THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE

Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: July 14, 2020

Subject: Installation of Street Mural

Staff Resource(s): Todd Okolichany, Planning and Urban Design Director
Steph Dahl, Strategic Design and Development Manager

Action Requested: Consideration to authorize City Manager to enter into an Agreement with Asheville Area Arts Council to install Black Lives Matter mural at Pack Square Plaza.

Background:

- The City wishes to express itself in matters of public concern, including in matters of racial equity.
- The City has previously used Agreements with not for profit organizations as a method of creating temporary public artworks on the City's behalf.
- The Asheville Area Arts Council (AAAC) has raised the majority of funds needed to install and maintain a City-commissioned Black Lives Matter mural in Pack Square Plaza, and anticipates reaching their goal of $22,100 by the end of the month.
- No City funds are needed to complete the project. City fees will be waived because it is a City project.
- The Agreement would specify maintenance roles and requirements for the mural.
- The Agreement would be for no longer than one year and would include the right for the City to remove the mural at any time.
- AAAC proactively held a competitive process to procure the three lead artists for the project; all of those artists and the sixteen assistant artists creating the mural are African Americans.
- The mural would be installed at a date to be determined.

Council Goal(s):

- An Equitable and Diverse Community

Committee(s):

- None.

Pro(s):

- Contracting with this not for profit provides the City with ability to artistically express itself in matters of public concern, furthering Asheville's identity as a place built on creative culture and economies
- Contract results in the hiring of 19 African American artists.

Con(s):

- Some community members may not agree with the City's expression.

Fiscal Impact:

- The City will provide minimal services, such as providing and installing barricades, blocking parking meters as part of this project. The cost for the materials and artist stipend will be donated by the AAAC.

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Agreement with the Asheville Area Arts Council to create a temporary Black Lives Matter Mural at no cost to the City.

Attachment(s)

- Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 20- _____

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ASHEVILLE AREA ARTS COUNCIL TO INSTALL A TEMPORARY DISPLAY OF PUBLIC ART

WHEREAS, the City, especially through its public art program, understands that Asheville's identity is largely built on its wealth of memorable places, its rich cultural heritage, and the excellent arts, crafts and maker communities that exist here today, including underrepresented African American artists and makers; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville desires to make a statement about racial equity and systemic racism through the installation of an artistic mural; and

WHEREAS, AAAC has substantially completed fundraising $22,100 of private donations for the purpose of designing, installing, and removing a BLM Mural on behalf of the City on the streets of Pack Square in order to galvanize solidarity and celebrate our collective movement towards addressing systemic issues locally; and

WHEREAS, elected officials from City and County passed a joint resolution in June 2020 to create a task force to study and recommend a future for several monuments that "are widely perceived as offensive and painful public reminders of the legacy of slavery and present realities of systemic racism in our country", including monuments within Pack Square Plaza; and

WHEREAS, the City and AAAC desire to set forth terms and conditions for an Agreement to install a temporary piece of art expressing the City's viewpoint in order to promote continued dialogue; and

WHEREAS, the City desires to commission a Black Lives Matter mural to express its position on a matter of public concern. This installation shall constitute a statement by the City of Asheville as a municipal entity, and the contents thereof shall be government speech;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

The City Manager is hereby authorized to enter into an Agreement with the Asheville Area Arts Council to create a Black Lives Matter Mural around Pack Square Plaza.

Read, approved and adopted this 14th day of July, 2020.

_____ _____

City Clerk Mayor

Approved as to Form:

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City Attorney