



## Commemorative Dedication and Name Application for City Facilities

*Refer to the City of Fairfield's "Policy for Naming City Facilities, Donations, Sponsorships, and Capital Campaigns"*

### **Applicant Information**

Name: City Manager's Office

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Name of Street / Facility:** Robbieburr Berger Street, Avenue, Road, etc. OR Robbieburr  
Street, Avenue, Road, Boulevard, etc. (In case of conflict with already existing Julia Berger Street).

**Location / Property Description of Street / Facility:** New Street; Asking for a street to be named  
in honor of Councilmember Robbieburr Berger (City Council 1972-1976)

### **Classification of Proposed Name (check all that apply):**

- ☒ Historical Significance to Location (*e.g. historical event, landmark, person, or group of major significance to region/location*)
- ☐ Commonly Recognized by Neighbors / Residents
- ☐ Compliments the Theme of the Location, Neighborhood or Surrounding Area
- ☐ Natural Phenomena of Site (*e.g. rivers, creeks, terrain, mountains, etc.*)
- ☐ Horticultural (*e.g. trees, plants, flowers or other horticultural features of area*)
- ☒ Deceased Individual (*deceased for at least 2 years & has long standing affiliation with City of 10 years or more*)
- ☐ Living Individual (*individual must be associated with a capital campaign*)
- ☐ Group or Organization (*requires long-standing affiliation with City of 10 years or more*)
- ☐ Donation or Sponsorship
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**For recommendation of an individual, please indicate individual's long-standing affiliation with Fairfield (10 years or more) of significant community service, involvement or contributions. Specifically indicate how this person has: (a) enhanced the quality of life/well-being of Fairfield's residents; (b) Contributed to the preservation of Fairfield's history and culture; (c) Made exemplary or meritorious contributions to Fairfield or its residents; or (d) Contributed to the acquisition, development of conveyance of land, buildings, structures or other amenities to the Fairfield community (if more room is needed, please attach separate sheet):**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

In 1972, Robbieburr Berger was the first woman elected to the Fairfield City Council. She held this position for 4 years. The recommendation has the support of Mayor Price, Councilmember Cat Moy, and City Manager, Stefan Chatwin.

Robbieburr Berger was the president of the Fairfield-Suisun Fine Arts Council, Music Makers of Fairfield, the Charles L. Sullivan PTA, and was the Councilmember for four years. Robbieburr died in 2000 at the age of 75.

**Supporting Documentation** *(required for recommendation of an individual's name)*

I have included the following documentation to demonstrate broad-based community support for my recommendation:

☐  
☐  
☒  
☐  
☐

Letters

Character References

Newspaper or journal articles

Petitions

Other Documentation: See attached.

**The following conditions will apply to all Commemorative Dedication and Name Applications:**

All applications submitted to the City of Fairfield for the purpose of naming a new City facility or street must be filled out completely and accurately with supporting documentation in accordance with and as required by the City of Fairfield's Policy for Naming, Dedication and Sponsorship of City Facilities and Acceptance of Donations (hereinafter the "Policy"). The Policy is available on the City of Fairfield's website, under the City Manager's Office page, and/or hard copies may be requested from the City Manager's Office.

The naming of a City facility will be considered only through this application process.

Incomplete, illegible and/or fraudulent applications will not be considered. The City of Fairfield reserves the right to verify the identity of the Applicant submitting this application to ensure its validity.

The Fairfield City Council will have the final decision as to the naming of a park or recreation facility and reserves the right to reject any and all proposed names and/or applications submitted for consideration.

**Signature of Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Return completed applications to:

City of Fairfield  
City Manager's Office  
1000 Webster Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Fairfield, CA 94533  
cmo@fairfield.ca.gov



**DAILY REPUBLIC**  
Solano County's News Source

FAIRFIELD-NORTH CITY EDITION



## 1972: Berger elected 1st Fairfield councilwoman

By Tony Wade



Tony  
Wade  
Back  
in the  
Day

Robbieburr Berger, an Oregon native who had moved to Fairfield in 1960, was the first woman elected to the Fairfield City Council.

Berger bested a field of five candidates in the 1972 election and unseated Allan Witt, the park's namesake, who had been on the council for 24 years.

Fully 49 percent of Fairfield's 9,220 registered voters voted for Berger. She attributed her victory to "people power."

Berger had run in 1970 and came in seventh out of 10 candidates, and recognized she needed help campaigning beyond herself, her husband and their four children.

