



CITY OF ASTORIA

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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## PRESS RELEASE

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FROM: BRETT ESTES, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

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### **GARDEN OF SURGING WAVES CONSTRUCTION TO LAUNCH IN JANUARY**

#### **DEMURO'S \$200,000 DONATION TRIGGERED JANUARY START; FUNDRAISING FOR COMPLETION MOVING FORWARD**

Momentum toward construction and completion of the Garden of Surging Waves, Astoria's Bicentennial legacy gift honoring the contribution of Chinese pioneers to the city of Astoria, was accelerated with the recent announcement of Art DeMuro's bequest of \$200,000 to the project. DeMuro, the visionary who redeveloped the Astoria plywood mill site into Mill Pond Village, a village of new homes and apartments, died September 9<sup>th</sup> after a 3-month battle with adrenal cancer.

"Art's generous gift secured the funding required to initiate construction of the Garden of Surging Waves, now planned for January 2013," said Mayor Willis Van Dusen. "His gift helped us reach our first funding plateau to cover construction costs of \$1.2 million, but there are additional project costs to be covered, and the fundraising campaign is moving ahead at full speed. The Garden represents Phase I of the broader Heritage Square project."

The Garden of Surging Waves' overall budget is \$1,717,000, for design, construction, infrastructure improvements, and administrative support for the project. Included in that amount is the cost of designing the initial parcel of Heritage Square, of which the Garden is a part. Completion of the larger site design was necessary to finalize the

Garden's design, and sidewalk repairs at the site were necessary before construction could begin. Of the total Phase I project cost, \$700,000 has been committed from the City of Astoria for construction. Significant investments received from other sources include a HUD grant of \$147,000, \$500,000 in individual and corporate donations, and \$26,000 from foundations.

When the initial timeline was established for the project, the scope of needed infrastructure improvements had not been discovered. After city engineers determined that the deteriorating sidewalks surrounding the site, built after a major city fire in 1922, demanded significant repair they decided to make the necessary upgrades before building the Garden. Approximately \$200,000 was required for the quarter-block of sidewalk repairs, now underway and due for completion by December 2012. Construction of the garden is now scheduled to begin in January, with completion estimated in April or May 2013.

“The Pavilion of Transition, the centerpiece of the Garden, will be named for Art DeMuro to commemorate his generous gift and his love for the community of Astoria,” Mayor Van Dusen announced this week. “Art was especially drawn to the Pavilion because it will help us all link our current lives to historic events, a passion in his life and work. Fundraising efforts toward completion are ongoing, and there are diverse Garden elements still available to recognize donor contributions,” he explained. Donor recognition opportunities range from \$50 for Heritage Block Bricks to \$100,000 for the Entry Story Screen. For more information about naming opportunities or to make a donation, go to [www.gardenofsurgingswaves.org](http://www.gardenofsurgingswaves.org) or contact Karen Whitman, fundraising coordinator, at [karenwhitman@comcast.net](mailto:karenwhitman@comcast.net).

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