

Motion

PUBLIC WORKS

Kame Restaurant

The first Japanese immigrated to Los Angeles as early as 1869;

In 1870 the census recorded two Japanese boys, aged 18 and 13, who were employed in the household of Judge Edward J. C. Kewen, the First Attorney General of California.

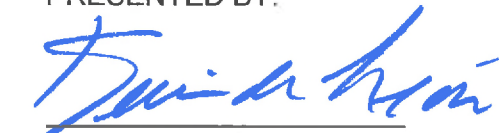
By 1888 there were about 70 people of Japanese descent in Los Angeles. With its favorable climate, orchards, and growing business opportunities, Los Angeles was becoming a significant and desirable destination; and by 1884 Los Angeles was transforming from a small town of 11,000 to 50,000 residents.

The first Japanese-owned business was Kame Restaurant, owned by Hamanosuke Shigeta, also known as Charles Hama, a cook who jumped ship and came to Los Angeles in 1884 and opened Kame Restaurant at 340 East 1st Street. Therefore, 1884 is regarded by some historians to be the "Birth of Little Tokyo."

Today Bunkado is located at the site of the original Kame's Restaurant. Bunkado, a treasured gift shop whose name means "House of Culture," is owned by Irene Tsukada Simonian, a third generation owner committed to carrying on the entrepreneurial spirit of Hamanosuke Shigeta. Legacy family businesses are vital to the preservation of Little Tokyo, one of the few remaining Japan Towns in the United States.

I THEREFORE MOVE that in recognition of the historical significance and entrepreneurial spirit of Issei (first generation) pioneer Hamanosuke Shigeta who opened the first Japanese business in Little Tokyo; that the City Council, adopt this motion and authorizes the Department of Transportation to fabricate an Historical Monument sign stating: "Kame Restaurant est. 1884 340 E. 1st Street First Japanese-owned business in Little Tokyo," and instruct the Department of Transportation to install the double-sided sign on the streetlight pole located in front of the current property at 340 East First Street, Little Tokyo.

PRESENTED BY:



KEVIN DE LEÓN
Councilmember, 14th District

SECONDED BY:



M. T. O'CONNELL

ORIGINAL

NOV 24 2021