Robbieburr Berger graduated from the University of Oregon in 1948 with a degree in history, international relations and politics. To say that she was active in the local community is an understatement. She was president of the Fairfield-Suisun Fine Arts Council, Music Makers of Fairfield and Charles L. Sullivan PTA, among other activities. She was also an accomplished harpist.

The five 1972 City Council candidates were interviewed by the Daily Republic on various issues. One question was if Fairfield needed a full-time mayor. Candidate Louis Bilikas commented that the mayor should be someone "selected by the people."

The custom in Fairfield back then, and in many cities, was for elected council members to then choose among themselves who would be mayor and vice mayor.

Usually the person who received the most votes in a municipal election become vice mayor, then became mayor two years later. Arne Digerud and not Berger, who had received the most votes, was chosen as vice mayor in 1972. Berger cast the lone dissenting vote.

Three open council seats were won in 1974 by Bill Jenkins, Gary Falati and Manuel Campos. They joined Berger and Loyal Hanson.

The next Tuesday, Campos was elected by the council as the new mayor in a 4-1 vote. Berger again cast the dissenting vote. She felt because of the long-standing tradition, she, as top vote-getter in 1972, should have been mayor. Berger

called it “the most appalling violation of custom that the city has had.” She stressed that her dissenting vote was not against the man, but the principle.

Berger actually honored the tradition by joining the unanimous vote for Jenkins as vice mayor as he’d received the most votes in the election.

At the Tuesday, March 19, 1974, council meeting, the mayor issue erupted.

Hundreds of protestors filled the council chambers, among them members of the National Organization of Women and the American Association of University Women. The four male council members were accused of sex discrimination by them and others including former Fairfield City Councilman/Mayor Don Pinkerton who said “an injustice had been done.”

Hanson, Jenkins, Campos and Falati all stood by their decision and said they voted their consciences and Berger’s sex had nothing to do with it. Falati, echoing Bilikas’ statement of two years earlier, suggested the city charter should maybe be amended to provide for a direct mayoral election.

Ordinance 74-27, passed in December 1974, authorized a ballot measure to that effect and was passed by voters in March 1975. The next March, the first direct elected mayoral race pitted Bill Jenkins against Berger and Charlie Challburg.

The final vote tally was Jenkins 2,834; Berger 2,768; and Challburg 200.

Berger lost by 66 votes.

She asked for a recount.

A four-person recount panel met the next week and the result was Jenkins scored a net gain of one vote.

City Council Resolution 76-9A, passed unanimously on March 9, 1976, thanked Berger for her council service, as was the custom when a member left. But Jenkins resigned in June 1977 to avoid a potential conflict of interest with his new job at Solano Concrete and that November, Berger ran for mayor again.

She was defeated by Falati, who received 52.3 percent of the vote.

Berger remained active in the local arts community and was involved with the ultimately unsuccessful bid to have the old Armijo Auditorium restored. Funds raised for that cause were later donated to the Fairfield Center for Creative Arts (now the Downtown Theatre) and there is a plaque with her name and others in the lobby.

After her victory in 1972, Berger called for an end to selfishness.

“Helping others is the rent we pay for occupying space on Earth,” she said, citing a well-known saying.

Robbieburr Berger died in 2000 at the age of 75.

*Reach Fairfield writer Tony Wade at [toekneeweighed@gmail.com](mailto:toekneeweighed@gmail.com).*

Printed in the March 18, 2016 edition on page A2 | Published on March 18, 2016 |

Tags: [A2](#)

Last Modified on March 17, 2016 at 9:47 pm

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CITY OF FAIRFIELD

RESOLUTION 76-9-A

WHEREAS, Robbieburr Berger has served as a member of the Fairfield City Council for four years since April 1972, and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Berger has been involved in numerous civic affairs for many years, and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Berger has capably served as the City's representative to BASSA, Redwood Empire Division of the League of California Cities, and in other areas of intergovernmental importance to Fairfield; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Berger has continually shown an interest in civic issues and has evidenced a deep concern for the quality of life in Fairfield, and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Berger has made a diligent effort to accomplish those things in which she believed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fairfield City Council does hereby commend Mrs. Robbieburr Berger for her community interest and service as a member of the Fairfield City Council.

Passed and adopted this 9th day of March, 1976, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmen Campes, Falate, Hanson, Jenkins

NOES: Councilmen none

ABSENT: Councilmen none

Colin C. Witham  
City Clerk of the City of Fairfield

(SEAL)