



# Memorandum

**TO:** HONORABLE MAYOR AND  
CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** Mayor Sam Liccardo  
Councilmember Raul Peralez

**SUBJECT: SEE BELOW**

**DATE:** August 28, 2020

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Approved by:

Date: 8/28/2020

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**SUBJECT: ACTIONS RELATED TO THE FUTURE PUBLIC PARK WITHIN THE  
JAPANTOWN SQUARE DEVELOPMENT**

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Support PRNS staff's original recommendation of "Heinlenville Park" as the official name for the future public park plaza located within the Japantown Square Development Project.

## **BACKGROUND**

Most residents in San José know little about John Heinlen, but to local historians and the Japantown community, he played a significant role in creating a vibrant neighborhood and a safe space for diversity to thrive in our City.

In 1887, when anti-Asian racism and violence was prevalent, suspected arson destroyed the local Chinatown community. Driven by his own immigrant experience, Heinlen, a German farmer, created a haven for displaced Chinese-Americans. Throughout San José's history, Heinlenville became a place of refuge for many Asian Americans, most notably the Japanese, and led to the creation of one of the last three remaining Japantowns in California today.

While Chinatown no longer exists in San José, Heinlen's brave actions to protect Chinese Americans illustrate that he clearly understood the importance of celebrating our differences and the value of the immigrant community. This is the opportunity to honor and celebrate John Heinlen's legacy and shed light on how he helped guide San José into the diverse city it is today. We deeply appreciate the Japanese and Chinese communities' steadfast engagement in this process, and aim to honor their wishes by naming the park "Heinlenville Park".