




## MEMORANDUM

**From:** Edward Lavalley, City Manager   
**DEPT:** City Manager's Office  
**TO:** Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) Members  
**DATE:** January 8, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Consideration of Naming a Public Space in Honor of Bob & Sue Vedder

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This memorandum provides an overview of potential public spaces for honoring Bob and Sue Vedder, whose decades of contributions to the City of Venice have included beautification initiatives and significant civic involvement. Below is an evaluation of the suggested sites to assist the Board in its deliberations and recommendations to City Council.

### Evaluation of Suggested Sites

- **Maxine Barritt Park**
  - **Considerations:** There is no clear connection between the Veddars and this park. Some community members involved in the original naming have expressed opposition to renaming it. Renaming would also entail costs for signage, digital updates, and revisions to city code.
- **West Venice Avenue Median Strip**
  - **Considerations:** This area is not currently designated as a park and lacks amenities suitable for public interaction. It primarily serves as a landscaped median, containing sensitive plants and irrigation systems, which are not intended for pedestrian use.
- **Heritage Park**
  - **Considerations:** Heritage Park recognizes the history and heritage of Venice through monuments and commemorations. Renaming even a portion of the park could cause confusion for residents. Changes would also require updates to signage, digital materials, and city code.
- **Centennial Park Gazebo**
  - **Considerations:** The gazebo, located in a prominent downtown location, has a direct connection to Bob Vedder, who played a role in its creation. This structure currently lacks formal dedication to any individual, making it a fitting option for consideration.

- **Fountain Park**
  - **Considerations:** Fountain Park already honors former Mayor Merle Graser, with an existing monument and plaque designating the park. Feedback from the Graser family indicates a lack of support for renaming.
- **New Northeast Venice Park**
  - **Considerations:** While this location provides an opportunity for a new park name, it has no connection to the Vedders, making it a less fitting choice for honoring their contributions.

As a caution to ensure that Bob and Sue Vedder would be agreeable to an initiative to create a public dedication in their name, I spoke with both Bob and Sue concerning the proposal recently provided to the CAB, and the request made by the Board for the staff to research the options suggested at that meeting for a dedication site. They were both very appreciative of the gesture and indicated that they would be honored to be remembered for their years of volunteer work. Bob indicated a preference for renaming Fountain Park in their name, but would defer to the Board. They were apprised of the strong feelings the Grasers have for retaining the Fountain Park name.

City staff appreciates the opportunity to provide this information and believes that the Centennial Park Gazebo presents the strongest connection to Bob Vedder's efforts in downtown beautification. This site offers a meaningful way to celebrate the legacy of both Bob and Sue Vedder in a location central to their contributions.