

**BEN BARTLETT**

VICE MAYOR

CONSENT CALENDAR

June 27, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Vice Mayor Ben Bartlett (Author), Councilmember Sophie Hahn (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: *Reparations Now* Community Art Mural Restoration and Preservation

RECOMMENDATION

Direct the City Manager to authorize, preserve, protect, and authorize the *Reparations Now* mural on Ellis Street (next to Malcolm X Elementary School) to continue the legacy of educational spaces for all community members to view it in the City of Berkeley.

BACKGROUND

Recently, the public mural on Ellis Street was painted over by staff from Public Works.¹ As a matter of urgency, Berkeley community members urgently wish to restore the colorful and impactful mural to the street pavement. As this space is alongside the Malcolm X Elementary School, community members, and parents have expressed the importance of restoring the mural to celebrate Juneteenth and continue the pursuit of reparations in Berkeley.

Other street murals, such as the “Ohlone Territory” and “Black Lives Matter” painted on Milvia Street and Martin Luther King Jr Way, respectively, have been created to serve as a visual reminder and message for the community.² These projects have previously been approved and supported by the City of Berkeley.

It should be noted that on a local level, reparations are being discussed within the Berkeley Unified School District and at the state level with the Governor of California. This art is a call to action to address the history of racial discrimination in South Berkeley and throughout our country and is seen as an opportunity to educate everyone in the community (no matter how young) about the importance of reparations. The mural will serve as a visual representation of the community's resilience and determination to address racial discrimination and promote inclusivity.

¹ Markovich, Ally. “Why the South Berkeley ‘Reparations Now’ Mural Was Painted Over.” *Berkeleyside*, 17 May 2023, <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2023/05/17/berkeley-reparations-now-mural-painted-over>.

² Hahn, Sophie. “Black Lives Matter and Ohlone Recognition.” 9, June, 2020, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1GGNRruOKGrxIWQ3xprQSa5wj60_WQoh6/view



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Through this collaborative effort, the community hopes to recreate a vibrant and thought-provoking mural that beautifies the neighborhood and catalyzes dialogue and action toward a more just and inclusive society.



Photo courtesy of Berkeleyside. Credit to Todd Matthews³



Photo courtesy of Berkeleyside. Credit to Ximena Natera⁴

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No negative impact.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

No General Fund impact

CONTACT PERSON:

Vice Mayor Ben Bartlett

James Chang

Nina (Wenxin) Li

Dafne Cruz Rodriguez

bbartlett@cityofberkeley.info

jchang@cityofberkeley.info

510-981-7130

510-981-7131

³ Markovich, Ally. "Berkeley School District Explores Giving Cash Payments to Students with Enslaved Ancestors." *Berkeleyside*, 24 Mar. 2023, <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2023/03/24/busd-reparations-program-berkeley-unified-school-district>.

⁴ Markovich, Ally. "Why the South Berkeley 'Reparations Now' Mural Was Painted Over." *Berkeleyside*, 17 May 2023, <https://www.berkeleyside.org/2023/05/17/berkeley-reparations-now-mural-painted-over>.