



# City of Palo Alto

## City Council Staff Report

(ID # 11454)

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**Report Type: Consent Calendar**

**Meeting Date: 6/23/2020**

**Summary Title: Place Black Lives Matter on a City Street Near City Hall**

**Title: Authorize the City Manager to Place "Black Lives Matter" on a City Street Near Palo Alto City Hall**

**From: City Manager**

**Lead Department: Community Services**

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends City Council adopt the following motion:

1. In solidarity with the Mayor of Washington, D.C. and the Black Lives Matter movement, joining other cities around the country, authorize the City Manager to place the words "Black Lives Matter" on a City street (or streets) near Palo Alto City Hall as soon as practicable.
2. The City Manager is authorized to approve a specific design and location in consultation with the Public Art Commission and the community and in conformance with Council's direction above. The City Manager will also consider the relationship with other street markings intended for traffic control.

### **Background and Discussion**

On June 15, 2020, the City Council directed the Public Art Commission to explore public art honoring diversity, and work with the community to paint "Black Lives Matter" or a similar message near City Hall, as soon as possible.

Staff returns to Council with the recommended motion above to authorize the painting on a street or streets in front of or near City Hall. This action confirms the City Council's direction to waive technical and process requirements as needed to affect changes to public streets, protect the City from liability, and expedite this effort. The Public Art Commission will work with staff to find and select artists to develop the "Black Lives Matter" design and for the City Manager's final approval. In reviewing the design and placement, the Public Art Commission and City Manager will take care to consider existing street markings, such as lane markings and pedestrian crossings.

## **Timeline**

If City Council approves of the recommended motion, staff will work with the PAC to outreach to artists and invite design proposals. PAC will review the designs and make a recommendation to the City Manager for final approval. Once a final concept is approved, it is envisioned that actual painting will occur on one day to prevent prolonged road closures.

## **Resource Impact**

The Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Proposed Budget, which is still subject to City Council approval on June 22, 2020, includes sufficient funding to support anticipated expenses of this project. The project will be funded in compliance with existing Public Art policies. The Public Art Commission will make a recommendation on number of artists and locations, which will determine the project budget, estimated by staff to range from \$10,000 to \$15,000. The Police and Public Works Departments will assist with necessary road closures, expected to be no more than two days.

## **Stakeholder Engagement**

A petition letter signed by over 1,000 individuals in support of painting Black Lives Matter on Hamilton Avenue in front of City Hall was sent to City Council earlier this month. As discussed above, the process will involve community involvement and outreach to artists and selection of the artists through the Public Art Commission.

## **Environmental Review**

The subject project has been assessed in accordance with the authority and criteria contained in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and the City's environmental regulations. Specifically, the City, acting as the Lead Agency, finds this project exempt from CEQA in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).