreement by the City of McKinney and the Craig Ranch Home Owners Association. The MASMB is charged with supporting the costs of engraving new names once each year on our Wall of Honor as they become known and vetted by the MASMB. Further, the MASMB incurs operating expenses on Veterans Day weekend to supply printed programs to the public, pay postage to market our Veterans Day Ceremony to the public, and pay for the aircraft fuel costs for the missing man flyover that we sponsor. We currently maintain a modest budget of

\$5,000 that historically has been supplemented by fund raising activities of a local Veteran Service Organization that covers our annual costs. Moving forward with the proposed additions, additional financial obligations would be constrained to funding the cost of the electricity of the additionally installed flag lighting and periodic replacement of the flags as they become weathered.

III. Financial

As mentioned above, MASMB operates on an annual budget of \$5,000 which is typically spent in conducting the two ceremonies around Veteran’s Day. Below is an outline of the MASMB finances that were made available by the City of McKinney illustrating our FY 2015 budget and actual expenditures and our FY 2016 Budget. This data was provided by the City of McKinney Parks and Recreation Department at the time of submission. The expenditures illustrated below are associated with our annual Veterans Day ceremony that the MASMB sponsors for our community.

Veterans Memorial Fund

REVENUES		FY15 EOY Budget	FY15 Actuals	FY16 Budget
055-0000-361.10-00	INVESTMENT INCOME / GENERAL GOVT INTEREST	16	15	23
055-0000-365.40-01	DONATIONS / CONTRIBUTIONS	5,000	3,000	3,500
055-0000-391.23-00	TRANSFERS IN / PARK CONSTRUCTION FUND	-	-	-
TOTAL Revenues		5,016	3,015	3,523
EXPENDITURES				
055-4355-453.81-25	SUPPLIES / REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE	-	-	-
055-4355-453.84-07	MAINTENANCE / OTHER	-	-	-
055-4355-453.85-16	CONTR OR MISC / RET FEE/PROF SERVICE	-	-	-
055-4355-453.85-81	CONTR OR MISC / SPECIAL EVENTS	5,000	4,676	5,000
TOTAL Expenditures		5,000	4,676	5,000
Net Income		16	(1,661)	(1,477)
Beginning Fund Balance		15,412	15,412	13,751
Ending Fund Balance		15,428	13,751	12,274

Funding for the proposed Gold Star Memorial and the flag plaza will be accomplished through fund raising, of which the subject request/proposal is a critical part. Depending upon the outcome of our request of MCDC, future fund raising efforts will be outlined below in the Marketing and Outreach section.

In so far as funding required to procure and erect the Gold Star Memorial and Flag Plaza, I have attached a detailed "Opinion of Probable Cost" by the Landscape Architecture firm of David C. Baldwin, Inc., in Appendix B. David C. Baldwin, Inc. has provided his professional services as an in-kind donation for the design and installation of our Gold Star Memorial. Based on the itemized opinion provided in Appendix B, it is estimated that the cost of procuring and installing the memorial and flag plaza project is \$137,574.50. Currently the growth of Collin County's population and economy is such that there is a high demand for construction personnel and materials that can limit the availability of qualified contractors and inflate the cost of materials required to complete the work. Accordingly, the MASMB has added an additional 5% "Supply and Demand" contingency factor to the total estimated cost, which was rounded up to the nearest thousand, to account for potential supply and demand disruptions in qualified construction contractors and materials. This brings our estimated project cost to the \$145,000 figure that has been requested.

IV. Marketing and Outreach

Marketing the new memorial will take two tracks depending upon the outcome of the subject request, fund raising and ceremonial.

Fund Raising: Promotion of the Gold Star Family monument will utilize several avenues:

1. MASMB has a vehicle in place to sell engraved bricks that pave the common areas around the existing monument and our plans are to re-emphasize that program. The MASMB anticipates an minimum profit of \$50 per brick sold.
2. Active solicitation of the following:
 - a. local corporations
 - b. Collin County Veteran's organizations
 - c. private donations

Ceremonial: Promotion upon approval for erection/unveiling of the new monument

1. MASMB will coordinate and conduct a ground breaking ceremony (hopefully coincidental to either Memorial Day or Veterans Day weekend depending on construction timetable). This ceremony would involve an extensive list of Gold Star family's, public officials and dignitaries with appropriate publicity from press, electronic and social media.
2. MASMB will coordinate and conduct a dedication ceremony upon completion of construction, inviting the same group of dignitaries as mentioned above and all Collin County veterans' organizations. This will be a dignified ceremony to honor our Gold Star Family's with the presentation of colors, playing of patriotic music, and a celebratory unveiling by a special guest speaker likely to be Medal of Honor Recipient Hershel "Woody" Williams or one of the 77 living Medal of Honor Recipients.

V. Metrics to Evaluate Success

The success of a permanent memorial is determined by the feedback gathered from those who walk its hallowed ground and experience the emotion inherent in the memories and recollections the experience creates. Feedback will be solicited through social media, via the MASMB Facebook page as well as anecdotally through personal inquiries at each of our solemn annual ceremonies.

Appendix A

Photo Graphs of Existing Gold Star Memorials in other States



Front side of memorial to face existing Veterans Memorial. Note "Mothers and Fathers" will be replaced with "Families."



Backside view of an existing memorial. We plan on changing the images on the Homeland, Family, and Sacrifice Panel.

Appendix B
Opinion of Probable Cost for Gold Star Memorial
David C. Baldwin, Inc. / Landscape Architecture and Planning