



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Cati Gallardo
Communications Specialist, City of Arcata
cgallardo@cityofarcata.org
707-825-2104

ARCATA CITY COUNCIL VOTES IN FAVOR OF REMOVING MCKINLEY STATUE & HISTORIC PLAQUE FROM ARCATA PLAZA

Arcata, CA, February 23, 2018 - On Wednesday, February 21, 2018, Arcata City Council voted in favor of removing 1 and replacing a second historic monument from Arcata's Plaza.

The monuments include a bronze plaque created in 1963 denoting the Jacoby Storehouse building's status as a California Registered Historic Landmark and the statue of former President William McKinley that has been located at the center of Arcata's Plaza since it was donated by Arcata resident George Zehndner in 1906.

The McKinley statue has been the center of much debate spanning several decades. Recent requests for the removal of the statue and rewording the plaque resulted in a special study session held on December 4, 2017 attended by approximately 75 people.

At Wednesday's meeting, Arcata City Councilmembers heard 3 hours of public comments on the subject before voting unanimously to replace the plaque and voting 4 to 1 in support of removing the McKinley statue, with Councilmember Winkler dissenting.

The estimated cost to the City of replacing the plaque is \$4,000. Bill Chino, owner of the Jacoby Storehouse building, has offered to help offset some of the expense. To replace the plaque, the City's Historic Landmarks Committee will reach out to the local Tribal Historic Preservation Officers and Storehouse owners to develop revised language. The final language will be sent to the State Office of Historic Preservation for approval.

The City will begin the lengthy process necessary to remove the President McKinley Statue immediately. The statue is identified as a historic feature of the Plaza in the City's guiding document called the General Plan. This designation requires the City to complete an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) prior to removal. An EIR is a very standard planning procedure that provides analysis of the project and time periods for public review and comment. It is initiated by a public scoping meeting, which will be held in March. Standard timelines for a General Plan amendment and EIR are estimated at 8-months, which includes periods of public review.

The cost estimate to remove the McKinley statue is \$40,000 - \$65,000. At least one community member has come forward with a commitment to raise the funds and the City is reaching out to coordinate efforts.

Additional details will be announced as they become available.

Statement from Mayor Sofia Pereira:

“As a Council, we took on a difficult issue that has endured for decades in Arcata. Thank you to all the community members who took part in the Council's decision-making process by voicing their opinions during our December study session, making phone calls, writing letters, signing petitions and engaging the Council at Wednesday's meeting. I encourage all community members to continue to engage the Council and attend our monthly meetings on issues they feel strongly about. Since Arcata is on Wiyot land, I also want to extend gratitude to the Wiyot Tribe for offering their input on this important community matter.

The decision to remove these monuments was not made lightly, and the Council recognizes that this is still a passionate issue for many in our community. I stand by our vote as I believe that these monuments do not reflect our values as a community nor the values to which we aspire. We cannot deny or change the history behind these monuments, but we can change the prominence they hold in our community.”

###

For additional information, the media may contact:

**Karen Diemer, City Manager,
City of Arcata
citymgr@cityofarcata.org
707-822-5953**