ATTACHMENT 2

Circle of Service Nomination
Former Mayor Robert M. Wilson

You'd be hard pressed to find anyone who loved Costa Mesa more than Bob Wilson. It's possible that there might not even be a Costa Mesa, if not for Bob Wilson. It's certain that the city would not be the Costa Mesa we know today, if not for Bob.

Robert M. Wilson was born in 1917. He married his life-long love, Maryalice in 1939. They moved to Costa Mesa to raise their family in 1948. Not long after, Bob attended a meeting of local residents interested in establishing Costa Mesa as an incorporated city. Soon, Bob Wilson became the chairman of the Home Rule Group which worked to get Costa Mesa incorporated. In 1953, an election was held, and Costa Mesa became a city.

Bob Wilson was a member of the city's first Planning Commission, on which he served seven years. He then went on to serve sixteen years on the City Council, with three terms as mayor.

Bob Wilson was instrumental in shaping the future of Costa Mesa. He helped persuade the Segerstroms to place their new shopping center in Costa Mesa, rather than over the border in Santa Ana. That shopping center is now the internationally known South Coast Plaza.

Bob pushed to build the existing five-story City Hall at 77 Fair Drive, a building that some thought had more space than the city would ever need. Thanks to Bob's foresight, the city has been able to stay in that same city hall for decades.

Another of Bob's projects was the "Costa Mesa greenbelt", running from Fairview Park at the Santa Ana River through the Costa Mesa Golf Course and Fairview State Hospital through Orange Coast College to the Fairgrounds. Bob lobbied hard for local acquisition of what is now Costa Mesa Golf Course and Fairview and Talbert Parks. While some of the original greenbelt has been developed in later years, the large swath of public, largely open space land remains, thank to Bob's vision.

Bob believed it was important to network with other public officials. He was very active in the League of Cities and United States Conference of Mayors. He served as a Director of the California League of Cities and was on the United States Conference of Mayors Resolutions Committee. He was also a United States delegate to the International Union of Local Authorities.

Through working with these other bodies, Bob was able to accomplish changes beyond just Costa Mesa. These included a League of Cities resolution, which later became law, which reduced the noise and pollution from jets. Another resolution of Bob's is something with which we are probably all familiar: "Use a gun, go to jail." This has been adopted into law in states across the nation.

After retiring from the City Council, Bob continued to remain active in community activities and mentored numerous new council members and other public officials. Bob was selected as Costa Mesa Man of the Year in 1975. Bob and Maryalice Wilson remained in Costa Mesa until his passing in January 2004.

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