



CITY OF GLENDALE, CALIFORNIA REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM

Report: Consideration of a Public Monument in Recognition of the Armenian Genocide

1. Motion to Approve the Acceptance and Installation of the Monument by the Consulate General of Armenia, to be Located at the Central Library, 222 E. Harvard St.

COUNCIL ACTION

Item Type: Action Item

Approved for _____ April 12, 2022 _____ **calendar**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles would like to donate a monument in recognition of the Armenian Genocide to the City of Glendale. The proposed monument is a stone sculpture of the Forget-Me-Not flower, which has become the symbol of the memory of the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman government. The proposed monument would be located along East Harvard Street, at the terminus of Artsakh Avenue, just west of the main entrance of the Central Library.

The proposed monument meets the requirements outlined in the Public Monument and Memorial Plaque Policy. Furthermore, the Arts & Culture Commission recommends approval of the monument.

COUNCIL PRIORITIES

Arts & Culture: The proposed monument would enhance the community's diverse cultural values and heritage.

RECOMMENDATION

That City Council consider the adoption of a Motion to approve the acceptance and installation of the proposed monument in recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the Consulate General of Armenia, to be located in front of the Central Library at 222 E. Harvard Street.

BACKGROUND

On March 1, 2022, the City Council approved a Public Monument and Memorial Bench Plaque Policy (adopted by Resolution, No. 22-30), which establishes the criteria and process for the placement of Public Monuments and Memorial Bench Plaques sponsored by individuals and/or groups (whether they are private parties, non-profit organizations, or others) on City property.

Proposed Monument

The Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles reached out to the City Manager's Office with a request to donate a monument in recognition of the Armenian Genocide to the City of Glendale. The proposed monument is a stone sculpture of the Forget-Me-Not flower, which has become the symbol of the memory of the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman government. Renderings of the proposed monument are included as Exhibit 1 of this report.

The monument will be produced by Stone Service, a company in Armenia that creates monuments. The Consul General would like to have this monument erected in the United States to strengthen Armenian-American relations, and to have a memorial for Armenian Genocide victims.

This would be the second monument of its kind, the first of which was created and erected in Petah Tikva, Israel. The Armenian community of Israel entrusted Stone Service with the creation of this monument for the 105th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. The municipality of Petah Tikva provided a space in a community park in their city, and the monument was erected in January 2020. Two photos of the monument in Petah Tikva, one taken during the day, and one at night, is included as Exhibit 2 of this report.

The Consulate has left the ultimate recommendation of a proposed location to staff, but asked that the location be a prominent space that is visible to passerby and not deep in a park. Staff is recommending that the statue be placed along Harvard Street, west of the main entrance of the Glendale Central Library, at the terminus of Artsakh Avenue. A map of the proposed location is included as Exhibit 3. Placing the monument at this location will require the removal of existing concrete, as well as the relocation of six bicycle racks in front of the library.

The base of the monument would be 8.5 ft. wide, with the flower portion of the monument being 5.9 ft. wide and 5.9 ft. tall. The overall footprint of the monument, including the planter that would go around the monument, would be a circle with a 14.4 ft. wide diameter. Exhibit 4 shows the scale of the monument, as proposed. It should be noted that the size of the statue can be scaled/modified to fit the space, but is appropriate in size as proposed.

ANALYSIS

The proposed monument is consistent with the City's Public Monument Policy in that it has an identifiable connection to the cultural makeup of the City. Glendale is home to the largest diaspora of Armenians per capita. Having a monument dedicated to the memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 would help educate the community and the public on the history of the Armenian-American people, and empower individuals to embrace cultural diversity and speak out against prejudice and injustice.

Furthermore, this monument meets the City's Public Monument criteria and requirements in the following manner:

1. Appropriateness: The monument is sensitive to social, historical, and other relevant contexts, and is suitable for all ages.
2. Compatibility: The scale and design of the monument is compatible with the location in front of the Glendale Central Library, which houses the ReflectSpace Gallery, an exhibition space designed to explore and reflect on genocides, human and civil rights violations. Furthermore, it is adjacent to Artsakh Avenue, which was renamed a few years ago in recognition of the thriving Armenian-American community in the City of Glendale.
3. Impact on Use of Public Space: The location of the monument is set back from the sidewalk and will not negatively impact the existing right-of-way. It may become a gathering point for the community on April 24, which is Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day.
4. Aesthetics: The monument will be constructed of stone, with a height and width of appropriate scale for the proposed location. The high-quality stone construction of the monument will ensure a durable and long-lasting tribute to the victims of the Armenian Genocide.
5. Maintenance and Insurance: The requestor will enter into a written agreement with the City and will meet the requirements as outlined in the policy.
6. Safety: The design of the monument has no overhangs, projections, or parts that may become loose, and thus, presents no obvious safety hazards to the public.

Per the adopted policy, the proposed monument was presented to the Arts & Culture Commission on March 17, 2022. The Arts & Culture Commission adopted a Motion (attached as Exhibit 5), unanimously recommending that Council accept the proposed monument, with the following comments: that the base be minimized, that there be no pointed tip protruding from the cone in the center, and have light coming out of the center.

STAKEHOLDERS/OUTREACH

N/A

FISCAL IMPACT

The Consulate General of Armenia in Los Angeles will cover the cost of preparing the site, the cost to relocate the bicycle racks, and any other costs associated with the installation of the monument. The City will be responsible for the cost of routine ongoing maintenance after the monument has been installed.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW (CEQA/NEPA)

The proposed Armenian Genocide Monument is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review as a Class 1 Existing Facilities project for the operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing facilities pursuant to the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15301.

CAMPAIGN DISCLOSURE

This item is exempt from campaign disclosure requirements.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: Adopt a Motion for the acceptance and installation of the monument, as presented.

Alternative 2: Choose to not recommend the acceptance and installation of the monument, as presented.

Alternative 3: Council may consider any other alternative not proposed by staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION

Prepared by:

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Approved by:

Roubik R. Golanian, P.E., City Manager

EXHIBITS/ATTACHMENTS

- Exhibit 1: Armenian Genocide Monument Renderings
- Exhibit 2: Armenian Genocide Monument in Petah Tikva, Israel
- Exhibit 3: Map of Proposed Location
- Exhibit 4: Size of Monument
- Exhibit 5: Arts and Culture Commission Motion