

1 [San Francisco Stairway Month - October 2024]

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Resolution proclaiming October 2024 as the first “San Francisco Stairway Month” in the City and County of San Francisco and supporting community beautification projects, encourage neighborhood exploration, and inspire San Francisco's inhabitants, elected officials, and city workers to find their nearest, or furthest, staircase and partake in San Francisco Stairway Month events and activities.

WHEREAS, San Francisco is a city of beautiful and beloved hikes, walks, and more than 900 public stairways; and

WHEREAS, There has been a public fascination with, love for, and commitment to San Francisco’s stairways for decades, as demonstrated by the first San Francisco Stairway Day on May 22, 2004, the myriad neighborhood groups and individuals who have taken on the improvement and upkeep of these stairways, and the many books and articles that have been written about the stairways, with the first guidebook published 40 years ago, in 1984; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco’s stairways have inspired legions of urban explorers, locals and tourists alike, to meander among the City’s streets, seeking out surprising, creative, and serpentine ways to connect neighborhoods, parks, and streets, such as the Crosstown Trails, which connect San Francisco from Southeast to Northwest and Southwest to Northeast and which feature many of the City’s iconic stairways; and

WHEREAS, These stairways lend a fairytale feeling to the hills and valleys of our City, each pathway a portal to spectacular vistas, a hidden garden or swing set, or a previously unfamiliar street or neighborhood, and a feeling of having discovered something magical; and

WHEREAS, Stairways not only provide a means of travel and discovery, but also can become a locus of community, whether through beautification and landscaping projects,

1 neighborhood clean-up days, group workout events, or chance encounters of strangers
2 passing on the trail; and

3 WHEREAS, Great effort has been put into the creation and maintenance of these
4 beautiful staircases, including tilework by local artists, advocacy, planning, and fundraising by
5 neighborhood groups, countless hours poring over the finer points of permitting by advocates
6 and City staff alike, construction by local businesses, and ongoing upkeep by neighborhood
7 groups and City departments; and

8 WHEREAS, Stairways in every neighborhood and district of the city contribute to the
9 landscape and individuality of each locale and the City as a whole, and themselves are often
10 works of art complete with one-of-a-kind tilework, landscaping, murals, or other unique artistic
11 features; and

12 WHEREAS, Each of San Francisco's eleven Supervisory Districts includes public
13 stairways that are sources of pride, joy, and whimsy for the neighborhoods of the district; and

14 WHEREAS, District One's iconic, beaux-arts inspired Lincoln Park Steps connect the
15 western end of California Street to Lincoln Park, the Legion of Honor, and Lands End, and
16 was the result of years of hard work, advocacy, and community engagement by the Friends of
17 Lincoln Park; and

18 WHEREAS, District Two has the Lyon Street staircase, adjacent to the Presidio, which
19 was built in 1916 and continues to draw locals and tourists alike to admire its terraced
20 gardens and stunning city views, and Vicha Ratanapakdee Way, a soon to be tiled stairway,
21 which will honor the life and legacy of Vicha Ratanapakdee, symbolizing the ongoing pursuit
22 of equality, anti-discrimination, and solidarity with the Asian American and Pacific Islander
23 community; and

24 WHEREAS, District Three's Coit Tower sits atop Telegraph Hill, with its winding
25 thirteen flights of stairs and historic murals that lead visitors to a viewing area that overlooks

1 the Bay; the District’s many other historic stairways include those that surround Pioneer Park,
2 such as the Greenwich Steps and Filbert Street Steps; and

3 WHEREAS, District Four is home to Ocean Beach, which is accessible by steps and
4 ramps from the Ocean Beach Esplanade, the O’Shaughnessy Seawall, and the Great
5 Highway Seawall and Promenade, which offer endless recreation and coastal access
6 opportunities, and which define the great western wilderness that borders the City; and

7 WHEREAS, San Francisco’s City Hall is in District Five, and its ornate Grand Staircase
8 is the venue for thousands of joyful wedding photos and celebrations each year; and

9 WHEREAS, District Six’s Yerba Buena Gardens feature the Fourth Street Murals,
10 completed in 2023 by local artists, as well as an intricately painted staircase, which features
11 different colorful patterns on each step; and

12 WHEREAS, District Seven has the first tiled staircase in San Francisco, a mosaic
13 depicting sea rising to sky along Moraga Street from 15th to 16th Avenues, which inspired
14 numerous other tiled staircases across the City; and

15 WHEREAS, In District Eight, the Burnside Mural, which features the natural and human
16 history of Glen Park, will soon have its own tiled staircase depicting a creek flowing down the
17 stairs, thanks to the tireless effort of a collection of neighborhood groups, advocacy
18 organizations, artists, and City staff; and

19 WHEREAS, District Nine has numerous stairways, including the Goettingen Stairs and
20 garden in the Portola, where the community is currently working on a colorful tiled staircase,
21 the beautiful Tompkins Stairway Garden, the Esmeralda stairs and slide, and dozens of
22 staircases throughout the Mission and Bernal that connect streets and meander through
23 neighborhoods; and

24 WHEREAS, The Arelious Walker Drive Flights of Fancy mosaic steps, located in
25 District Ten, honor Reverend Arelious Walker, the founding pastor of True Hope Church and a

1 prominent figure in the Bayview community; the stairs feature intricate patterns inspired by
2 textiles and fabrics from cultures around the world, representing the diverse communities of
3 the District; and

4 WHEREAS, District Eleven has the Kenny Alley Stairs, which depict a beautiful, tiled
5 waterfall, the 100 colorful tiled steps of the Athens Avalon Greenspace, and the Naglee
6 Avenue Steps, which are tiled with a depiction of Islais Creek and the classic architecture of
7 the southern end of San Francisco; and

8 WHEREAS, In 1984, the first guidebook about San Francisco’s Stairways, “Stairway
9 Walks in San Francisco,” was written by Adah Bakalinsky, and the tenth edition will be
10 released in October of this year; and

11 WHEREAS, In 2004, Mayor Newsom dedicated May 22nd as San Francisco Stairway
12 Day on the 20th anniversary of Bakalinsky’s guidebook; and

13 WHEREAS, San Francisco Stairway Month 2024 will include explorations of the City’s
14 staircases, a book launch and author event, the installation of a new staircase on Burnside
15 Avenue in Glen Park, an educational session focused on the development of new tiled
16 stairways, and stairway cleaning events across San Francisco; now, therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco hereby designates the month
18 of October as the first San Francisco Stairway Month in the City and County of San Francisco;
19 and, be it

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco shall endeavor to
21 support community beautification projects, encourage neighborhood exploration, and inspire
22 San Francisco's inhabitants, elected officials, and city workers to find their nearest, or furthest,
23 staircase and partake in San Francisco Stairway Month events and activities.

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