



Memorandum

File #: 20-00365

City Council

7/14/2020

LEGISLATIVE ACTION ITEM

SPONSOR: Grover C. Robinson, IV, Mayor
City Council Member Sherri Myers

SUBJECT:

HISTORICAL CONTEXT REVIEW OF THE LEE SQUARE CONFEDERATE MONUMENT AND
EQUITABLE CONSIDERATION OF ALL PARTIES

RECOMMENDATION:

That City Council authorize the removal of the Lee Square Confederate Monument. Further, that City Council authorize the Mayor to take all actions necessary to award a contract for the removal and disposition of the monument.

HEARING REQUIRED: No Hearing Required

SUMMARY:

On June 11, 2020, the City Council introduced discussion on the Lee Square Confederate monument and initiated a 30-day waiting period for potential action.

Staff was asked to consider:

- 1) Is the Square in its current format equitable and representative to all the citizens of our community?

Under careful consideration and with Pensacola's collective heritage and historic landscape in mind, staff has determined that Lee Square and the monument does not reflect our current values nor strive to create a more inclusive City. Although the Confederate monument remembers those that lead, fought, and died for the Confederacy, it also promotes a post-Reconstruction "Lost Cause" narrative that memorializes a divisive time in American history reflective of "white supremacy" and the Jim Crow era. The Square and monument are not equitable representations of all our citizens. To achieve a stronger and more unified community, staff recommends the complete removal of the Lee Square Confederate monument.

- 2) If not: can the square be altered and made equitable to all parties of our community?

Staff strove to answer the questions in the context of our current citizens and our diverse ancestral histories through which they come to our community. We are essentially all descendants of either

Native Americans, free African slaves, Confederate soldiers and families, Union soldiers and families, immigrants, or some combination of those groups. As we celebrate 200 years of Florida being a part of the United States next year, we desire a place where all of us feel we are represented with equity.

3) If yes, how much would it cost to do so?

The final design would determine the cost. Like and equitable replacement of the current monument representing all our ancestries would be cost-prohibitive, likely more than \$10,000,000.

4) Then for staff to recommend ways the Square can be made equitable to all parties.

Rather than spending millions on memorializing our past, we should invest towards creating a better future by bringing people together. We recommend bringing the square reuse consideration back to Council in August to discuss and determine a means moving forward to bring unity and equitable recognition to all the people of our community.

It is through this lens staff prepared the attached report and recommendations. The report provides a brief history of Lee Square, a historic resource analysis of the monument, and various aesthetic options for the square if the monument is removed or relocated.

PRIOR ACTION:

June 11, 2020 - City Council introduced discussion on the Lee Square Confederate Monument and initiated a 30-day waiting period for potential action.

FUNDING:

N/A

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

Currently, sufficient funds are available in the Parks & Recreation Department for the immediate removal of the monument. However, once a contract has been awarded and final costs are known, a supplemental budget resolution will be brought before City Council to appropriate the funds for the removal of the monument.

CITY ATTORNEY REVIEW: Yes

7/6/2020

STAFF CONTACT:

Keith Wilkins, City Administrator

ATTACHMENTS:

1) Confederate Monument Staff Report

PRESENTATION: No