Project Title: Discovering Astoria: America's Oldest Pacific Coast Settlement

Applicant: Astoria Public Library
The Astoria Public Library (APL) is located in Astoria, a port city situated at the junction of the Columbia River and Pacific Ocean. Astoria was named after John Jacob Astor, an investor from New York City whose American Fur Company founded Fort Astoria at the site in 1811. Astoria holds the distinction of being the first (and oldest) permanent (non-Native) American settlement on the Pacific coast. APL's collection holds nearly 70,500 physical items, including historical materials unique to Astoria and the Pacific Northwest region. Papers from the founding families document genealogies, early settlement life, and major events. The City of Astoria's earliest records are general ledgers, lien documents, general warrants, planning maps, and pioneer-era cemetery records, and already have historians requesting access. In addition, there are materials documenting Astoria's growth specific to logging, salmon, cannery industries, and additional port-related activities.

Project Goal
Engage the community with APL's recently uncovered archive collection in order to preserve, document, and make accessible local histories and experiences. Objectives to include:
1. The continued facilitation of the archive volunteer program that trains community members on how to handle and work with archive collections. The volunteers are already trained on how to process a collection, and will be further trained on how to digitize and describe the collection material.
2. The development and launch of Astoria's regional collection via an online portal in order to publish digitized and described materials related to community histories; to include photographs, artifacts, texts, and other materials. The online portal will be freely accessible and created with future peer contributed collections in mind.
3. The creation of program events inspired by the historical materials to support community dialogue related to the collection and preservation of local histories.

Project Justification

Need Being Addressed
The archive collection at APL is currently closed due to its mostly unprocessed nature. As a result, there are no opportunities for the community to access and engage with the collection material. Furthermore, the primary resources remain largely unused in any local or regional history work being performed. Since work on the collection began, several discoveries have been made by local experts and have contributed to the historical understanding of the region's history. The project historian has used the archive materials to inform his history book for 4th graders, 5th grade architecture lessons, history walking tours, and community college lectures. The most recent, and exciting discovery was the bound volumes of Astoria's earliest cemetery records. These records will guide a ground penetrating radar investigation of pioneer burial sites by the National Park Service and Portland State University's archaeological field school, in Summer 2019. The collection needs to be digitized, described, and published online to a freely accessible platform. By undertaking this project, APL meets community needs by 1. Utilizing interested community members in collection work; 2. Publishing Astoria's regional collection to a freely accessible online portal; and 3. Engaging community members in dialogue related to the collection and preservation of local histories.

How the Need Was Identified
APL's archive initiative began when Jimmy Pearson became the Library Director in October 2016. For decades, archive materials dated from the 2000s to the founding of Astoria (1811) and earlier, were collecting in the

basement of APL. Due to a previous lack of interest and resources, the collections remained dormant and unidentified until recently - 2018. With an Oregon Heritage grant ($21,700), Pearson engaged a consulting historian and archivist to identify the approximately 1200 linear feet of historical materials, provide a needs assessment and recommendations (Supportingdoc1), and deliver training for handling and processing archival collections to a team of volunteers. Since the project was initiated, a team of 40 volunteers have processed an estimated 1/4 of the collection (Supportingdoc2). With APL's continued work and community interest increasing, it's time for APL's archive collection to formally launch and, specifically, be accessible to the community.

Additionally, APL's draft strategic plan (Supportingdoc3) reports on a previous needs assessment conducted with community stakeholders. Referring to those identified needs, the strategic plan outlines APL's initiatives and future goals. From the strategic plan: *This means, for example, that the various local entities share historic/heritage collections and resources and collaborate to preserve and make these available to the community.*

Best Practices & Standards
This project will adhere to the standards and best practices set forth by the Society of American Archivists. Digital preservation efforts will be aggregated across Omeka (with LibraryHost service), Dropbox (digital asset management), and AVP's fixity tool; and is guided by POWRR tools – an IMLS-funded resource (Supportingdoc4). Handling, processing, digitizing, and describing archival collections will be overseen by the consulting archivist and project director to ensure they meet relevant benchmarks.

