

1 [Findings of Fiscal Feasibility - Proposed Portsmouth Square Improvements]

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3 **Resolution finding that the proposed Portsmouth Square Improvements project is**  
4 **fiscally feasible and responsible under Administrative Code, Chapter 29.**

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6 WHEREAS, Chapter 29 of the Administrative Code requires the Board of Supervisors  
7 to determine whether a City department’s plan for undertaking and implementing a covered  
8 project is fiscally feasible and responsible; and

9 WHEREAS, The Recreation and Park Department operates and manages Portsmouth  
10 Square, located at Clay Street and Kearny Street and is considering a proposal to construct  
11 improvements at the site (the “proposed Project”); and

12 WHEREAS, Portsmouth Square is a culturally significant civic space; originally a civic  
13 plaza for the Yerba Buena settlement, it was renamed after the USS Portsmouth in 1846, and  
14 has served as a backdrop to some of the most important moments in city and state history:  
15 the site of the first City Hall and California’s first public school; the rise and fall of the Gold  
16 Rush; a staging ground and place of refuge after the 1906 earthquake; and countless  
17 festivals, parades, and other affirmations of civic pride; and

18 WHEREAS, Portsmouth Square has special significance for Asian Americans  
19 throughout Northern California, located in the Chinatown neighborhood, which is one of the  
20 densest urban neighborhoods in the City with over 10,000 residents; more than a  
21 neighborhood park, Portsmouth Square is a central hub during Asian American cultural events  
22 and gatherings, while providing accessible open space for a majority of Asian Americans that  
23 reside in apartments and single-room occupancy hotels with no backyards; and

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1           WHEREAS, Currently, the site is terraced with several hardscape plazas, two  
2 children’s play areas, a clubhouse, an underground parking structure, various historical  
3 markers, a restroom building, and a pedestrian bridge extending over Kearny Street; and

4           WHEREAS, From 1960’s, 1970’s and 1990’s, Portsmouth Square went through a  
5 number of partial renovations which spurred a grassroots effort from Chinatown leaders that  
6 began advocating for an overhaul redesign of the park that would allow a more unified park for  
7 the community; and

8           WHEREAS, During the outreach and conceptual design phase for the proposed  
9 Project, the Recreation and Park Department conducted a comprehensive community and  
10 stakeholder outreach process that included five community workshops, numerous stakeholder  
11 interviews, surveys and meetings, and community members attended these workshops and  
12 participated in record numbers; and

13           WHEREAS, Community members have been engaged and organized in their  
14 passionate support for investment in the future of Portsmouth Square not just for its current  
15 users but for future generations to come; and

16           WHEREAS, The proposed Project that resulted from the community outreach has an  
17 estimated cost of \$65,000,000; the Recreation and Park Department presently anticipates  
18 being able to obtain \$9,000,000 in funding from Transit Center Impact fees and the Transbay  
19 Transit Center Community Facilities District, and is also seeking other funding sources, and  
20 completing environmental review will provide the Department more opportunities to secure  
21 philanthropic and additional funding for the proposed Project; and

22           WHEREAS, It is appropriate to further evaluate and perform environmental review on  
23 the proposed Project, given the civic and cultural significance of Portsmouth Square, and the  
24 need to preserve its history for future generations; and

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1           WHEREAS, The proposed Project is intended to provide a safer, more sustainable  
2 park with a longer useful life, and improved facilities to better serve the general public; and

3           WHEREAS, The proposed Project will support job creation, as infrastructure  
4 investment is a known and tested job stimulus with a strong multiplier effect, estimated at 5.93  
5 jobs per every \$1 million in construction spending according to the REMI Policy Insight model;  
6 and

7           WHEREAS, Direct and indirect financial benefits will include increased property values  
8 for surrounding businesses and residential buildings, increase in commerce for local  
9 merchants, decrease in health spending by having accessible open space that leads to  
10 improved physical and mental health, decreased operations and maintenance costs through  
11 updated facilities and infrastructure with clear sight lines and activated edges; and

12           WHEREAS, The Recreation and Park Department desires to promptly complete  
13 environmental review; and

14           WHEREAS, Pursuant to Administrative Code, Section 29.3, the Recreation and Park  
15 Department has submitted to the Board a general description of the Program, the general  
16 purpose of the Program, and a fiscal plan; and

17           WHEREAS, The Board has reviewed and considered the general description and  
18 purpose of the proposed Project and other information submitted to it and has considered the  
19 direct and indirect financial benefits to the City; now therefore, be it

20           RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors finds that the Recreation and Park  
21 Department's plan for implementing the proposed Project at Portsmouth Square is fiscally  
22 feasible and responsible in accordance with Administrative Code, Chapter 29; and be it

23           FURTHER RESOLVED, Pursuant to San Francisco Administrative Code, Chapter 29,  
24 the Planning Department may undertake environmental review of the proposed Project as  
25 required by Administrative Code, Chapter 31 and CEQA.