

September 1, 2026

Raja Sethuraman
Public Works Director
City of Costa Mesa

Dear Mr. Sethuraman,

I am writing to request your direction and assistance regarding the possibility of planting a memorial tree near the Estancia Adobe to honor the lives and lasting contributions of Beth and Gladys Refakas, two remarkable lifelong members of the Costa Mesa community.

Beth and Gladys represented the very best of Costa Mesa. Their dedication to our city and its residents spanned decades, and their volunteerism reached into many different corners of our community. They generously gave their time, energy, talents, and enthusiasm to organizations and causes including the Costa Mesa Historical Society, Freedom Committee of Orange County, City of Costa Mesa Military Affairs Team, Camp Pendleton 1/5 Marine Support, and the First Friday Roadshow car show, where Beth served as the photographer. Beyond these organizations, they were steadfast advocates for the betterment of Costa Mesa, its citizens, and the community they loved so dearly.

Their connection to Costa Mesa was also deeply personal and historic. Beth and Gladys spent most of their lives on the Eastside of Costa Mesa in their family home, which was purchased in 1950—three years before the City of Costa Mesa was incorporated. Few people can claim such a long and meaningful connection to our city's history.

For that reason, I believe a tree planted near the historic Estancia Adobe would be a particularly appropriate and lasting tribute. It would provide a living memorial in a place connected to Costa Mesa's history, honoring two women who devoted so much of their lives to preserving that history, supporting our military families, strengthening our community, and serving others.

I would greatly appreciate your guidance regarding the City's process for requesting and approving such a memorial. If there is a particular department, commission, application process, or City policy that we should follow, please direct me accordingly. I would also welcome any recommendations regarding an appropriate location near the Estancia Adobe and a tree species suitable for the site.

Additionally, could you please let me know whether there are costs associated with planting the tree or installing a dedication plaque? If fees are required, I would appreciate information about the amount and whether the City might be willing to waive or reduce a portion of those costs in recognition of Beth and Gladys's longstanding involvement, service, and dedication to the Costa Mesa community.

My hope is that this can become more than simply the planting of a tree. It would be a lasting expression of gratitude from a community that benefited tremendously from Beth and Gladys's generosity and service—a place where friends, family members, and

future generations can remember two women whose roots in Costa Mesa ran very deep.

Thank you for your consideration and for any assistance you can provide in helping us determine how best to move this request forward.

Warm regards,

Cindy Brenneman