Qualification for Small and/or Rural Library
APL is a small, rural library located in Astoria, Oregon. Astoria is 97.4 miles or a 2-hour drive from the nearest major city: Portland, Oregon. Since 1914, APL has operated as an independent city library. It's one of only three tax-funded public libraries in Clatsop County (1,083 square miles, population: 39,182). APL is the only publicly available library in the area (no other branches) and does not have the benefit of belonging to a consortia or Inter-Library Loan program. A modest staff of 3 FTE are charged to manage all library operations. APL is excited about the IMLS cohort learning program as it provides an opportunity for staff training, networking, and collaborative relationships. It is APL's view that the IMLS cohort program will help shore up the foundation of its work toward launching an emerging archive program.

The Target Audience Who Benefits
The target audience for this project is a combination of the local and regional community, and those interested in Pacific Northwest history. Specifically:
1. Volunteers who desire to help process, digitize, and describe the collection
2. Scholars who work with this area of history
3. Community members who are interested in learning and engaging with local histories
4. Partner institutions interested in sharing digitization equipment and contributing their collections via the resulting online portal
5. Astoria's broader community who will indirectly benefit from the access and promotion of local history

How the Project Will Engage the Target Audience
The project naturally includes community members in bullet #1 due to the archive volunteer program (40 members) started as a result of the 2018 collection assessment, report, and training. Additionally, at the beginning of the project, APL intends to build respectful and equitable relationships with two important but under-represented populations: 1. The Chinese families who were present in Astoria's early 19th & 20th century

history (per recommendation from Supportingdoc1, p. 52); and 2. The modern-day Latinx population (9%). Initial work with Astoria's Chinese families has been undertaken by the City of Astoria as well as Clatsop County Historical Society – a partner for this project. Here is a link to their project: http://www.astoriachineseheritage.org/garden-of-surging-waves_chinese-heritage-stories.html. APL will join these existing efforts with the goal to work with these under-represented community members and support their decisions for how they would like to be included in the project. The historian's work and objectives will help to engage target audience #2 and #3. Work relating to the online portal will include conversations with target audience #4. Additionally, APL is a public library with existing community communication channels, the Library Foundation, and City exchanges; all of which will help to update and engage target audience #5.

How the Project Addresses APP Goals, Agency Goals, and Project Category Goals

APP special initiative: *Support projects that strengthen the ability of small and rural libraries and archives to serve their communities*. APL is a small and rural library doing the best it can to meet community needs through smart decision-making and leveraging shared resources among peers. The work to uncover APL's archive collection will benefit the community tremendously, but it's a task too large for APL to launch on its own. Support from IMLS and the mentorship cohort will help APL build capacity to strengthen the archive program and its positive reach within the community.

IMLS Agency Goals: Promote Lifelong Learning: *IMLS supports learning and literacy for people of all ages through museum and libraries.* The project's end products – community engagement in local history work, a freely accessible online collection portal, and program events to foster community dialogue – will help to inspire, promote, and support the community's relationship with its local history. It's a project that will result in the promotion of historical literacy for the local community, the region, and scholars of the region.

IMLS Project Category: Community Memory: *Engage local communities in the collection, documentation, and preservation of their local histories, experiences, and identities.* Specifically:
- The archivist will continue to engage local community members in collection work, documentation, and preservation of their local histories;
- The community program events will be held at trusted spaces for community engagement and dialogue, including APL, known for its integrity in meeting community needs through community services; and
- APL will work with relevant guidelines provided by the City of Astoria and work with interested community members to develop ethical practices and working relationships. Community volunteer representatives will be present at monthly meetings to ensure the work undertaken aligns with community needs.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

As a public library, APL has long supported the peoples' free an unencumbered access to knowledge and Library resources. Through APL's services, classes, and events the Library demonstrates commitment to supporting each person's learning abilities. In addition, APL's strategic plan draft, *Values* section (Supportingdoc3) commits to respectfully providing inclusive and equitable services to the community.

Project Work Plan: Please refer to Page 1 for project goal and outcomes.

Project Activities

Archivist
1. Evaluate and recommend catalog software that fits the collection needs with future affordability and future peer contributed collections in mind. Peer institutions will be involved in conversations specific to

the online portal. Presently, Omeka is the preferred online portal for two reasons: 1. Omeka has the broadest applicability (and affordability) to include peer organizations; and 2. Omeka supports both Spanish and Chinese (languages that correlate with Astoria's important and currently under-represented community members, and part of this project's intended target audience).

2. Work with APL staff to implement the catalog infrastructure which will include digital asset management that follows digital preservation best practices (Supportingdoc4 and Digitalproduct.pdf).
3. Work with APL to acquire digitization equipment and schedule equipment sharing with Clatsop County Historical Society.
4. Establish digitization standards, instructions, and workflow for volunteers to follow.
5. Create a catalog template that adheres to *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS)
6. Oversee project work, support APL staff and volunteers, troubleshoot issues, and confirm that archival standards and best practices are followed.

