

State Veterans Cemetery, Tri-Cities Update



"Serving Those Who Served"

October 10, 2024 - WDVA is honored that the [Tri City Regional Chamber](#) included WDVA's proposed Tri-Cities Veterans Cemetery as one of their five priority projects for the 2025 Legislative Session. On January 23, the Tri-Cities Legislative Council invited WDVA Director David Puente to attend their Legislative Day events. David shared a few project updates including:

- \$500,000 included in the Governor's proposed budget for a cemetery pre-design report.
- Continuation of talks with owners of the two parcels under consideration, cost and access to water are the primary factors being discussed.
- Eventual need for state legislative funding to purchase land and / or bring infrastructure on site such as power, sewer, and water.

We greatly appreciate the Legislative Council's interest in the project, and coordination from Council Co-Chair Sean O'Brien and West Richland City Council Member May Hayes, and Gold Star Mother Shirley Schmunk for her warm introduction and welcome!

Here is a little more information on the Pre-Design. If the Pre-Design is funded in the Legislative Budget, our plans are to:

- Conduct further studies on properties that can support the cemetery;
- Determine if we can obtain water rights to support an irrigated grass cemetery, or if it is feasible to have a dry (non-irrigated) cemetery, which exist in other arid areas such as Arizona and Texas.
- Determine full costs for land, improvements, and construction of the cemetery. Land and off-site improvements, such as running utilities, must be borne by the state, but up to 100% of cemetery construction will be paid by the federal VA (a 10% up front match is required).
- Provide an updated Capital Request for all funding necessary to support the building of the Cemetery as soon as possible after the pre-design work is completed. In addition, WDVA will submit a grant application to the Federal VA for the construction funding. The 10% matching funds from the state must be provided before the grant will be approved.