

1 [Urging the Recreation and Park Department to Develop and Install Signage Acknowledging
2 Sharp Park Dark History as a Concentration Camp]

3 **Resolution urging the Recreation and Park Department to develop and install**
4 **appropriate interpretive signage onsite at Sharp Park, acknowledging and setting forth**
5 **the site’s dark chapter in San Francisco and American history as a concentration**
6 **camp, in consultation with the Japanese American Community.**

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8 WHEREAS, Pursuant to U.S. Presidential Executive Order 9066, signed on February
9 19, 1942, the United States forcibly relocated and incarcerated over 120,000 people of
10 Japanese ancestry, most of whom lived on the Pacific Coast, into ten concentration camps in
11 the western interior of the country under the jurisdiction of the War Relocation Authority
12 (WRA), of whom approximately two-thirds of the inmates were United States citizens; and

13 WHEREAS, At the outset of World War II, controversial Federal Bureau of Investigation
14 (FBI) Director J. Edgar Hoover lobbied the federal government to imprison foreign non-
15 citizens from countries the United States deemed “enemy nations”, without the benefit of a
16 trial, based purely on their country of origin; and

17 WHEREAS, Even before Japan attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941, Sharp Park had already
18 been selected as a site to falsely and unjustly imprison non-citizens in what is widely
19 understood today to have been a concentration camp, and “Camp Sharp Park” was
20 established as a temporary holding station by the Immigration and Naturalization Service
21 (INS) where individuals of Japanese ancestry, including non-citizens of Japanese descent
22 from California and Peru, foreign nationals from “enemy nations” including Germany, Italy and
23 China, were taken and remained at Sharp Park before being sent to more permanent prison-
24 like facilities operated by the Department of Justice (DOJ); and

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1 WHEREAS, The glibly-named “Camp Sharp Park” is today understood to have been
2 the Sharp Park Concentration Camp and is now the home of the San Francisco Archery Club
3 in a canyon above the City of San Francisco’s Sharp Park Golf Course in the City of Pacifica,
4 California, east of State Highway 1; and

5 WHEREAS, Stanford University instructor and Issei leader Yamato Ichihashi, (who
6 attended Lowell High School, then Stanford University where he received a bachelor’s and
7 master’s degree in Economics, later earning his doctorate degree at Harvard University),
8 spent six weeks imprisoned at the Sharp Park Concentration Camp and wrote in his diary
9 about his horrific experience, transcripts of which are housed in the special collections of
10 Stanford University’s Green Library, along with his wartime letters and essays; and

11 WHEREAS, Ichihashi wrote:

12 *“The ground is limited by tall iron net-fences and small in area; barracks 20’ x*
13 *12’ are well-built and painted outside and inside and are regularly arranged; there are 10 of*
14 *these for [sic ?] inmates, each accommodating about 40, divided into 5 rooms for 8 persons*
15 *each; if double-decked (beds), 80 can be put in...[T]he number of detainees never exceeded*
16 *500...”;*

17 on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 220958, which is hereby
18 declared to be a part of this resolution, as if set forth fully herein; and

19 WHEREAS, The Issei Japanese, who were community leaders including business
20 proprietors, clergy, language school teachers and martial arts instructors, were the first group
21 of persons of Japanese ancestry to be imprisoned at various “temporary” locations, such as
22 Sharp Park, prior to being sent to more permanent facilities; and

23 WHEREAS, The Sharp Park Concentration Camp was closed in 1946 and
24 subsequently demolished, and today there does not appear to be any evidence of a
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1 concentration camp at this site or its dark and racist history, which has largely been erased
2 and forgotten; now, therefore, be it

3 RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Board of Supervisors hereby urges the San
4 Francisco Recreation and Park Department to develop and install appropriate interpretive
5 signage onsite at Sharp Park acknowledging and setting forth this dark chapter in San
6 Francisco and American history, in consultation with the Japanese American Community; and

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Clerk of the Board
8 to transmit a copy of this Resolution as formal city policy once adopted to the Director of the
9 Recreation and Park Department, along with a request to the Recreation and Park
10 Commission to hold a hearing and take action on this Resolution.

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