Historian
1. Provide identification of historical materials and contextual information critical to their interpretation.
2. Work with community members and APL to prioritize historical materials for digitization and description.
3. Craft a set of program events to meet community interests and provide an avenue for engaging the community in a dialogue related to the collection and preservation of local histories.

The Team: People and Roles
Jimmy Pearson, project director
Mr. Pearson will lead the project and ensure it fits into APL's current operations to minimize impact on staff. As Library Director and proposed IMLS project director, Pearson will plan and manage the delivery of stated objectives to ensure the project dovetails with APL's existing work and meet the community's stated needs.

Rachael Woody, consulting archivist
Ms. Woody has previously worked with APL's archive collection and her foundational knowledge will allow for the efficient and accurate execution of collection work and project objectives. Woody will assist in acquisition and construction of the digital infrastructure, workflow creation, and publishing of historical materials online.

John Goodenberger, consulting historian
Mr. Goodenberger has previously worked with APL's archival collection and his cultivated knowledge will support evolving the collection into a usable resource. As a local historian and professor, and one who engages with several cross-sections of community members (academic, historic preservationists, tourists, and the general local community) Goodenberger will research, create, and deliver program content to the community.

Partnerships
APL has established partnerships with: Warrenton (WA) Public Library, Seaside (OR) Public Library, Columbia River Maritime Museum, Clatsop County Historical Society, Clatsop County Community College, and Flavel House & Heritage Museum. Project outcome #2 will include Clatsop County Historical Society (Supportingdoc5), who has offered to share their digitization equipment to augment APL's digitization equipment needs and APL will reciprocate. This partnership and mutual access to equipment will support the development of Astoria's regional collection via an online portal. The online portal will be created with peer contributed collections in mind. Project outcome #3 will include partners by delivering or jointly hosting program events inspired by the historical materials – all with the aim to support community dialogue related to the collection and preservation of local histories.

Resources Needed: Personnel & Time, Financial
Personnel & Time: In addition to the project director, archivist, and historian; the project will rely on the assistance of APL's cataloger and the City of Astoria staff connected to the distribution and management of the IMLS grant awards. This project is also reliant on the volunteers (and their time) who are currently committed to working on the archival collection.

Financial: The project requires funding for the consulting archivist and historian activities, a modest allotment to support equipment and software acquisition (less than 30% total project budget) for digitizing and describing the collections, and funds to support the historian's community engagement events.

Risk Mitigation
There are two main risks to this project: 1. Digitization projects have an inherent risk associated with them due to the changing nature of technology with unknown forecasts regarding digital migration and preservation; and 2. Digitization and description projects can be laborious and overwhelming for organizations who are new to the work. To mitigate this risk, APL will work with a consulting archivist who is a specialist in launching emerging archival programs with demonstrated success implementing digitization and description projects among multiple organizations and their volunteer teams; including the Smithsonian Institution, Linfield College Archives, and the Pacific Northwest Railway Archive. Additionally, the consulting archivist will refer to POWRR resources and implement digital preservation tools available (Supportingdoc4).

Measuring Progress and Evaluating Project Performance Goals
The team will meet monthly with volunteer representatives to report on project activities and review project benchmarks. Discussion of ideas and issues will take place with an equitable and collaborative approach to finding solutions. The project director will report regularly to Astoria's City Council as part of his regular duties as Library Director.

Project Outcomes: Please refer to Page 1 for project goal and outcomes.

Results & Outputs
- APL's volunteer team will be additionally trained in digitization and description practices.
- A fully developed online portal for Astoria's regional collection, to be composed of: photographs, artifacts, texts, and other materials that chronicle local histories and events. The online portal will be constructed and available for future peer contributed collections.
- A selection of program events inspired by the historical materials to support community dialogue related to the collection and preservation of local histories.

How the Results and Outputs Address the Project's Stated Need
Need: *The archive collection at APL is currently closed due to its mostly unprocessed nature. As a result, there are currently no opportunities for the community to access and engage with the collection material. Furthermore, the primary resources remain largely unused in any local or regional history work being performed.* **The collection needs to be digitized, described, and published online to a freely accessible platform**. By undertaking this project, APL opens up the collections for engagement both virtually through the online platform and in real life via event programming.

