CITY OF ASHEVILLE RESOLUTION NO. 20-_____

BUNCOMBE COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. 20-_____

JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE AND BUNCOMBE COUNTY TO REMOVE THE CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS LOCATED AT THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY COURTHOUSE AND IN PACK SQUARE PARK, AND TO ESTABLISH A JOINTLY APPOINTED TASK FORCE TO RECOMMEND ACTION REGARDING THE REMOVAL OR REPURPOSING OF THE VANCE MONUMENT_____

WHEREAS, Monuments to Confederate soldiers and military leaders, which were installed in Asheville and many other communities in the South in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries by white Southerners seeking to preserve the Confederacy, are widely perceived as offensive and painful public reminders of the legacy of slavery and present realities of systemic racism in our country.

WHEREAS, A memorial monument honoring the 60th Regiment of North Carolina Confederate soldiers currently stands in front of the Buncombe County Courthouse, sitting on county-owned land; and

WHEREAS, A memorial monument known as the “Robert E. Lee Dixie Highway,Colonel John Connally Marker” is located in Pack Square Park, sitting on city-owned land; and

WHEREAS, Both of these monuments were paid for and erected by a private organization known as the United Daughters of the Confederacy, and ownership of these monuments have never passed to either the City or the County; and

WHEREAS, A memorial monument known as the “The Vance Monument” is also located in Pack Square Park, the former site of the county courthouse which is the likely location where slaves were sold and traded locally; and

WHEREAS, African-American residents of the City of Asheville and Buncombe County have issued a clear call to remove and/or repurpose these monuments as expeditiously as possible due to the harm they pose, and to replace them with monuments that honor local African-American history and are created by African-American artists; and

WHEREAS, The Confederacy was formed by its political leaders for the express purpose of perpetuating and expanding slavery of African Americans; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County recognize that the legacy of slavery, institutional segregation and ongoing systemic racism directly harm public safety and public health; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 100-2.1(c), the City and County are authorized to remove the two Confederate monuments from public property; and

WHEREAS, The City of Asheville and Buncombe County are committed to promoting racial equity and justice, and desire to express this commitment through a joint resolution of their respective governing boards; and

WHEREAS, The City of Asheville and Buncombe County desire to remove Confederate monuments from the public spaces within the City of Asheville; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County desire specifically to remove the monument to Confederate soldiers from the grounds near the County Courthouse and the Robert E. Lee monument from Pack Square Park; and

WHEREAS, The City of Asheville and Buncombe County desire to explore options for removing, relocating, or making alterations to the Vance Monument; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of the governing boards of the City of Asheville and Buncombe County that these monuments be replaced or altered in such as manner as to honor the local history of African Americans; and

WHEREAS, The City of Asheville and Buncombe County want to seek citizen input - and particularly to hear from those most impacted by the monuments - regarding the future of the Vance Monument by the establishment of a jointly appointed task force which will explore options including removal, relocation, and alteration of the monument; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville and Buncombe County approve this resolution jointly at separate meetings of their governing boards;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE AND THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY COMMISSION THAT:

Request is hereby made to the United Daughters of the Confederacy to immediately remove the two Confederate monuments located at the Buncombe County Courthouse and Pack Square Park. The City further requests that it receive from the United Daughters of the Confederacy its intent to remove the monument within 30 days, and that said removal is completed within 90 days. If the intent to remove is not received or the removal is not completed within the specified timeframes from the date of full adoption of this resolution, then the City of Asheville and Buncombe County shall take action to remove the monuments; and

A jointly appointed task force shall be established by the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commission, consisting of not more than 12 members whose appointments will be made in equal numbers by the two governing boards. This task force shall, within three months of all appointments being made, provide a report to the City Council and the County Commission with a recommendation regarding the removal and/or repurposing of the Vance Monument. Once the report is presented, the task force shall perform such other duties as requested by the governing bodies. When no further action is requested, the task force shall dissolve. Upon passage of this resolution and until such time as the monument is removed or repurposed, it shall be shrouded in order to reduce its impact on the community and to reduce the risk of harm it presents in its current state.

Read, approved and adopted by the City of Asheville this 9th day of June, 2020.

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CITY CLERK MAYOR

Approved as to form:

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CITY ATTORNEY

Read, approved and adopted by Buncombe County this 16th day of June, 2020.

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COUNTY CLERK COMMISSION CHAIR

Approved as to form:

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COUNTY ATTORNEY