Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for 
Diego Rivera’s fresco, titled “The Allegory of California,” painted in 1931 and located at 
155 Sansome Street.

WHEREAS, Diego Rivera remains one of the most important and famous Mexican 
artists of all time, whose fresco work helped to establish the thriving Mexican Mural Art 
Movement in the 1920s, and who painted his first murals in the United States in San 
Francisco; and

WHEREAS, San Francisco is home to three of Rivera’s masterpieces, including the 
first fresco Diego Rivera completed in the United States entitled “The Allegory of California,” 
which was painted in 1931 and is located within the grand stairwell inside of the former Pacific 
Stock Exchange building at 155 Sansome Street in downtown San Francisco, now home of 
The City Club; and

WHEREAS, The fresco depicts classic themes and motifs found in Rivera 
compositions, namely harmony between nature and machine, a glorification of the past while 
looking toward the future, and a panorama of historical figures; and

WHEREAS, According to Rivera’s autobiography, the large, looming female figure 
represents Calafia, the Spirit of California, with her right hand mining the earth for hidden 
treasures of the State of California, and her left hand holding the treasures that grow on its 
surface; and

WHEREAS, The background of the fresco mural shows industries of the Bay Area: the 
oil refineries of Richmond, the shipping yards facing the Pacific Ocean, and dredging 
equipment then used in search of gold; and
WHEREAS, The forefront of the fresco depicts specific historical figures important to
the development of California as a state: James Marshall, who discovered gold at Sutter’s
Creek in 1948, famous horticulturist Luther Burbank, sculptor Peter Stackpole, and fellow
muralist Victor Arnautoff; and

WHEREAS, The Allegory of California fresco attracted immediate criticism and harsh
reactions, principally to Rivera’s nationality and Marxist political leanings, and quickly became
one Rivera’s most significant and well-known works; and

WHEREAS, The Allegory of California fresco is of particular significance to the Latinx
and Chicanx communities, and, along with Rivera’s other murals in San Francisco, is part of
the direct lineage of the Mission Mural movement which remains a significant and vibrant part
of San Francisco’s cultural heritage, and it is the responsibility of civic and academic
institutions to include these communities in studies and decisions pertaining to the fresco;
now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Board hereby initiates a separate landmark designation of Diego
Rivera’s masterpiece fresco “The Allegory of California,” created in 1931 at its sole and
current location at 155 Sansome Street; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Planning Department
prepare a Landmark Designation Report to submit to the Historic Preservation Commission
for its consideration of the special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value of
the fresco; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board requests that the Historic Preservation
Commission consider whether the Mural warrants landmark designation and submit its
recommendation to the Board according to Article 10 of the Planning Code.
Resolution initiating a landmark designation under Article 10 of the Planning Code for Diego Rivera's fresco, titled "The Allegory of California," painted in 1931 and located at 155 Sansome Street.

April 19, 2021 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED

April 27, 2021 Board of Supervisors - ADOPTED
   Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

File No. 210352

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED on 4/27/2021 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

Angela Calvillo
Clerk of the Board

London N. Breed
Mayor

Date Approved 5·7·21