

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A STATE VETERANS CEMETERY IN AUGUSTA
RESOLUTION NO. 2019-11-03**

WHEREAS, the Greater Augusta Area is home to 66,000 U. S. Military veterans, a population that is increasing each year, and

WHEREAS, these veterans, their spouses and eligible dependent children each faces the decision at life's end of where to lay their family member in eternal rest, and

WHEREAS, the Veterans Administration through an annual grant program makes funds available for states to construct veterans' cemeteries to provide an affordable option for veterans to be buried among fellow veterans, and

WHEREAS, the current locations of State and National Cemeteries requires family members in the Greater Augusta Area to spend a substantial amount of time traveling to and from these locations to visit the grave site of their loved ones, and

WHEREAS, local veterans have expressed their support for the State of Georgia to establish a veterans' cemetery in Augusta-Richmond County to service the substantial veterans' population in East Central Georgia, and

WHEREAS, the government of Augusta-Richmond County has pledged whatever support is necessary to host a state veterans cemetery,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the City of Grovetown does hereby endorse the proposal to establish a State Veterans Cemetery in Augusta-Richmond County, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the City of Grovetown calls upon the Georgia Department of Veterans Services to pursue an application to the Veterans Administration for a construction grant, and that the Governor and members of the Georgia General Assembly support such a move.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this resolution has been duly adopted by the Mayor and City Council of the City of Grovetown, Georgia on this 12th day of November 2019.

Gary E. Jones, Mayor

Attested by: _____
Roxanne Brown
City Clerk

STATE VETERANS CEMETERY TALKING POINTS

1. More than 60,000 military veterans live in the greater Augusta area.
2. The nearest veterans cemeteries are Ft. Jackson – 76 miles away, Milledgeville – 90 miles away, and Glennville – 120 miles away.
3. Research by the Veterans Administration shows veterans prefer to be buried with other veterans. Honorably discharged veterans, their spouses and qualifying dependents are eligible for burial in state veterans cemeteries.
4. A state veterans cemetery is constructed and equipped with a grant from the Veterans Administration and constructed on property owned by the state of Georgia.
5. The state is responsible for on-going operation and maintenance costs for the cemetery (in 2019 about \$500,000 annually.) The VA provides a payment to the state for each internment.
6. State veterans cemeteries contribute to economic development. The cemetery itself provides jobs. Out-of-town visitors contribute to the hospitality sector. The cemeteries are focal points for special ceremonies and programs.
7. The cemetery would not be open for another five or so years, so it would have no impact on the current round of state budget cuts.
8. The state cemetery grant application to the VA will be filed by the state, and funds would flow to the state. This is as much a state project as Augusta University and the Georgia Cyber Center.
9. The following are the key players in gaining state support: Commissioner of Veterans Service, Governor, Georgia Legislature.
10. The following are key players in gaining federal support: Georgia Congressional delegation, Department of Veterans Affairs.