

Resolution in Support of the San Francisco Scale Model in the Upper Level of the Student Union

Whereas, the San Francisco Scale Model is a detailed wooden model of the city of San Francisco at a scale of one inch to one hundred feet, for a total size of roughly one thousand square feet, fully assembled;

Whereas, the Model, built by the Works Progress Administration (WPA)^[1] in the late 1930s, was envisioned by Timothy Pflueger (City College of San Francisco's Ocean Campus original architect and one of the people responsible for bringing Diego Rivera to the Bay Area) as a planning and educational tool, as well as a tourist attraction;

Whereas, the model debuted to the public at the Golden Gate International Exposition (GGIE) in 1939, a few buildings over from where Rivera would paint the Pan American Unity mural;

Whereas, in 1940, the model moved to what was supposed to be its permanent home at City Hall, but in 1942, the World War II administration repurposed the display room and placed the model in storage;

Whereas, in the late 1960s, UC Berkeley began using a portion of the model as a tool for urban studies, architecture, and city planning, though it remained inaccessible to the public;

Whereas, in early 2018, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) commissioned artists Bik Van der Pol (Liesbeth Bik and Jos Van der Pol) to create a project to promote public dialogue on the cultural impact of urban change and during their research they discovered the model and created [“TAKE PART – IS THERE ROOM FOR SAN FRANCISCO IN SAN FRANCISCO?”](#);

Whereas, in 2019, an exhibition and an extensive community programming series at the San Francisco Public Library created a shared public vision of the city by anchoring discussions about its past, present, and future, as well as its challenges and opportunities, to a tangible object—the thousand-square-foot scale model;

Whereas, librarians and staff of the San Francisco Public Library became stewards of the object, hosting sections of the model at every branch in the system, where over a million people experienced the object and thousands of San Franciscans came together to talk about the place they love and in the process witnessed the model resurface as a beloved object;

Whereas, with an ongoing commitment to finding a suitable permanent home for the model, the artistic team Bik Van der Pol poses these questions about the San Francisco Scale Model to spark thinking about the future of another GGIE beloved object;

- What can the scale model tell us about the city’s history, pre- and post-1939?*
- Can we imagine the city of the future from this historic object? How can the model promote the civic imagination and the reshaping of public institutions as they recover from the pandemic?*
- What might make City College of San Francisco a perfect place for this WPA model?*

Whereas, in early 2020, an opportunity arose to display the SF Scale Model in its entirety for the first time since 1942, and as part of their ongoing partnership, CCSF and SFMOMA signed an agreement to install the model in City College's Ocean Campus Smith Hall Cafeteria during June 2020, which the COVID-19 crisis canceled;

Whereas, since Spring 2020, the CCSF class “Introduction to Museum Studies” (IDST 3) has been using the SF Scale Model in its final project, which centers on community engagement;

Whereas, [Groundswell](#) (City College’s architectural literacy program housed in the Interdisciplinary Studies Department), after exploring other potential sites, proposes a permanent installation of the model in the Upper Level of the Student Union on the Ocean Campus of City College, after current offices on the site move to the new Student Success Center;

Whereas, the SF Scale Model has the potential for bringing added value to CCSF’s New Deal art and architecture assets, including the “Pan American Unity Mural,” the mosaics in the Science Hall porticoes, and two fresco murals in the Science Hall lobby;

Whereas, the pandemic has damaged peoples’ economic and inner lives while revealing historical inequities rooted in race and class and the WPA vision is an example of art and beauty forged out of desperate circumstances at another time in U.S. history;

Whereas, the model could become a flagship project with ongoing community engagement projects designed by CCSF students in collaborations across departments;

Whereas, a proposed Museum Studies and Social Justice Certificate, which includes engagement with other disciplines--history, science, art, architecture, and social justice studies--will provide pathways to four-year university transfers as well as entry-level museum jobs, with the model offering an exhibition and community engagement platform for certificate internships;

Whereas, repurposing an older and centrally located building on the Ocean Campus allows the college to participate in a powerful architecture movement dedicated to finding new purpose and meaning to old spaces;

Whereas, situated next to Rosenberg Library, the SF Scale Model would create a research site for City College students, while revitalizing the southeastern section of Cloud Circle and building on the new life of the Student Success Center at the Circle’s western end;

Therefore, **be it resolved** that the _____ supports further exploration of permanently installing the San Francisco Scale Model in the Upper Level of the Student Union on the Ocean Campus of City College of San Francisco.

[1] WPA=Works Progress Administration (later renamed Work Projects Administration) was an American New Deal agency that put people back to work building public buildings and roads. Some of the major WPA projects employed artists and writers.