

1 [Portola Green Plan and Portola as San Francisco’s Garden District]

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3 **RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE PORTOLA GREEN PLAN AND RECOGNITION OF**
4 **THE PORTOLA AS SAN FRANCISCO’S GARDEN DISTRICT**

5 **WHEREAS**, the Portola was once a primary source of cut flowers for the City and
6 widely known as “San Francisco’s Garden,” with flowers grown in open fields and, more
7 strikingly, in many family-owned commercial greenhouses spread throughout the
8 neighborhood; and

9 **WHEREAS**, the Portola aided in relief efforts after the devastation of the 1906
10 Earthquake by providing agricultural resources, such as vegetables and meats, and later a
11 home for many of those relocated from other parts of the City, and

12 **WHEREAS**, today, the Portola is overwhelmingly residential and very few physical
13 markers of its agricultural history remain, some landmarks have persisted, including; the
14 original Alemany Farmers Market, the last standing family-owned commercial greenhouses,
15 the University Mound Nursery greenhouses, at 770 Woolsey, and perhaps the last historic
16 windmill in the southeast, once used to draw up groundwater to irrigate crops; and

17 **WHEREAS**, The Portola is situated within a unique environment that continues to
18 make it an ideal location for agricultural and horticultural activity; the peaks of McLaren Park
19 create a natural fog break giving the community a sunny climate, a natural watershed in
20 Yosemite Creek which flows through the Portola and continues to feed plant growth and
21 enrich the soil, and residential parcels are often oversized at 3,000 sq/ft or more with
22 structures built to front & side property lines, creating large rear yards protected from wind and
23 ideal for gardening; and

24 **WHEREAS**, the Portola prides itself on being San Francisco’s Garden District based
25 on a vibrant urban-agricultural heritage that includes a rich history of commercially operating

1 greenhouses that lives on in community-driven efforts such as the Portola Garden Tour, which
2 will celebrate its tenth consecutive year in 2016, as well as a bee farm, a new pocket park,
3 and a multitude of public art works reflecting the Portola’s rich agricultural history; and

4 **WHEREAS**, in 2014, the Portola Urban Greening Steering Committee was formed to
5 convene a diverse group of Portola residents and stakeholders including the Portola
6 Neighborhood Association, The Greenhouse Project, San Francisco Community
7 Empowerment Center, Portola Branch Library, San Francisco School, and Portola and
8 Excelsior Family Connections to promote the Garden District identity, to build community and
9 to advance a broad vision for community sustainability and resilience through greening; and

10 **WHEREAS**, in July 2015 the Steering Committee published the Portola Green Plan, a
11 groundbreaking report that provides an environmental history and context for the
12 neighborhood, as well as a roadmap to promote a safe, healthy and enriching public realm
13 based on community feedback and the Portola’s Garden District identity; now, therefore, be it,

14 **RESOLVED**, that the San Francisco Commission on the Environment supports the
15 Portola Green Plan and supports the San Francisco Department of the Environment’s efforts
16 to advance the plan both within the neighborhood and before the City as an important
17 statement of neighborhood goals and identity, rooted in urban agriculture, green infrastructure
18 and community greening; and, be it,

19 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission recognizes the Portola as San
20 Francisco’s Garden District and commends the neighborhood’s environmental, residential,
21 and small business leaders for success in advancing a bold vision of community sustainability
22 and resilience; and, be it,

23 **FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Commission urges the San Francisco Board of
24 Supervisors to formally recognize the Portola as San Francisco’s Garden District.

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1 I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted at the Commission on the
2 Environment’s meeting on December 14, 2015.

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5 Anthony Valdez, Commission Affairs Manager

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- 7 VOTE: Approved
 - 8 AYES: Commissioners Arce, Bermejo, Omotalade and Wald
 - 9 NOES: None
 - 10 ABSENT: Hoyos, Stephenson and Wan

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