

Daniel Lurie, Mayor



Kat Anderson, Commission President
Sarah Madland, Interim General Manager

Date: February 19, 2026
To: Recreation and Park Commission
Through: Sarah Madland, Interim General Manager
Stacy Bradley, Director of Capital and Planning Division
From: Noah Levy, Project Manager
Subject: Portsmouth Square Improvement Project– Contract Award

Agenda Wording

Discussion and possible action to award a construction contract for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project (Sourcing Event ID # 0000011131) to Swinerton Builders, in the amount of up to \$48,095,000 to cover (1) the base bid (\$47,995,000), and (2) bid alternate #1 (\$100,000).

Strategic Plan

Strategy 1: Inspire Public Space: Keep today’s parks safe, clean, and fun; promote our parks’ historic and cultural heritage; and build the great parks of tomorrow.

- Objective: 1.2.: Strengthen the quality of existing parks and facilities.

Strategy 2: Inspire Play: Promote active living, well-being and community for San Francisco’s diverse and growing population.

- Objective 2.2 Strengthen and promote the safety, health and well-being of San Francisco’s youth and seniors.

Strategy 4 Inspire Stewardship

- Objective 4.1 Conserve and strengthen natural resources.
- Objective 4.1.d Scope San Francisco’s first carbon-neutral facility.

Project Background and Description

Portsmouth Square is located in the Chinatown neighborhood at 745 Kearny Street, between Clay Street and Washington Street, and is one of San Francisco’s most significant historic, cultural, and civic spaces. The existing terraced site includes several hardscape plazas, two children’s play areas, a clubhouse, underground parking structure, various historical markers, a new restroom building, and a pedestrian bridge extending over Kearny Street.



The proposed project will demolish nearly all the existing park features, with the exception of the upper-level restrooms, the parking garage, and its associated facilities. The proposed project will renovate the existing park with a new children's play area, exercise equipment, plazas, shade structures, seating areas, wayfinding, signage, sidewalks, landscaping, terraces, ramps, and a new 8,300-square-foot clubhouse. The proposed project will also re-waterproof the roof of the Portsmouth Square Garage located underneath the park and portions of the adjacent streets and sidewalks, seismically upgrade portions of the parking garage, and demolish and remove the pedestrian bridge spanning Kearny Street that connects a 27-story privately-owned hotel building at 750 Kearny Street (currently managed as a Hilton Hotel and the Chinese Culture Center) with Portsmouth Square. The construction duration of the proposed project is anticipated to be approximately two years.

At the outset of the outreach and conceptual design phase, five project goals were identified with the community:

1. The project site shall be viewed in the context of the overall Chinatown Neighborhood: the renovated park and streetscape should seamlessly integrate with the community context and reflect the needs of the Chinatown neighborhood.
2. Provide an integrated and open park that maximizes usable space, removes barriers, and gracefully connects to the surrounding neighborhood.
3. Provide a safe pedestrian experience.
4. Create spaces that are comfortable, safe, and welcoming for all age groups and abilities.
5. Create flexible spaces that can accommodate daily recreation activities as well as events.

Community Outreach

The Recreation and Park Department has engaged in an extensive and robust community outreach process over multiple years including one-on-one meetings with over 20 community organizations, and intercept surveys that reached over 800 individuals. In 2017-2018 the Department held five community workshops that were attended by 300 people for each workshop (totaling over 2,000 attendees). This project has one of the highest community engagement rates of all Rec Park projects to date. This project and design are supported by the majority of the Chinatown community and the City's Asian American and Pacific Islander community leaders.

Every outreach connection point was conducted in both English and Cantonese, both in written documents and verbal communication. The community engagement was divided into two phases: 1) Listening, and 2) Participatory Design. The following describes the outreach conducted during these phases:

Phase 1: Listening (2016)

- **One-on-One Stakeholder Interviews:** Interviews with key community members, advocates, and stakeholders. The project team spoke to individuals representing over 20 community organizations.
- **Intercept Surveys:** on-the-ground conversations with park users while they were in the park.
- **Online Survey**

Through this initial listening phase, the project team reached over 500 individuals to exchange initial information about the park.

Phase 2: Participatory Design (2017-2018)

- **Community Workshop #1:** The project team shared a summary of the results from Phase 1 and provided an opportunity for community members to contribute their opinions in the same format. In addition, the team began the participatory design process by sharing site constraints, analysis, and history. A survey to understand community program and visual preferences was conducted to understand community priorities.
- **Community Workshop #2:** The project team presented potential design “frameworks” for input. These frameworks were diagrammatic massing studies representing options for organizing the site.
- **Community Workshop #3:** Three alternative designs were presented based on feedback from the listening phase and earlier workshops.
- **Community Workshop #4:** Preferred Option presented for feedback.
- **Community Workshop #5:** Final concept plan presented.

