Gaston County

Public Works

Board Action

File #: 24-338

Commissioner Keigher - Public Works - To Accept the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument Located on the Department of Social Services Campus as County Owned and Maintained Property

STAFF CONTACT

Daniel K. Ziehm, PE - Public Works Director - 704-862-6795

BUDGET IMPACT

No additional County funds.

BUDGET ORDINANCE IMPACT

N/A

BACKGROUND

In January 2004, the Gaston County Board of Commissioners, working in conjunction with the Gaston County Progressive Coalition, NAACP, the Gaston County Organization for Community Concerns, Inc., and the Gaston Citizen-Clergy Coalition (GC3), resolved the commemoration of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. monument on the Department of Social Services campus, located at the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and East Long Avenue. The monument is an obelisk with the words "I have a dream" written in 17 languages. This monument pays homage to the slain civil rights leader's vision that people from all walks of life could unite. The monument and plaza were paid for with non-County funds. The monument also has a plaque listing the names of the annual Gaston County MLK Award recipients beginning in 2004. After 2025, there will not be room on the plaque for additional award recipients' names.

Approval of this Board Action accepts the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. monument as County property. Moving forward, Gaston County will be responsible for maintenance and upkeep associated with the monument. Also, approval of this Board Action authorizes County staff to work with the Gaston Citizen-Clergy Coalition (GC3) to develop a new Gaston County MLK Award recipient plaque and a new placement of this plaque at a suitable location.

POLICY IMPACT

N/A

ATTACHMENTS

MLK Monument Letter

DO NOT TYPE BELOW THIS LINE

I, Donna S. Buff, Clerk to the County Commission, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the Board of Commissioners as follows:

NO.	DATE	M1	M2	CBrown	CCloninger	AFraley	BHovis	KJohnson	TKeigher	RWorley	Vote
2024-307	08/27/2024	BH	AF	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	U

DISTRIBUTION:

Laserfiche Users

A=AYE, N=NAY, AB=ABSENT, ABS=ABSTAIN, U=UNANIMOUS

August 8, 2024

Mr. Ray Maxwell
Infrastructure & Assets Manager
Gaston County Government
128 W. Main Avenue
Gastonia, NC 28052

Dear Mr. Maxwell:

Gaston Together is pleased to share the following information regarding the MLK Monument currently located on the MLK Unity Plaza on the corner of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and East Long Avenue.

Gaston Together's Gaston Clergy and Citizens Coalition (GC3) established the Dr. Martin Luther King Unity Awards in 2004. Gaston Together spearheaded a fundraising effort for the creation of the MLK Monument and oversaw its creation, which is currently located on the County's MLK Plaza.

The MLK Unity Award is designed to recognize the dream of Dr. King and to promote a culture that protects and nourishes every community and resident of Gaston County. The annual awards recognize Gaston County residents who have performed exemplary community service to help build bridges of unity across lines of class, race, gender, faith, and municipalities within Gaston County. The names of the award honorees are engraved on the MLK Monument.

Gaston Together is grateful to the County for allowing the MLK Monument to be placed on the MLK Plaza and for the spirit of understanding surrounding this important award. As stewards of the MLK Monument, we confirm:

- Gaston Together raised the funds and oversaw the creation of the MLK Monument.
- There are no claims, financial or otherwise, against the Monument.
- The Monument resides on County property at the MLK Plaza.

Gaston Together extends an offer of dedication of the MLK Monument to Gaston County, effective upon the signing of this agreement by both parties, with the following stipulations:
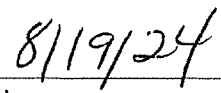
- Gaston County will maintain the MLK Monument.
- Gaston Together will maintain responsibility for awarding the MLK Unity Award.
- The name of the winner will be added annually to the Monument.
- Any additions to the Monument will be funded through private fundraising efforts.

Thank you for your understanding and continued partnership as we celebrate the importance of the MLK Unity Award and the MLK Monument,

Sincerely,

Amia Massey
Chair, Board of Directors
Gaston Together

Amia Massey _8/19/24_
Amia Massey, Chair, Board of Directors   Date
Gaston Together

_____   _____
For Gaston County   Date