Council Meeting Date: March 23, 2021

Staff Report

Subject: Presentation of information on Vance Monument in response to Council request and general discussion.

Staff Resource(s): Jade Dundas, Capital Projects Director

Action Requested: Resolution directing the City Manager on action to be taken in regard to the Vance Monument; and a budget amendment in the amount of $70,000 from General Fund unassigned fund balance for the cost of the comprehensive Community Vision Document.

Background:

- The Vance Monument has become a public safety threat in our community.
- On numerous occasions, the monument has been vandalized and the City has received significant threats that members of the public will attempt to topple the structure.
- In July 2020, the Vance Monument was shrouded with temporary leased scaffolding to reduce its impact on the community and to reduce the risk of harm it presents.
- On 11/19/2020, the Vance Monument Task Force voted to recommend removal of the monument.
- The City Attorney has confirmed that the City has the legal authority to remove the monument as its existence has been deemed a public safety hazard due to the dangerous and unsafe condition it presents.
- The City Council requested that staff provide information regarding the cost of potential removal of the monument and reuse of the site.
- Bids for the demolition and removal of the Vance Monument were advertised 01/07/2021 and opened on 01/28/2021.
- The duration for the removal, pending Council authorization, would be anticipated to take 45 calendar days.
- The bids are valid for 90 days.
- The following five bids for the monument removal were received:

Contractor	Location	Amount
Neo Corporation	Canton, NC	$ 157,000
Silvers and Associates, LLC	Burnsville, NC	$ 495,000
Tennoca Construction Co.	Candler, NC	$ 244,100
4 Seasons Demolition, Inc.	Wilmington, NC	$ 149,000
Chonzie, Inc.	Asheville, NC	$ 114,150

- A comprehensive Community Vision Document that guides the future repurposing of the site is estimated to cost between $50-$70,000, depending on scope of services and requested schedule.
- Staff will utilize fund balance for the cost of the Vision Document; and seek funding partners to help offset that cost.
- The Vision document will provide direction concerning the next phase and expertise needed to determine final repurposing of the site or the monument.

Vendor Outreach Efforts:

- Staff performed outreach to minority-and women-owned businesses through solicitation processes, which included posting on the State's Interactive Purchasing System and requiring prime contractors to reach out to Minority- & Women-Owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) service providers for subcontracted services.
- In addition, staff was able to break up the scope of work into multiple parts.
- One contract would address the monument demolition and removal.
- Separate from the Vance Monument removal contract, a temporary site restoration and landscape installation would be planned for the site where the Vance Monument stands.
- Outreach for separate site restoration work was performed following the Asheville Business Inclusion policy.

- A separate contract for site restoration would be awarded to MS Lean Landscaping, LLC in the amount of $25,535.
- The City followed standard practice for selecting contractors and MS Lean Landscaping was the lowest responsive responsible bidder.
- MS Lean Landscaping is an Asheville African American-owned Business and award of the contract will result in 22.4% minority participation, when evaluating these separate contracts as a whole project.

Council Goal(s):
- An Equitable and Diverse Community; A Connected and Engaged Community; A Well Planned and Livable Community.

Committee(s):
- Vance Monument Task Force, 11/19/20 voted to recommend removal of the monument.

Pro(s):
- Presentation of Information only

Con(s):
- Presentation of information only

Fiscal Impact:
- If Council decides to move forward with removal, it should be noted that this action would be an unplanned capital expense.
- Each year as part of the Capital Improvement (CIP), staff budgets $750,000 in contingency for unplanned expenses.
- Staff utilized $248,485 from the FY21 CIP contingency to establish a project budget for expenses associated with the shrouding and potential removal of the monument.
- Funding partnerships would be sought to offset the costs associated with this removal project and the repurposing project.
- Potential funding partners include other local government agencies and possibly private grant providers for both the removal project and the repurposing project.

Suggested Motion:

Presentation of Information only. Council may now proceed with directing staff as to potential repurposing, removal, or taking no action with respect to the Vance Monument.

Attachment(s)
- Map of the area showing potential limits of removal and temporary restoration plan
- C - RFQ/RFP Outline: Pack Square Plaza Visioning Project

Map of Vance Monument Demolition and Site Restoration

RFP OUTLINE: PACK SQUARE PLAZA PROJECT

RFP PURPOSE: In the event of a decision by elected officials to remove the Vance monument, the City seeks to procure consultant services for planning and community engagement that result in the creation of a Community Vision Document for Pack Square Plaza in downtown Asheville. The Community Vision Document will serve as a guide to the future repurposing of the area.

- **Scope of Services will include** site inventory and analysis, community engagement plan and public meetings/charrettes; vision report including high-level concept narrative with programmatic elements to help aid future design; presentation to public and elected officials.

- **Anticipated timeline** is based on RFP release date in April 2021 with a deliverable this winter.

- **Funding has been identified** in the City's existing budget; partnership on funding possible.

OTHER KEY POINTS:

- The deliverable will be a Community Vision Document with a concept plan narrative and a high-level concept design(s).
- The Vision Document will inform the City and County what professional services would be needed in order to repurpose the area in accordance with the community's vision.
- The RFP will include a list of project goals,
- The RFP will provide questions for the engagement process to answer e.g: "Should a new monument be installed in this area?" and "Should this area include more accessible public/green space?"
- The process and the deliverable will utilize the findings and recommendations of the Vance Monument Task Force.
- A draft budget for repurposing the area based on the community's vision will be developed in coordination with partners after the Vision Document is accepted.