



## CITY OF ASTORIA

Founded 1811 • Incorporated 1856

November 16, 2016

### MEMORANDUM

TO: MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

FROM:  BRETT ESTES, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: SCANDINAVIAN IMMIGRANT MONUMENT, FURTHER DIRECTION NEEDED

### **DISCUSSION**

During the Monday, August 15<sup>th</sup> regular meeting, City Council gave direction to establish an agreement that meets the needs of the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association (ASHA) and the Parks and Recreation Department to construct and maintain a Scandinavian Immigrant Monument at People Place Park. Since the City Council provided this direction, Parks staff has been working with Loran Mathews, Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association President, to come to a mutually agreeable maintenance plan; however, this has been achieved.

#### Department Staff, Spring 2016

Prior to the proposal being presented to City Council, Parks and Recreation Department staff reviewed the proposal and provided feedback in Spring of 2016 regarding maintenance needs and shared concerns about the Parks and Recreation Department's ability to maintain the monument. Staff shared that over the past decade we have seen some unattractive sites as well as hazardous conditions develop, and citizens demanding higher levels of care.

At the conclusion of these conversations, staff shared the success that partners like the Friends of the Astoria Column and the Friends of McClure Park have had in making additions and improvements to Park sites in conjunction with adopting the site and assisting with maintenance responsibilities. Staff suggested that ASHA consider their ability to contribute to the maintenance of the monument and Park as it would be needed to keep the monument in a safe and attractive state and expressed that based on recent discussions relating to the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan that Park Advisory Board Members may also have concerns about adding an additional park amenity/requirement without the resources to maintain it.

#### Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, June 2016

During the June 22, 2016 Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting, Loran Mathews, and Carol Lyngstad (ASHA Treasurer) presented the proposal to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. The presentation included images and a description of the proposed monument and surrounding site. Loran and Carol added that the monument could help fill Astoria's shortage of urban plazas identified in the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan

and that there is a large amount of support in the community for the monument and volunteers could help maintain the site.

Following this presentation, Park and Recreation Advisory Board members and the ASHA representatives discussed partnering together to build a low maintenance design and how to maintain the monument and park. ASHA representatives stated that they had a large number of multi-generational volunteers able to assist with maintenance of the monument and park, and believed they could make adoption commitments, to the park and set an example for the City and community on how to establish future partnerships, as recommended by the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan.

Based on this discussion and ASHA's commitment to adopt and maintain the sites, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board provided a recommendation based upon a formal adoption agreement of the park. The Parks and Recreation Advisory Board concluded that the ASHA would need to include not only fundraising for construction but for the monuments ongoing care and maintenance and unanimously agreed to recommend the Scandinavian monument project to City Council contingent upon a formal park adoption agreement.

#### City Council, August 2016

During the August 15, 2016 regular City Council meeting, Loran and other ASHA members presented the proposal to the City Council. The presentation included the images and a description of the proposed monument and surrounding site. Following the presentation, City Council discussed an agenda item to provide direction for a possible Scandinavian Immigrant Memorial Monument to be located at People Place Park. During the Council meeting, ASHA shared a perspective different from the Park's Board presentation that they were an aging group and "too old to volunteer" to maintain the monument and adopt the Park and without the resources to do so. At the conclusion of this discussion, City Council gave direction to establish an agreement that meets the needs of the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association (ASHA) and the Parks and Recreation Department to construct and maintain a Scandinavian Immigrant Memorial Monument at People Place Park.

#### Department Staff, September 2016

Since City Council provided this direction, staff has been working with Loran Mathews, Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association President to create a mutually agreeable plan. To try and bridge the gap, Parks staff asked if ASHA would be willing to commit to maintaining just the monument versus the entire park site. They responded that they could not, and that they do not have the resources or volunteers to make any commitments. I explained that although ASHA was not asking the City for funds to build it, ASHA was asking to build it on City land, and asking to City to care for and maintain it, which comes at a cost. Staff concluded the conversation explaining, that although they believe the Scandinavian Immigrant Monument would be a wonderful addition to People Place Park, the Parks Department is struggling because under current funding scenarios they do not have the ability to maintain it without taking away maintenance resources from other parks in the City. Staff has reviewed how the increased maintenance requirements at People Place Park with the monument (and increased pedestrian traffic) would reduce resources for maintenance at other park sites. This would in effect decreased maintenance at those other parks, assuming there would not be additional City funds budgeted specifically for maintaining this park.

