

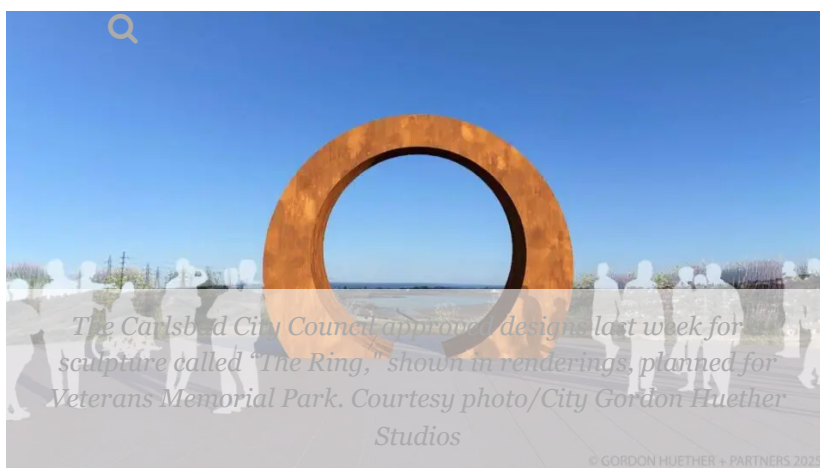


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Carlsbad council OKs 'The Ring' for Veterans Memorial Park

by Cameron Adams ⓘ October 10, 2025 👁 603

CARLSBAD — The Carlsbad City Council has unanimously approved the design of a large circular sculpture that will anchor Veterans Memorial Park and serve as a space for reflection and meditation.

"The Ring," designed by Gordon Huether Studios, will be a 16-foot-tall, 20-foot-wide metal structure that widens at the base. The art piece will be installed on the northwest corner of the park, angled so the opening faces west toward Agua Hedionda Lago

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the north. The undeveloped land includes steep slopes and natural habitat areas near the Pacific View Apartments and The Crossings at Carlsbad golf course.



Craddock Stropes, the city's cultural arts manager, said "The Ring" is meant to provide a "contemplative space" and "a symbolic portal that frames the horizon and invites stillness, introspection and connection with beautiful sweeping views of our lagoon and Carlsbad beyond."

Stropes said the piece is designed to honor veterans' service and reflect "a commitment to duty, unity and remembrance" through its continuous form.

"It offers a sacred moment of pause where past, present and future are held in quiet reverence," she said.

The interior of the sculpture will feature three metal strips on each side — a subtle reference to the military



Councilmember Kevin Shin, who represents the district where the park is located and is a Marine Corps veteran and former defense contractor, said the artwork symbolizes closure.

“When you come back, you don’t feel like you ever have closure,” Shin said.

The design process began in 2018 and included multiple rounds of public input. Nearly 600 people with ties to Carlsbad provided feedback between April 24 and June 4, according to city records.

Nick Stupin, the city’s parks planning manager, said the park will include northern and southern sections connected by trails and an inclusive playground. The southern section will feature a rustic bike trail and other amenities.



A view of the proposed sculpture “The Ring” by artist Gordon Huether at Veterans Memorial Park in Carlsbad. Courtesy City of Carlsbad and Gordon Huether Studios

The northern section, which will house “The Ring,” will center around Memorial Plaza. Plans include memorial panels dedicated to each of the six military

Councilmember Melanie Burkholder said she hoped the flag would be “as big as this building,” referring to City Hall.

Huether, a Napa-based artist and former Napa City Planning Commission member, was unable to attend Tuesday’s meeting because he was in New York for another unveiling. In August, he told the Arts Commission that Memorial Plaza would “not only honor our veterans, but also give a place to gather for all kinds of activities.”

“What I was really trying to do was frame a really beautiful, contemplative view that you just want to stop and sit and enjoy — maybe even meditate a little bit,” Huether said.

The Arts Commission [unanimously approved the design](#) in August.

Next steps include detailed design drawings and installation to coincide with the park’s opening.

Stupin said the city’s Parks and Recreation Department will collaborate with Huether’s team on landscape design and ADA accessibility around the sculpture.

Councilmember Teresa Acosta said the artwork reminded her of the framed view of the Mediterranean Sea from the home of surrealist artist Salvador Dalí in Port Lligat, Spain.



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North County native, Cameron returned from Maryland where he covered agriculture and development for the Frederick News-Post. He also received a master's degree from American University and interned at the Washington Post. Cameron is passionate about local journalism's role in building strong communities and is proud to be part of The Coast News team.

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