



CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE MEMORANDUM
#40-2018

DATE: December 17, 2018

TO: Honorable Mayor Carol Dodge and City Council Members

THROUGH: Heather Geyer, City Manager 

FROM: Kimberly Rein, Communications Manager 

SUBJECT: Introduction of Marketing Character for City of Northglenn

PURPOSE

This memo proposes the creation of a city marketing character that would be introduced in 2019 as part of the 50th anniversary celebration.

BACKGROUND

Marketing characters are powerful, which is why so many organizations use them. A character gets attention, makes a city memorable, and puts a friendly, approachable face to the municipality. A fun, likable character can instantly create a positive connection with residents. A good marketing character can appeal to a wide demographic, across many age groups and backgrounds. Marketing characters can even transcend languages and cultures. The following are two examples of local city marketing characters:

- City of Wheat Ridge: Cody the Code Ranger, representing Code Enforcement (stalk of wheat)
- City of Arvada: Fillup A. Can, representing their Storm Water Program (giant trash bin!)

According to the communications managers at these municipalities, the characters are very popular among children and adults.

Introducing Glenn – the Northglenn Gnome

We are proposing a garden gnome as our marketing character. Gnomes have a rich history and have been used for decoration, protection and to bring a bit of whimsy into the garden. Gnome figurines go back as far as ancient Rome, and spread in popularity across Europe in the 1800s. Garden Gnomes were thought to bring good luck and served as a protector of farms, mines and yards. At one time, gnome lawn ornaments were considered prestigious and used as a decoration for the wealthy; however, garden gnomes are now prevalent in gardens and lawns all throughout the western world.

Why a Northglenn Gnome?

“Glenn” was inspired by the general popularity of garden gnomes in modern culture. However, we see a more relevant tie-in to Northglenn. Here, we are proud of our city’s many parks, open spaces, and lush gardens. In fact, we have 25 parks in our city of seven square miles. This pride in our trees and gardens is even represented with a tree element in our logo. Northglenn has an active community gardening program, and also awards residents with “Garden of the Month” in the summer months and a Magnificent Tree annually.

In addition, Northglenn was the first city in the nation to earn a Playful City designation, a nod to the whimsy of gnomes. Garden gnomes saw a resurgence in popularity in the 1970s with the creation of more humorous types of gnomes. This coincides with the formation of our city in 1969 and the growth that ensued in the 1970s.

Finally, since gnomes were once used to oversee and protect property, we see a tie-in of using this character with our efforts to be a sustainable city, as demonstrated by our programs to encourage water conservation and recycling.

Use of Glenn the Gnome

There are endless possibilities in using our gnome character. We are envisioning Glenn being used in printed materials and digitally:

- Connection newsletter to share tips (“Here’s a *little gnome fact* about water conservation.”) and promoting upcoming events.
- We can bring Glenn “to life” through animation, making him talk and move. We can use this digital form on social media and in videos. (According to AdWeek, video on Facebook garners triple the engagement).
- Our gnome can be used on the website in various locations.
- A costumed Glenn can make appearances at events throughout the year.
- Special Glenn garden gnomes can be awarded for best gardens, Magnificent Tree, etc.
- Specialty promo items can bear the likeness of Glenn the Gnome.

In addition, elements of Glenn’s clothing could be changed throughout the year for holidays or projects (e.g.: a witch hat or Santa hat for holidays, hard hat or rubber boots for construction, sunglasses during summer months).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends City Council consensus on the proposed marketing character.

BUDGET/TIME IMPLICATIONS

It is estimated that illustration and animation of the gnome character will cost \$3,500 (this is an unbudgeted item that can be absorbed in the 2018 budget) and a gnome costume, approximately \$1,500 (included in the 2019 anniversary budget).