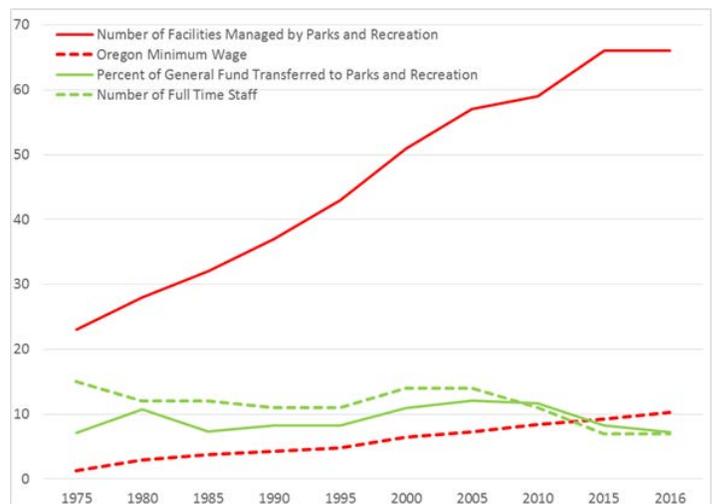
Currently, the City contracts with Greensmith Landscaping to provide grounds maintenance at People Place Park, while the Parks and Recreation Department staff are responsible for garbage removal, tree trimming, and the various unforeseen maintenance needs. Below is a chart representing our current standard annual maintenance costs in addition to the maintenance the monument would require.

Work Description	Estimated Labor Per Occurrence	Occurrences per Year	Total Annual Cost
<b>Work currently being contracted and completed by Greensmith</b>			
Spring cleanup	6 - 7.7	1	\$270
Mowing and trimming of all turf areas, including cleanup after maintenance of all sidewalks, drives, etc.	2.5 - 3.2	27	\$3,038
Edging of all sidewalks, driveways and curbs	1.25 - 1.6	14	\$788
Flower beds' chemical and manual weeding and deadheading	0	22	\$0
Fertilizing flower beds and containerized flowers	0	3	\$0
Landscape planting bed and tree base weed removal by chemical and manual means	4 - 5.1	4	\$720
Fall Cleanup, includes summer and annual flower removal	5 - 6.4	2	\$450
Applications of fertilizer and weed control to all turf areas	1 - 1.3	2	\$265
Aerating of turf	3 - 3.9	1	\$135
Shrub shaping	4 - 5.1	6	\$1,080
Shrub fertilization	2 - 2.6	1	\$90
<b>Total</b>	<b>20.75 - 39.5</b>		<b>\$6,836</b>
<b>Work currently being completed by Parks and Recreation Department Staff</b>			
Debris pick up and removal	0.25	104	\$1,560
Tree trimming	6	1	\$300
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$1,860</b>
<b>Current total cost to maintain Peoples Park in its current state</b>			<b>\$8,696</b>
<b>Additional work that would need to be performed with the addition of the Scandinavian Monument</b>			
Pressure Washing	16	2	\$1,280
Graffiti Removal	.25 - 6	12	\$1,600
Herbicide Application	2	2 - 3	\$670
Additional Time weed-eating around hardscapes	0.5	27	\$540
Additional time blowing debris from hardscapes	0.5	27	\$320
Additional Garbage Collection	0.25 - .5	146	\$2,860
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$7,270</b>
<b>Cost to maintain Peoples Park with the addition of a Scandinavian Monument</b>			<b>\$15,966</b>

*plus compounding 3% annual inflation*

FY 2017 - 2018	\$16,445
FY 2018-2019	\$16,938
FY 2019 - 2020	\$17,446
FY 2020-2021	\$17,970
And so on ...	

As you can see the needed annual maintenance cost would be minimal with the proposed low maintenance design. The challenge is the Parks and Recreation Department's requirements far exceeds its resources, and the addition of any park land or amenity without the resources to maintain it will only increase the imbalance. As you are aware, staff is preparing an analysis of funds needed to sustain current levels of services or conversely options for Parks service cuts, should additional funds not be secured. If Council provides direction that the City should maintain the monument, this will be factored in to the overall analysis of funds needed to sustain the Department in the future, or conversely will be factored in as an item to remain in place should service cuts in other areas be needed.



The issue at hand before City Council is a request for Council to provide clarification as to the intent of the motion where it was stated an agreement should be developed that meets the needs of ASHA and the City. Both ASHA and Parks staff feel that having additional direction from Council would provide better clarity. Representatives from ASHA and Park's staff will be present to answer questions.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council provide direction regarding the Scandinavian Immigrant Memorial Monument at People Place Park and their intent for maintenance responsibilities.

