

RESOLUTION NO. NS-

RESOLUTION ENDORSING THE COMMUNITY'S EFFORT TO UPDATE THE NARRATIVE OF MISSION PLAZA PARK IN THE MISSION HILL AREA HISTORIC DISTRICT SO THAT A MORE ACCURATE DEPICTION OF THE HISTORY OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF THE AREA IS INCLUDED AND DIRECTION FOR THE HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION TO PLACE AN ITEM AT A FUTURE MEETING TO DISCUSS THE REMOVAL OF ALL EL CAMINO REAL MISSION BELL MARKERS FROM THE CITY OF SANTA CRUZ AND BRING BACK A RECOMMENDATION FOR THE CITY COUNCIL TO CONSIDER.

WHEREAS, At the beginning of the twentieth century, civic boosters, developers, and automobile promoters worked together to increase tourism and settlement in California by encouraging a nostalgic and positive remembering of California's Spanish colonial past; and

WHEREAS, The promoters picked a mission bell with a shepherd's staff to mark and memorialize the route of a California state highway that followed the mythical trek of El Camino Real ("Royal Road"), that connected the twenty-one California missions and four presidios (military forts), and several pueblos from Mission San Diego de Alcalá in the south to Mission San Francisco de Solano to the north, turning the missions into money-making tourist destinations; and

WHEREAS, In contrast, Chairman Lopez of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and other California Indigenous peoples view the mission bells as a colonial settler and racist symbol that glorifies the killing, dehumanization, forced labor and imprisonment of their ancestors, and seizure of indigenous lands; and

WHEREAS, The bell was a potent symbol of the domination of the Catholic Church and the Spanish state over all aspects of the lives of the indigenous people who were forced to live "under the bell"; and

WHEREAS, On June 21, 2019 representatives of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band and the UC Santa Cruz administration assembled on campus to remove an existing El Camino Real bell marker; and

WHEREAS, There are two El Camino Real bell markers within the jurisdiction of the City of Santa Cruz, one on Mission St at Mission Plaza Park in the Mission Hill Area Historic District which was dedicated on March 8, 1999 and another at Soquel Ave and Dakota Ave which was installed in 2006; and

WHEREAS, In August of 2018, Chairman Lopez of the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band reached out to the City to express that the mission bell markers represent an omnipresent reminder of the destruction and domination of California Indians and to ask that the two mission bells on City of Santa Cruz property be removed; and

WHEREAS, From late July - October of 2020, Mayor Cummings and Director Tony Elliot hosted community meetings with representatives from Friends of the Santa Cruz State Parks, California State Parks, Museum of Natural History, Chairman Lopez from the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band, Kanyon Sayers-Roods of the Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan Ohlone and other indigenous leaders to discuss if and how to move forward with removing the El Camino Real bell markers and how to reimagine Mission Plaza Park in the Mission Hill Area Historic District to better illustrate the history and experiences of the local indigenous people; and

WHEREAS, Consensus was reached that the bells should be removed throughout the City and that the narrative of Mission Plaza Park in the Mission Hill Area Historic District should be revised; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Santa Cruz City Council endorse the community's effort to update the narrative of Mission Plaza Park in the Mission Hill Area Historic District so that a more accurate depiction of the history of the indigenous people of the area is included; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Santa Cruz City Council direct the Historic Preservation Commission to place an item at the next possible meeting to discuss the removal of El Camino Real mission bell markers from the City of Santa Cruz and provide Council with feedback and a recommendation to consider.

Passed and adopted this 13th day of October, 2020, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

DISQUALIFIED:

APPROVED: _____
Mayor

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk