

[Establishment of the LGBTQ Leather Cultural District]

Resolution establishing the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) Leather Cultural District (“District”) with the intent of commemorating historical sites, preserving existing spaces, and planning for thriving and vibrant communities that are LGBTQ and Leather affirming.

WHEREAS, *the boundaries of the District are defined as the south side of Howard between 7th Street and Highway 101, to the west side of 7th between Howard Street and Harrison St, to Interstate 80 between 7th Street and Division Street, to Highway 101 between Interstate 80 and Howard Street; as well as the south side of Harrison Street between 7th Street and Morris Merlin Street.*

WHEREAS, the National Park Service LGBTQ Initiative recognized multiple sites in the LGBTQ Leather District as having significant historical value, including the End Up at 401 6th Street; Oasis at 298 11th Street; the Sutro Baths at 1015 Folsom Street which provided a social community space to gay and bisexual men, and women and transgender people; the Club Baths 201 8th Street; and the Stud Bar at 399 9th Street, one of the oldest gay bars in San Francisco and the oldest LGBTQ performance venue in the United States, and the first worker owned, cooperative nightclub in the country; and

WHEREAS, In 2013, the San Francisco Planning Department issued The Western SoMa LGBTQ Social Heritage Proposal for Recognizing, Protecting, and Memorializing South of Market LGBTQ Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources (“Proposal”) which describes the LGBTQ Leather District as being a valuable and important part of local, regional, and world history; and

WHEREAS, In 2015, the San Francisco Planning Department issued the LGBTQ Historic Context Statement (“Statement”) describing and uncovering the rich and multi-layered LGBTQ history of the SoMa; and

WHEREAS, The Statement, and Proposal described the first LGBTQ Leather affirming community event known as Megahood started in 1984 by a group of local activists led by lesbian Kathleen Connell and gay Filipino American Michael Valerio to bring attention to LGBTQ displacement caused by the San Francisco Redevelopment Agency, and to the AIDS crisis which had a significant impact on SoMa, and which in its current incarnation is the Folsom Street Fair, a yearly gathering that draws over 400,000 people to San Francisco to celebrate Leather and kink culture, and is the third largest outdoor event in California; and the Up Your Alley Fair, which began on Ringold Alley but now takes place on Dore Alley that celebrates the LGBTQ leather community in SOMA; and

WHEREAS, The Statement and Proposal outline the rich artistic and publishing history of the Leather District, including: the currently operating photography studio of Mark I Chester (current); and former sites such as Fey-Way Studios at 1287 Harrison, which was the first gallery to showcase gay male art in San Francisco; the home of photographer and writer Jim Stewart at 766 Clementina which served as a salon, gallery space, and headquarters for Keyhole Studios an LGBTQ photography publication; The Bay Area Reporter, a LGBT weekly newspaper which featured a column by Leatherman Marcus Hernandez, and played a significant role in reporting on the AIDS crisis; LGBT newspaper The Bay Times at 288 7th Street; Brush Creek Media at 367 9th Street which became national magazine supporting bear culture; and unique local industries built around the manufacturing and sale of leather goods, clothing and accessories including the currently operating Mr. S. Leather the internationally known leather goods store founded by Alan Selby at 227 7th Street and 308-310 7th Street; Leather Etc. at

1201 Folsom Street; and the former shops A Taste of Leather at 1501 Folsom Street; Worn Out West at 1158 Howard Street, Stormy Leather at 1158 Howard Street; Taylor of San Francisco at 768 Clementina Street; and

WHEREAS, The Statement, and Proposal outline that LGBTQ community has frequently relied on night-life spaces as the centers of community-building and the SoMa area have been a hub of gay nightlife from the 1960's to the present, and the District seeks to reestablish SoMa as a major destination for LGBTQ nightlife, and will seek to preserve, revitalize, memorialize or reopen the District's historic venues, theaters, bars, cafes, and clubs including: Febe's at 1501 Folsom Street, which featured the famous statue called "Leather David" created by gay artist Mike Caffee; The Ambush at 1351 Harrison Street, which displayed the work of local queer artists; Arena at 399 9th Street; the Bay Brick Inn, a lesbian bar at 1190 Folsom Street; The Black and Blue at 198 8th Street; Boot Camp at 1010 Bryant Street; Casey's Frontier at 1145 Folsom Street; The Cave at 280 7th Street; Rawhide II at 280 7th Street; Chaps at 375 11th Street; Chaps II at 1225 Folsom Street; Cissy's Saloon at 1590 Folsom Street; Drummer Club at 298 11th Street; the Red Star Saloon at 1145 Folsom Street; Leatherneck at 280 11th Street; the Lumber Yard at 979 Folsom Street; the Brig at 1347 Folsom Street; the Ramrod at 1225 Folsom Street; the Stables at 1123 Folsom Street; the Warehouse at 333 11th Street; The Bolt at 1347 Folsom Street; The Covered Wagon at 280 11th Street; Dirty Sally's at 280 11th Street; the Gold Coast at 280 11th Street; The End Up at 401 Sixth Street; No Name at 1347 Folsom Street; the Drummaster/Drummer Key Club 280 at 11th Street; the Compound at 280 11th Street; Mack at 317 10th Street; My Place at 1225 Folsom Street; Hamburger Mary's at 1582 Folsom Street; the Canary Island Diner at 1270 Harrison Street; and seeks to support, preserve or revitalize current businesses such as Wicked Grounds at 289 8th Street; Blowbuddies at 933 Harrison; Lone Star Saloon at 1354 Harrison Street; the SF Eagle

at 398 12th Street; the Hole in the Wall Saloon at 1369 Folsom Street; the Powerhouse at 1347 Folsom Street; Oasis at 280 11th Street; [and the Stud at 399 9th Street](#); and

