



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NAACP DC URGES MAYOR BOWSER AND DDOT TO EXPLORE OPTIONS TO MAXIMIZE BLACK-BUSINESSES OPPORTUNITIES IN BLACK LIVES MATTER PLAZA CONSTRUCTION

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The NAACP DC Branch urges Mayor Bowser and the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) to explore options to maximize Black-Business opportunities in the reconstruction of Black Lives Matter Plaza. Black Lives Matter Plaza symbolizes the empowerment and upliftment of the Black community. It is important that maximum opportunities are available to Black-businesses, artists and contractors in the re-construction project. There is a need to balance expedience in the reconstruction of Black Lives Matter Plaza, with ensuring this symbol of Black empowerment embodies the empowerment of Black-businesses.

In June 2020, Mayor Muriel Bowser ordered the renaming of a portion of 16th street in front of the White House as “Black Lives Matter Plaza.” DDOT is renovating the Black Lives Matters Plaza to address some underground, infrastructure requirements to make it a permanent fixture. To expedite the construction, DDOT executed a Purchase Order on an existing Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract with Fort Myer Construction Company (FMCC) already performing a larger road repair on 16th and K Street. There are only 3 companies in DC qualified to perform the asphalt construction required for the scope of work, including Fort Myers Construction Company. Fort Myer Construction Company is not Black-Owned, but it is a Minority-owned company where the primary owner is Latino and one of the partial owners is African-American. Phase 2 of the Black Lives Matter reconstruction is estimated at \$3 million in the FY22 budget. Mayor Bowser and DDOT plan to ensure a broad procurement for Phase 2 of this project.

The NAACP DC Branch is committed to promoting racial equity, economic development and economic empowerment for Black-Businesses. The Coronavirus pandemic, unemployment and other economic inequities have had devastating impacts on the Black community. Many Black businesses are still struggling to recover, which disproportionately impacts Black business owners and Black employees. We urge Mayor Bowser and DDOT to explore options to maximize Black businesses participation in the reconstruction of Black Lives Matter Plaza. Depending on the stage of Fort Myers Construction Company’s execution, there may be opportunities to execute Phase 2 awards, sub-contracts and purchases with black businesses to maximize black business participation in the construction of the historic, Black Lives Matter plaza.

Akosua Ali, NAACP DC Branch President states, “Black Lives Matter Plaza is a historic symbol of the fight for racial equity and social justice. Financial opportunities for Black Businesses directly impacts the economic, education, health and other racial inequities facing the Black community. We are confident Mayor Bowser and DDOT will ensure Phase 2 of this project maximizes opportunities for Black-Business procurements.”

For more information, please contact naacp@naacpdc.org