



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0952, Version: 1

Dept/ Agency: Offices of Municipal Council/City Clerk

Action: () Ratifying (X) Authorizing () Amending

Type of Service: Resolution of Support

Purpose: Support for a Rainbow Mural

Sponsor(s): Council Member, Carlos M. Gonzalez

Additional Information:

Rainbow Mural to be placed near the intersection of Academy Street and Halsey Street.

The Rainbow Mural will be commemorative of Sakia Gunn, a Newark native whose life and legacy continue to inspire advocacy for rights and visibility of the LGBTQ+ community.

WHEREAS, the City of Newark, New Jersey wishes to pay homage to Sakia Gunn, a Newark native whose life and legacy continue to inspire advocacy for the rights and visibility of the LGBTQ+ community; and

WHEREAS, on August 8, 2023, the Municipal Council adopted a Ceremonial Street Designation Resolution authorizing a street dedication for Sakia Gunn at the intersection of Academy and Halsey Streets; and

WHEREAS, on October 28, 2023, the Municipal Council organized a Street Dedication Ceremony to honor Sakia Gunn's memory on the twenty-year (20) Anniversary of her tragic passing. The Event was attended by friends, family members and members of the local, regional and statewide LGBTQ+ community; and

WHEREAS, on May 18, 2024, the "All Black Lives Matter" ground mural on Halsey Street, located between New Street and Bleeker Street was revitalized. The street was repaved using municipal aid grant funding, which is subject to reimbursement by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The mural was initially painted in 2020 on the same street. The City's Department of Engineering stated that creating a public art mural to honor the late Sakia Gunn, with an LGBTQ+ pride theme, could jeopardize potential reimbursements to the City of Newark for Municipal Aid grant funding issued by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The "All Black Lives Matter" ground mural project was supported by the City of Newark's Division of Arts and Cultural Affairs, Newark Alliance, Four Corners Public Art, Newark Arts, New Arts Justice, Project for Empty Space and several community organizations; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council recognizes the importance of celebrating diversity and promoting inclusivity within our City; and

WHEREAS, the installation of a rainbow mural near the intersection of Academy and Halsey Streets, specifically inside the lines of a transverse crosswalk, or between the interior bars of a ladder-style crosswalk, would serve as a symbol of support for the LGBTQ+ community; and

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council recognizes a major study sponsored by Bloomberg

Philanthropies found asphalt art reduced collisions by approximately 50%.

WHEREAS, the Municipal Council intends to adhere to the standards provided by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) while supporting this community initiative to ensure that the mural is both safe and compliant with traffic control standards; and

WHEREAS, other municipalities such as Jersey City, Hoboken, Trenton, Asbury Park, and Maplewood have successfully completed and installed similar crosswalks, demonstrating a regional commitment to LGBTQ+ visibility and community support.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MUNICIPAL COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEWARK, NEW JERSEY, THAT:

1. The Municipal Council on behalf of the City of Newark expresses its full support for the placement of a rainbow mural near the intersection of Academy and Halsey Streets commemorative of Sakia Gunn and to celebrate and honor the LGBTQ+ community.
2. The Municipal Council requests that the appropriate City Departments and Divisions work collaboratively with the LGBTQ+ community organizations to design and implement the mural in a manner that adheres to MUTCD standards, ensuring the Project is executed safely and effectively.

STATEMENT

Resolution in support of the placement of a rainbow mural near the intersection of Academy and Halsey Streets commemorative of Sakia Gunn and to celebrate and honor the LGBTQ+ community.