

1 RESOLUTION NO. 2023-209

First Reading Passage Requested
(Executive Shapiro)

2
3 SPONSOR Executive Shapiro, Ms. Sims and Council as a Whole

4
5 DATE June 26, 2026 COMMITTEE: Human Services

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7 **A Resolution authorizing the Executive to execute a grant agreement with United Way of**
8 **Summit and Medina Counties to provide funds, in an amount not to exceed \$275,000.00, to**
9 **support the Sojourner Truth Statue Fund, a fund dedicated to the construction of Truth**
10 **Plaza and the erection of a Sojourner Truth Statue, in Council District 4, for the Executive,**
11 **and declaring an emergency.**

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13 WHEREAS, in 2019, the Executive, members of Council, and other community leaders
14 gathered to form the Summit Suffrage Centennial, to plan the celebration of the 100th anniversary
15 of women’s suffrage, to educate the public on the progress made over the last 100 years, and to
16 honor the fight for voting rights for all women, especially those women of color who were
17 excluded from voting until the 1960s; and

18
19 WHEREAS, from this initiative came a renewed effort to erect a statue of Sojourner Truth
20 in downtown Akron. *The Sojourner Truth Project – Akron*, led by Towanda Mullins, is working
21 to raise funds for Sojourner Truth Memorial Monument, a new National Monument that will
22 feature a statue of Sojourner Truth, situated in Truth Plaza next to the United Way of Summit &
23 Medina Counties’ Sojourner Truth Building on North High Street; and

24
25 WHEREAS, the Statue has been designed by Akron-native and internationally known
26 artist, Woodrow Nash. Truth Plaza has been designed by Dion Harris, Landscape Architect for the
27 Summit Metro Parks. Individual residents, non-profits, local government offices, and private
28 businesses have all come together to achieve this goal; and

29
30 WHEREAS, at the 1851 Women’s Rights Convention held in Akron, Sojourner Truth
31 delivered what is now recognized as one of the most famous abolitionist and women’s rights
32 speeches in American history, commonly titled “Ain’t I a Woman?”; and

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34 WHEREAS, Sojourner Truth stood tall for equal rights for all women, and her speech in
35 Summit County defending the rights of women *and* Black women electrified the suffrage and civil
36 rights movements for decades to come; and

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38 WHEREAS, residents are encouraged to learn more about Sojourner Truth and her time in
39 Summit County by visiting SummitSuffrageCentennial.com and can learn more about the
40 fundraising efforts at truthstatue.org; and

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42 WHEREAS, the project committee has worked since 2020 to raise funds to erect a statue
43 of Sojourner Truth and construct the Truth Memorial Plaza, garnering support from community
44 organizations that have partnered to make this vision a reality, including the City of Akron, the
45 John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, United Way of Summit and Medina Counties, the Akron
46 Community Foundation, the GAR Foundation, and numerous other organizations, businesses,
47 families, and individuals; and

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49 WHEREAS, the County of Summit contributed \$25,000.00 in 2021 and the Executive and
50 Council wish to contribute an additional \$275,000.00, as such the County will be recognized as a
51 visionary sponsor of the project, with a contribution totaling \$300,000.00; and

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4 WHEREAS, the Executive and Council recognize the importance of the project, the
5 creation of a new National Monument in Summit County, and the positive impact it will have on
6 our local community, as a gathering point for the community, an educational resource, and
7 historical marker; and

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9 WHEREAS, this Council finds and determines, after reviewing all pertinent information,
10 that it is necessary and in the best interest of the County of Summit to authorize the Executive to
11 execute a grant agreement with United Way of Summit and Medina Counties to provide funds, in
12 an amount not to exceed \$275,000.00, to support the Sojourner Truth Statue Fund, a fund dedicated
13 to the construction of Truth Plaza and the erection of a Sojourner Truth Statue;

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15 NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the County of Summit, State
16 of Ohio, that:

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18 SECTION 1

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20 This Council hereby authorizes the Executive to execute a grant agreement with United
21 Way of Summit and Medina Counties to provide funds, in an amount not to exceed \$275,000.00,
22 to support the Sojourner Truth Statue Fund, a project to erect a National Monument of Sojourner
23 Truth and construct the Truth Plaza.

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25 SECTION 2

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27 This Resolution is hereby declared an emergency in the interest of the health, safety and
28 welfare of the residents of the County of Summit, and for the further reason that the County wishes
29 to authorize the Executive to execute a grant agreement with United Way of Summit and Medina
30 Counties to contribute to the Sojourner Truth Statue Fund.

31

32 SECTION 3

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34 Provided this Resolution receives the affirmative vote of eight members, it shall take effect
35 immediately upon its adoption and approval by the Executive; otherwise, it shall take effect and be in
36 force at the earliest time provided by law.

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38 SECTION 4

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40 It is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to
41 the adoption of this Resolution were adopted in an open meeting of this Council, and that all
42 deliberations of this Council and any of its committees that resulted in such formal action were in
43 meetings open to the public, in compliance with legal requirements, including Section 121.22 of the
44 Ohio Revised Code.

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5 INTRODUCED June 26, 2026

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7 **ADOPTED** June 26, 2026

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9 DocuSigned by:
hauwenmaish

10

11 F8D2DB132BE041B...
CLERK OF COUNCIL

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13 **APPROVED** June 26, 2026

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15 DocuSigned by:
Steve Shapiro
CBD33E40D287473...
EXECUTIVE

DocuSigned by:
Veronica R Sim
C65A926FE4BA42A...
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

June 27, 2026
ENACTED EFFECTIVE