

## CONSENT CALENDAR

May 20, 2025

**Igor Tregub**, Councilmember District 4**Adena Ishii**, Mayor**Rashi Kesarwani**, Councilmember District 1**Cecilia Lunaparra**, Councilmember District 7

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmembers Igor Tregub (Author), Mayor Adena Ishii (Co-Sponsor), Rashi Kesarwani (Co-Sponsor), and Cecilia Lunaparra (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Relinquishment of Council Office Budget Funds from General Funds and Grant of Such Funds to the annual Asian Cultural Festival

**RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt a Resolution authorizing the expenditure of up to \$500 per Mayor/Councilmember from their D13 Discretionary Accounts, including \$500 from the Mayor and Councilmember Tregub, and contributions of \$250 each from Councilmembers Kesarwani, and Lunaparra. Other Councilmembers are invited to contribute to support annual Asian Cultural Festival in an amount of up to \$500. Funds will be transferred to the City's general fund and provided to the designated fiscal sponsor of the festival to ensure its successful production and community engagement.

The relinquishment of funds from the respective discretionary Council Office Budgets of such members of the Berkeley City Council who wish to contribute will support this impactful event, promoting cultural exchange, unity, and celebration of Berkeley's rich Asian American communities

**BACKGROUND**

The Asian Cultural Festival is one of the Bay Area's most cherished celebrations of Asian heritage, art, and community. Taking place in the heart of Berkeley, the festival brings together families, performers, artists, and small businesses to honor the cultural traditions of over a dozen Asian countries through music, dance, crafts, and cuisine.

Going on its fifth year, the festival serves as a joyful, unifying space that promotes cross-cultural understanding and celebrates the richness of the Asian American

experience in all its diversity. It brings together people of all backgrounds to engage with centuries-old traditions and contemporary expressions of Asian culture. The festival also provides a vital platform for community-based organizations, local artists, and small businesses, many of whom represent historically underrepresented or marginalized voices, to share their stories, showcase their talents, and build lasting connections across communities. Through music, art, food, and storytelling, the event fosters pride, representation, and a deepened sense of belonging.

As the festival continues to grow in size and significance, so too does the need for increased financial support to ensure accessibility, safety, and high-quality programming for all attendees. City Council funding will help offset the costs of staging, cultural performances, programming, and outreach, thus ensuring this beloved event remains free and open to all.

By investing in the Asian Cultural Festival, the City of Berkeley demonstrates its continued commitment to cultural equity, inclusion, and the celebration of diversity as a core civic value.

### **CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS**

The continued growth and popularity of the Asian Cultural Festival have brought rising operational costs that now pose a significant challenge for organizers. These include expenses for sound and stage equipment, communication tools, and expanded outreach to ensure the event remains inclusive and welcoming for all. To keep the festival free and open to the public while ensuring its ongoing success, additional funding is needed to support:

- Rental of sound, stage, and communication equipment;
- Support for artists, performers, and cultural educators; and
- Accessibility infrastructure to ensure safety and access for all attendees

As the festival is volunteer-led and does not receive institutional funding, support from the City Council is critical to maintaining the scale, inclusivity, and cultural impact of this beloved event.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

No General Fund impact. Up to \$500 is available from contributing Mayor's and Councilmembers' Council Office Budget discretionary accounts.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

There are no identifiable environmental effects or opportunities associated with the subject of this report.

**CONTACT PERSON**

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**ATTACHMENTS**

Resolution

**RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.**

**AUTHORIZING THE EXPENDITURE OF SURPLUS FUNDS FROM THE OFFICE EXPENSE ACCOUNTS OF COUNCILMEMBERS FOR A GRANT TO SUPPORT ANNUAL ASIAN CULTURAL FESTIVAL**

**WHEREAS**, Mayor Ishii and Councilmembers Tregub, Kesarwani, and Lunaparra have surplus funds in their D13 discretionary office expenditure accounts and will contribute up to \$500 each, and invite other Councilmembers to join in contributing; and

**WHEREAS**, the Asian Cultural Festival is one of the Bay Area's most cherished celebrations of Asian heritage, art, and community, bringing together families, performers, artists, and small businesses to honor the cultural traditions of over a dozen Asian countries; and

**WHEREAS**, the festival serves as a unifying space for cross-cultural understanding and celebration, offering a platform for community-based organizations, local artists, and small businesses, many representing historically underrepresented or marginalized voices, to share their stories and talents; and

**WHEREAS**, the festival, in its fourth year, has experienced continued growth, with rising operational costs that include expenses for sound and stage equipment, communication tools, artist support, and outreach for inclusivity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Asian Cultural Festival is volunteer-run and does not receive recurring institutional funding, with the event's success reliant on community donations and support; and

**WHEREAS**, additional funding will ensure longevity, accessibility, safety, high-quality programming, and outreach to maintain the festival's inclusivity and free, open access to the public; and

**WHEREAS**, the provision of such funding aligns with the City of Berkeley's commitment to cultural equity, inclusion, and the celebration of diversity as core civic values;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Council of the City of Berkeley that funds relinquished by Councilmembers from their discretionary office budgets, up to \$500 per office, including \$500 from the Mayor and Councilmember Tregub, and contributions of \$250 each from Councilmembers Kesarwani, and Lunaparra, shall be authorized for expenditure from their D13 Discretionary Accounts to the designated fiscal sponsor of the 2025 Asian Cultural Festival to support its successful production and community engagement.