Definition of Project Success
- The archive collection is more accessible due to the additional descriptive work performed
- Under-represented communities are involved to the extent they deem appropriate

- o Maintain or grow 40-member archive volunteer base and deliver digitization and description training
- o 500 or more historical items are described and made available online
- o 3 community events or more have been held

Collecting and Reporting Data on Project Performance Goals
1. Outcome #1: Surveys will be given to the volunteer members to capture their level of knowledge gained, their evaluation of the work, and their feedback on how the process can be improved.
2. Outcome #2: The project team will develop an outcome rubric that will identify desired levels of success to include how many historical items digitized, described, and published online. Once items are available online, additional statistics will be gathered to measure digital visitor engagement.
3. Outcome #3: Surveys will be given to the attending community members to capture their level of knowledge gained, their enjoyment of the program events, and their feedback on what they found interesting, what they'd like to learn more about, and ideas for different engagement formats they would like to participate in.

Additionally, the project team will incorporate IMLS' Agency-Level Goal 1: Promote Lifelong Learning rubric for the community volunteers and event attendees to self-assess: "My understanding has increased as a result of this program:"; "My interest in this subject has increased as a result of this program:"; and "I am confident I can apply what I learned in this program:".

As well as gather the IMLS required quantitative statistics, such as: number of volunteer community members who participated in the digitization and description project and community program events, number of community members who completed the surveys, and number of incomplete or non-responses.

Sustaining Benefits Beyond the Project Term
Per the strategic plan, APL is committed to continued engagement of community members with the soon to be uncovered archive collection. The ongoing archive volunteer program will help to sustain the digitization and description of the collections (outcome #1) as well as contribute to the growth of Astoria's regional collection online portal (outcome #2). The knowledge and content gathered for community programming and events (outcome #3) can be repurposed by the historian in the classes, writings, presentations, historical tours, and historical preservation work he undertakes.

Additionally, APL commits to:
- o Sustaining the costs of hosting an online portal to the archive collection (appx. $1000/year).
- o Continuing to acquire grants to help facilitate technology acquisition and hire project assistants to help in management and troubleshooting required for the digitization equipment and software.
- o Supporting continued volunteer training related to the digitization & description of the collections.
- o Promoting new collection items or new research discoveries with partners and community members via informal and formal announcements, social media, and community events.
- o Sharing project specifications, framework, results, and findings with local partners and national peers via presentations and publications.

Schedule of Completion

<u>Timeline</u>
June 2019: Notification of Award

July 2019: Schedule September's Project Kick-Off Meeting and monthly meetings for October, November, and December 2019.

September 2019: Project kick-off Meeting with the team, review IMLS grant requirements, project goals, and roles and responsibilities

Phase 1 (October 2019-March 2020): Acquire Technology
The archivist will 1. Evaluate and recommend catalog software that fits the collection needs with future affordability and future peer collection contributors in mind; 2. Work with APL staff to implement the catalog infrastructure which will include digital asset management that follows digital preservation best practices; and 3. Work with APL to acquire digitization equipment and schedule equipment sharing with Clatsop County Historical Society.

Phase 2 (April-August 2020): Setup Equipment, Establish Workflow & Deliver Training
The archivist will: 1. Setup and trouble-shoot equipment, establish digitization standards, instructions, and workflow for volunteers to follow; 2. Create a catalog template that adheres to *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS); and 3. Train volunteers and staff on the relevant hardware and software.

Phase 3 (September 2020-August 2021): *Digitize & Describe*
Volunteers will carry out digitization, description work, and publish items to Astoria's online portal. The historian will: 1. Provide identification of historical materials and contextual information critical to their interpretation; and 2. Work with community members and APL to prioritize sets of historical materials for digitization and description. The archivist will periodically review the digitization and description work to ensure that standards and best practices are being adhered to.

Phase 4 (September 2020-August 2021): Distribution and Assessment
The historian will craft a set of three (3) programming events to meet community interests and provide an avenue for engaging the community in a dialogue related to the collection and preservation of local histories. The events will tentatively be scheduled for December 2020, April 2021, and August 2021; with locations to include Astoria, Portland, and a regional conference.

August 2021: The project has concluded and the IMLS grant report is compiled.

Year 1: September 2019 – August 2020

Phase:	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
1												
2												

Year 2: September 2020 – August 2021

Phase:	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug
3												
4												