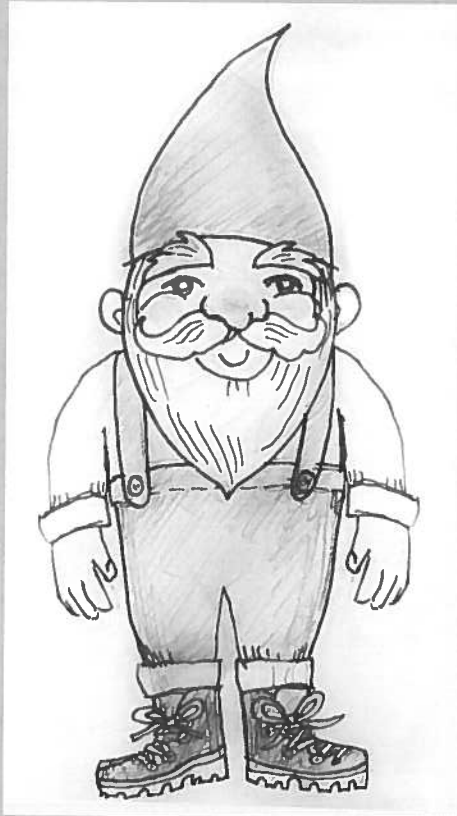
STAFF REFERENCE

If Council members have any comments or questions they may contact Kim Rein, 303.450.8713, krein@northglenn.org.

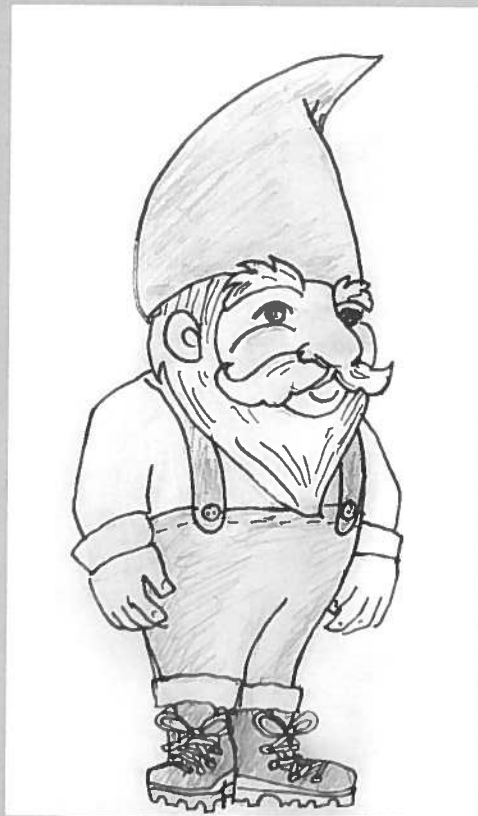
ATTACHMENT

1. “Glenn” the Northglenn Gnome sketches

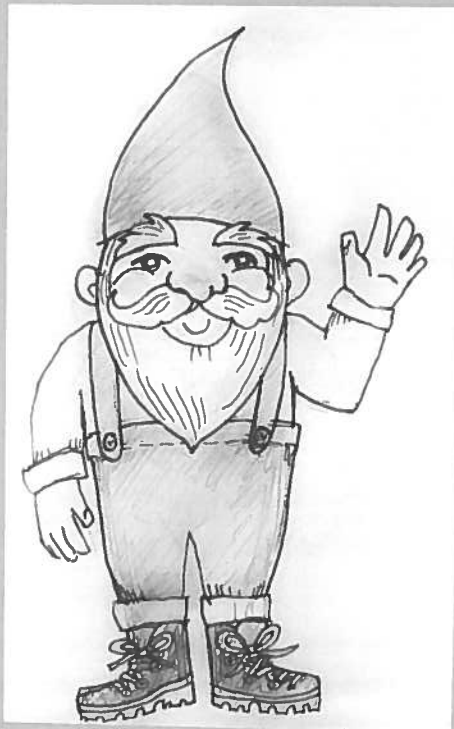
NORTHGLENN GNOME: **Sketches R1**



FRONT: Resting



3/4: Resting



FRONT: Waving



FRONT: Pointing