WHEREAS, Leather and kink organizations have been based in or had their spiritual home in SoMa since the 1960's, creating community and raising money for LGBT charities, including groups such as: The National Leather Association at 1250 Folsom Street; Templar Hall at 1127 Folsom Street; Service of Mankind Church at 367 12th Street; the San Francisco Leather Alliance; Dykes on Bikes; *the Center for Sex and Culture*; The Exiles; The 15; The Society of Janus; the Leathermen's Discussion Group; SF girls of Leather; BLUF SF (the Breaches and Leather Uniform Fanclub); Bay Area Kinky Business Alliance; Ms. SF Leather & Mr. SF Leather; the Golden Gate Guards; Legion of Sin; Bears of SF; [Men of ONYX; The Little Scouts; The Defenders](#); as well the important community spaces like the SF Catalyst at 1060 Folsom; and

WHEREAS, Many LGBT persons, especially gay men, sought refuge in bathhouses that thrived in [SoMa during the 1970's and 80's, including](#) The Folsom Street Barracks at 1147 Folsom, which featured murals by leatherman Chuck Arnett; The Plunge at 280 11th Street; The Slot at 979 Folsom; The Hotel at 973/975 Folsom Street; Handball Express at 973 Folsom, , the Club Baths/Eighth and Howard at 201 8th Street; The Folsom Street Club at 1389 Folsom Street; 890 Folsom at 890 Folsom Street; the Hothouse at 374 5th Street; until the AIDS crisis and the San Francisco Health Department's forcible shut-down of all [remaining bathhouses in San Francisco](#) SoMa, including the Sutro Bath House at 1015 Folsom Street; and

WHEREAS, There is a growing population of LGBTQ Seniors in San Francisco, ~~and in SoMa specifically~~, who face significant and unique problems with housing and care as they age, being less likely to have adult children, more likely to be alienated from their

families, and more likely to have lost members of their support systems due to the AIDS epidemic, and many LGBTQ seniors continue to face discrimination in accessing care, housing, and assisted living facilities; and

WHEREAS, SoMa played a significant role during the AIDS crisis and, according to the San Francisco Department of Public Health, is historically and currently has one of the highest concentration of people living with HIV in San Francisco; and SoMa leather bars were the site of many of the first fundraising and organizing efforts to address the AIDS crisis and served as an important space for the education of LGBTQ men on sexual health and AIDS, and as SoMa LGBTQ businesses, organizations, and venues were disproportionately affected by the AIDS crisis, including the culturally significant bathhouses that were forced to close by the Department of Public Health; and

WHEREAS, Today there is a vibrant LGBTQ community in SoMa which has served as a refuge in particular for LGBTQ seniors and people living with HIV; and while the District will memorialize the LGBTQ leather and nightlife history of the SoMa area, it also seeks to concentrate the District within the aforementioned boundaries in order to create a safe, and supportive neighborhood for LGBTQ Seniors and people living with HIV and to provide them with affordable housing and culturally competent services and care; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco (hereinafter "the Board") establishes the District to preserve and further develop the SoMa area's past, present, and future manifestation of LGBTQ leather communities and resources, recognize the historical and present contributions of the community and neighborhood, to specifically preserve and further develop LGBTQ nightlife and commercial corridors within the boundaries of the district, and to specifically preserve

and develop housing, services, and health care for LGBTQ Seniors and people living with HIV, and to maintain and further develop public installations commemorating the history of the District such as the Ringold Alley ~~Historic Installation~~ SF Leather History Walk, Eagle Plaza, and to support the creation and maintenance of multi-use community center spaces ~~and a Leather History Museum~~; and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, The Board of Supervisors urges the Mayor's Office of Community Development ("MOCD") and the Historic Preservation Commission ("HPC") along with the Office of Economic Workforce Development ("OEWD"), and the District working group consisting of members of the community representing the following sectors: residents, historical preservationists, arts and cultural workers, small business owners and employees, club promoters and nightlife experts, housing and tenant advocates, LGBTQ advocates, land use, social and health services, and city department and other local agency staff to develop a Leather District Cultural Heritage and Economic Sustainability Strategy ("LCHESS") to set policies that promote community development and stabilization, and increase the presence and visibility of the District; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, Other city departments and other bodies may be requested to be part of the strategic planning of the District, including but not limited to: Department of Public Health; Department of Homelessness; Aging and Adult Services Commission; Small Business Commission; San Francisco Arts Commission; Department of Human Services; Department of Aging and Adult Services; Department of Children, Youth and their Families; Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure; Department of Building Inspection, Department of Public Works; Entertainment Commission, and Park and Recreation Department; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That such strategic plan for the LGBTQ Leather District be developed by the working group in conjunction from the above listed government bodies be submitted to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors within 12 months of adoption of this resolution; and, be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board commends the effort of the LGBTQ Leather community in working with the Office of Supervisor Kim towards the creation of the LGBTQ Leather District that will contribute to the well-being of the LGBTQ community in the City and County of San Francisco.