

Pride flags won't come down in Heber despite controversy

By Nick McGurk

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HEBER CITY, Utah (ABC4 News) – The mayor here says she won't ask for Pride flags to be taken down — flags that hang over the city's main artery.

"There was never an intention of making it into a political battle," said Kelleen Potter, Heber City's mayor.

She says a private citizen came to the city and asked about putting flags along Main Street for Pride Month.

"When someone asks, if there's room on the schedule, we allow them to hang flags," said Potter.

In the past, flags have advertised supporting local businesses, attending rodeos and even promoting the Farmer's Market.

But in this case, Potter says, she felt like allowing the privately-funded flags was the right thing to do.

"If someone came to me with Martin Luther King flags, or Black History month, or anniversary of women's right to vote, I would've approved as well," said Potter.

But, she says, the opposition has been vocal.

"One woman told me she'll take them down herself, if I don't take them down," said Potter.

"They say they that's not who we are, we represent families, and we're a conservative small town, and they find it to be offensive. And they're angry about that," added Potter.

On Tuesday, the ACLU sent a letter to the mayor in support. She says the flags won't come down.

"We applaud them for saying, 'You know what, we're gonna keep those banners up, they followed all the rules, and this is the way the

First Amendment works,'" said

Jason Stevenson with ACLU Utah.

Mayor Potter says about 75 percent

of local feedback has been positive.

And, she says, the message of the flags is positive, too.

"Just a symbol of inclusion, and welcoming to anyone who's here," said Potter.