The community workshops witnessed the Recreation and Park Department’s highest community attendance to date and a corresponding high level of engagement and survey responses. This is a highly engaged and organized community that is passionate about their open spaces and invested in the future of Portsmouth Square.

Between 2022 and 2025, the Recreation and Park Department, the SF Arts Commission, and the Planning Department engaged extensively with the Chinatown community and residents through multiple public meetings to gather feedback on existing monuments, plaques, and artwork at Portsmouth Square. This coordinated and educational process, conducted in collaboration with the California State Office of Historic Preservation, informed the development of the Portsmouth Square Arts and Interpretive Master Plan, a community-driven framework that will guide future content development

Throughout the project’s development, the Recreation and Park Department has maintained a project webpage with regular updates (<https://sfrecpark.org/1166/Portsmouth-Square-Improvement-Project>) and distributed information through a large stakeholder email list compiled over several years from community meeting attendance, online survey participation, Supervisor referrals, and direct inquiries.

Proposed Design

The conceptual design that resulted from the community outreach is reflective of the cultural significance of the neighborhood and addresses programmatic opportunities unique to Chinatown. It responds to the existing conditions of the site – most prominently, the garage structure below the park and the natural topography of the site. These two constraints naturally split the park into two terraces, the upper and lower terrace. They also provide a clear organizational structure for the clubhouse design.

The organizing concept for the proposed park is inspired by a traditional Chinese treasure box, where the compartment is perfectly scaled for the content. Since Portsmouth Square is so heavily used, scaling and framing the outdoor rooms is key for program success. Activity and program preferences were solicited from the community in intercept surveys and at workshop 1. The community was invited to test-fit site program elements into park frameworks in workshop 2. The final design showcases a park proportioned and scaled to maximize the key outdoor programmatic spaces, while also utilizing the zones between the spaces.

Key elements of the design include:

- Provide a larger, flexible outdoor event space
- Provide a stage with power to support events
- Provide a new larger clubhouse
- Include new lighting to enable evening use and improve safety
- Provide generous shade structures
- Provide trees for shade
- Include a new, larger, consolidated playground
- Provide fitness equipment for seniors near the playground
- Remove the existing Kearny Street bridge
- Include perimeter fencing so park can be secured at night
- Enhance the connection to Walter U. Lum Place
- Enhance universal accessibility

Refer to Recreation and Park Commission Resolution Number 2201-006, Approval of Concept Design on January 20, 2022, for additional information regarding the Concept Design.

Arts Commission

The Portsmouth Square Project includes a 2% public art component in accordance with the Art Enrichment Ordinance. The project goals are to create two public art pieces that are welcoming, durable, culturally significant and reflect the diversity of the community. The selected artists are Jenifer K. Wofford for the indoor/outdoor tile and Cathy Lu for an entry sculpture.

Regulatory Requirements

Due to the funding sources, the following regulatory requirements apply to the project:

- Citywide Project Labor Agreement (PLA): This project is covered by the Citywide PLA.
- Prevailing wage: State prevailing wage rates apply. This is monitored by the Office of Labor Standards Enforcement.
- Contractors are required to work in good faith with the CityBuild unit within the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development (OEWD) to employ economically disadvantaged individuals in 50% of all new hiring opportunities.
- Registration with Department of Industrial Relations (DIR): All contractors, including subs, performing public work are required to register with the DIR.

The Portsmouth Square Improvement Project relies on the demolition and removal of the pedestrian bridge spanning Kearny Street that connects Portsmouth Square with The Hilton Hotel located at 750 Kearny Street. Over 70% of community participants support bridge removal.

On June 13, 2022, the SF Board of Supervisors passed Motion No. M22-054 (granting petition and revoking major encroachment permit for pedestrian bridge) and Motion No. M22-055 (directing the Clerk of the Board to prepare findings in support of the revocation determination). Thereafter, the Board adopted findings in support of the Board's decision granting the petition and revoking the Encroachment Permit in Motion No. M22-094, ordering the removal of the Bridge and related encroachments. These actions resulted in delays from the originally anticipated project schedule. Since that time, the City and the Hilton ownership team have cooperated on engineering and project approvals, and continue to negotiate the Hilton's share of bridge removal costs.