By: Angela Cosby  
Angela Cosby  
Director of Parks & Recreation



ASTORIA SCANDINAVIAN HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

P. O. BOX 34, ASTORIA, OREGON 97103 USA

PROPOSAL FOR MEMO OF AGREEMENT:

1. The Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association (ASHA) will develop a design to enhance the current city park located between 15th and 16th street on the Astoria Riverwalk. The Scandinavian Immigrant Park will honor the thousands of Scandinavian immigrants who settled in the North Coast region and whose values are imprinted in our community.
2. ASHA will work with the City of Astoria Parks and Rec Department, Engineering Department, Community Development, Historical Landmarks Commission, and Design Review Committee and others as necessary to develop a design that is as low maintenance and permanent as possible.
3. ASHA will provide for power washing the completed park twice a year for three years.
4. ASHA will organize the Scandinavian community (ASHA, festival committee, lodges) for spring "Chip-In" park clean-up in the spring for three years.
5. ASHA will work with community service groups that may want to "adopt" the park as a service project.
6. ASHA will encourage members of the Scandinavian community to continue to assist in park maintenance and clean up in the future and to renew this agreement at its conclusion.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Loran Mathews, President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rationale:

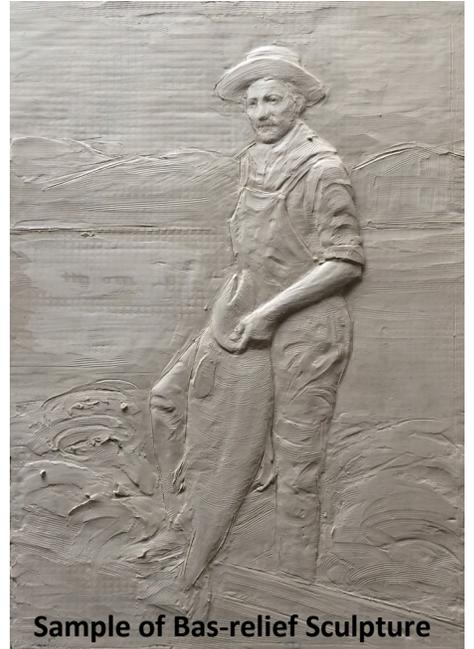
Members of the Scandinavian Immigrant Park Committee have been meeting with the City of Astoria Parks and Rec director since the fall of 2015. In June 2016 AHSA presented their design proposal to the Parks and Rec board and received authorization to present to the City Council. In August 2016 Councilor Zetty Nemlowill made a motion seconded by councilor Russ Warr for the City of Astoria Park and Rec Department to make an agreement with ASHA that both groups can live with so that this civic project can move forward. Members of the Immigrant Park Committee met with Parks and Rec Director Cosby and there was discussion concerning misunderstanding between what the Parks and Rec Board thought they had agreed to and what the City Council had approved. In discussing these differences with City Manager Bret Estes and after his discussion with Mayor LaMear it was decided that we should discuss this further with the City Council at their meeting on Nov. 21.

Momentum for the Scandinavian Immigrant Park proposal is at a standstill until the Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association receives approval from the City to proceed. We are proposing an agreement that we feel can be accomplished by our members and hope that we can move forward as soon as possible as our project has been well received both locally and from outside the immediate area. Several donors are anxious to move forward with design, costs and construction.

## Scandinavian Immigrant Park Proposal



Street View from Marine Drive



Sample of Bas-relief Sculpture

The **Astoria Scandinavian Heritage Association** is the non-profit partner of the Astoria Scandinavian Midsummer Festival Association.

The **Mission of ASHA** is preserve traditional Scandinavian culture and heritage through educational opportunities in areas of customs, language, food and the arts and to educate the citizens of Clatsop County and surrounding areas about the culture and heritage of the Scandinavian countries.

**City of Astoria:** According to the 1910 census there were 9599 inhabitants in Astoria and 35 % of the population identified as Scandinavian. The proposed Scandinavian Immigrant Park will honor the immigrant tradition that brought thousands of Scandinavians to Oregon's North Coast in the late 1800s and early 1900s. It will be erected in a public space to make locals and visitors aware of the ethnic heritage that contributed immensely to the fabric of our community. It will honor families that said their last good-bye in Scandinavia and moved to Astoria to become Americans. The park will educate locals and visitors about the City's rich history that has been influenced by its citizens from Scandinavia.

The proposed **Scandinavian Immigrant Park** will fill a need mentioned in the City of Astoria Parks and Rec Master Plan for more urban plaza space. ASHA intends to work with Parks and Rec throughout the planning process to gain their input and approval for the design. The proposed park is NOT a new park but an enhancement to a current park already under Parks and Rec jurisdiction.



The **proposed park** is at the site of the former People's Park on Marine Drive between 15th and 16th. The park is bordered on the north by the Astoria Trolley tracks, the River Walk, and the Columbia River. Marine Drive is on the south and the park is close to the Welcome to Astoria sign and the Columbia River Maritime Museum. The park will be visible, accessible, and welcoming.

Details and more information are available at:  
[www.fromscandinaviatoastoria.org](http://www.fromscandinaviatoastoria.org)