



## RESOLUTION

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REQUESTING THE CITY ADMINISTRATION TO IDENTIFY LOCATIONS IN THE DOWNTOWN/CHINATOWN AREAS AS POTENTIAL SITES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF PUBLIC RESTROOMS, AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SOLUTIONS TO MEET THE URGENT NEED FOR PUBLIC RESTROOMS.

WHEREAS, both Downtown/Chinatown Honolulu are special district areas that offer cultural, historic and artistic attractions and are also places where people live, work and visit; and

WHEREAS, the Downtown/Chinatown area, in addition to being the setting for residents, workers and tourists, also has a sizable population of unsheltered homeless persons; and

WHEREAS, homeless persons have relieved themselves on area sidewalks, streets, storefront stoops and other inappropriate public places; and

WHEREAS, in addition to creating serious public health concerns, this shortage of public toilets in the Downtown/Chinatown area prevents tourists and workers from visiting and patronizing area businesses, restaurants and stores, and results in reduced business revenue and a poor reputation for the neighborhood; and

WHEREAS, numerous studies and reports have documented the need for more public restrooms, the resulting impact upon the Downtown/Chinatown area, and made the following recommendations:

- "Rediscovering Chinatown Honolulu" (November 2006), prepared for the City, concluded that: 1) The current lack of public restrooms contributes to the problem of urine and defecation on the streets and alleyways; 2) To address cleanliness in Chinatown, one must resolve some of the basic issues at the core of the problem: homelessness and a lack of public restrooms; 3) There are no public restrooms in Chinatown. The nearest public restroom is in A'ala Park; and 4) Families with children or the elderly need access to restrooms. Without them, their visits have to be short. In order to lengthen visit times and provide convenience for Chinatown's customers, it is imperative that public restrooms be provided;
- The economic impacts analysis prepared for the City, entitled "Chinatown Riverwalk Revitalization and Downtown Connectivity Study" (June 2012), observed that: 1) The concentration of homeless and street people who



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do not have access to restroom facilities have turned the sidewalks, vacant doorways and any semi-public area into places to urinate and defecate. They, along with the general public who use these sidewalks, parks and plazas, need restroom facilities; and 2) Self-cleaning, fee-based restrooms should be maintained and manned at every block; and

- A City-initiated study on Downtown/Chinatown homelessness, "Neighborhood Planning in the Context of Homelessness" (September 2012), underscored earlier reports by stating: 1) Business owners have been overwhelmed by the daily cleaning activities required to remove urine and defecation left behind by unsheltered homeless residents. Unsanitary sidewalk conditions and loitering issues negatively affect street safety and public health. Merchants and residents noted the necessity of providing more public restrooms; and 2) Public toilets that are regularly cleaned [can be] paid through a community benefits district. Offering public toilets in Chinatown does make sense, but would be better served if it were managed through an existing non-profit or commercial establishment;

and

WHEREAS, the Council finds that the Downtown/Chinatown area is a cornerstone of Honolulu's economic recovery, in which public restrooms are urgently needed to address public concerns, accommodate residents, workers and visitors, and improve the economic health of this area; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that the City Administration is requested to identify locations in the Downtown/Chinatown areas as potential sites for provision of public restrooms through public, private or contracted non-profit service providers; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Administration provide recommendations to the Council regarding solutions involving public restrooms in the Downtown/Chinatown area by January 30, 2014 as part of a homeless solutions action plan for the Downtown/Chinatown region; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this Resolution be sent to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Executive Director of the Office of Housing and the Directors of Community Services, Planning and Permitting, Facility Maintenance, and Parks and Recreation.

INTRODUCED BY:

*Carol Fido*

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DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

**DEC 05 2013**

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Honolulu, Hawaii

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Councilmembers