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## City Expands Military Banner Program

The City's successful military banner program is being expanded to include armed forces veterans as well as those who have retired from careers in uniform.

Perris City Council members, noting the community's 150-year connection to those who served in the armed services, agreed to expand those eligible for recognition on municipal lights poles along D Street. Initially, the program honored only active-duty members of the military and 32 residents with Perris ties have already been recognized since its inception in November.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch and members of the City Council were unanimous in their support for expanding the program, which provides the banners at no cost to the honoree.

"Let's put as much flexibility into this program so we can make it open to as many people as possible," said Busch, a Navy veteran.

City Councilman Mark Yarbrough, whose twins were honored with banners, said Perris residents who have served recently and left the military also should be recognized. It's part of the "continuing legacy" that involves military service. Yarbrough's son, Schuyler, serves in the Marines; daughter Andrea is in the Army.

"Our banner program has been very successful—it means a lot not only to the soldier but to the family," Yarbrough said. "It's really important to tell our young veterans who served that we honor their commitment. It makes a big, big difference."

Perris City Councilman Rita Rogers said she believes the banner program should be open to all veterans.

"We have been blessed in this country to have so many men and women who have served," she said.

City Councilman Al Landers said Perris has achieved national recognition as a veteran-friendly community. A small-business summit for veterans held at City Hall last year drew hundreds of former servicemen and women, employees, government representatives and non-profits. Landers' brother, Richard, was killed while serving in Vietnam in 1965, a death that still haunts the family.

"Our banner program is great and I am proud to be part of it," Landers said.

City Councilman Julio Rodriguez said he supports expanding the banner program and also hopes Perris works with other communities and agencies to reduce the number of homeless veterans.

Michael McDermott, the City's Redevelopment and Economic Development Manager, said the City has 48 potential light poles in Downtown Perris on which to hang military banners. Should more Perris veterans and active-duty military seek banners, the City can find other locations.

Under conditions of the expanded banner program, a current service member or veteran or someone in their immediate family must be a current Perris resident or the military service member must have attended high school in Perris. For more information about the program, visit the [city's website](#) or contact McDermott at 951-943-5003, ext. 277.



Military banners like these hang along historic D Street in Perris, part of a City program to honor active duty and former members of the military.

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