Bid Information

With the assistance of SF Public Works, the Recreation and Park Department re-advertised the bid for the project on October 20, 2025, with a published engineer’s estimate of \$42,000,000. Bids opened on January 7, 2026. The Department received a total of three bids. A tabulation of bids is attached for reference. Swinerton Builders LLC. is the apparent low bidder with a bid of \$47,995,000 for base bid construction and \$100,000 for Additive Alternate 1. Contractor responsiveness, which includes compliance with Contract Monitoring Division (CMD) requirements and meeting qualifications, has been confirmed.

For reference, on March 12, 2025, the Rec and Park Department advertised the project and received three bid proposals. All bids from this previous advertisement were rejected as they came in much higher than the established construction budget. The Department engaged in a robust Value Engineering process to identify savings which resulted in the current rebid package.

Funding

Project Sources

2020 Health & Recovery Bond	\$54,000,000
Transit Center Impact Fees & CFD Revenue	\$10,865,000
Sustainable Chinatown Grant	\$8,400
Downtown Park Fund	\$1,150,000
State of CA funding from Asm. Ting	\$6,000,000
State of CA funding from Sen. Wiener	\$1,000,000
Total Sources	\$73,000,000

Project Uses

Soft Costs	\$13,300,000
Hard Costs including Reserve, contingency and escalation	\$59,700,000
Total Uses	\$73,000,000

Project Schedule

Phase	Start	Finish
Planning	Spring 2016	Winter 2021
Design	Winter 2022	Fall 2025
Bid / Award	Fall 2025	Spring 2026
Construction	Summer 2026	Fall 2028

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Commission approve the award for the construction contract for the Portsmouth Square Improvement Project (Sourcing Event ID # 0000011131) to Swinerton Builders, in the amount of up to \$48,095,000 to cover (1) the base bid (\$47,995,000), and (2) bid alternate #1 (\$100,000).

Supported By

- CA Senator Scott Wiener
- SF District 3 Supervisor Danny Sauter
- San Francisco Planning Department
- San Francisco Arts Commission
- Community Meeting Attendees
- Chinatown Community Development Center (CCDC)
- Committee for Better Parks & Rec in Chinatown (CBPRC)
- Self-Help for the Elderly
- Community Youth Center (CYC)
- Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco (CCC).

Opposed By

None Known

Attachments

Attachment A – Tabulation of Bids

Attachment B – Concept Design Plan

Attachment A – Tabulation of Bids

**City and County of San Francisco
Department of Public Works
TABULATION OF BIDS
PLA**

SOURCING ID: 0000011131

CONTRACT TITLE: PW Portsmouth Square Imp Prj

FULL TITLE: Portsmouth Square Improvement Project (Rebid) [CITYWIDE PLA]

BIDS RECEIVED: January 7, 2026

BIDDERS (in the order received & opened):

	<u>Base Bid Price</u>	<u>Alternate 1</u>	<u>Alternate 2</u>	<u>Alternate 3</u>	<u>Alternate 4</u>	<u>Total Bid Price</u>
Swinerton Builders	\$47,995,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$600,000.00	\$1,080,000.00	\$500,000.00	\$50,275,000.00
Clark Construction	\$54,183,367.00	\$1.00	\$62,285.00	\$956,427.00	\$284,068.00	\$55,486,148.00
S.J Amoroso Construction Co. LLC	\$49,397,000.00	\$23,000.00	\$220,000.00	\$1,060,000.00	\$1,100,000.00	\$51,800,000.00
Average Bid:	\$50,525,122.33	\$41,000.33	\$294,095.00	\$1,032,142.33	\$628,022.67	\$52,520,382.67
Engineer's Estimate:	\$42,000,000.00	\$66,000.00	\$150,000.00	\$440,000.00	\$123,000.00	\$42,779,000.00
% of Engineer's Estimate:	120%	62%	196%	235%	511%	123%
% of Engineer's Estimate vs. Low Bid Received	114%	0.00152%	42%	217%	231%	118%

The following announcement was made prior to bid opening:

The Construction Budget for this Project is \$47,000,000.00, and the priority of alternates is as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4

cc: Noah Levy
Jason Chin
Ivan Oldenkamp

Carla Short
Scott Anderson
Stacy Bradley

Sarah Madland
All Bidders

For complete subcontractor listings, check: <https://bidopportunities.apps.sfdpw.org/CaseLoad/Details/2641>

January 7, 2026

= Indicates a correction after review

Attachment B – Concept Design Plan



Plan of Proposed Project