

1 [Commemorative Street Plaques - Historical Markers - Top of Broadway Community Benefit
2 District]

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3 **Resolution authorizing the placement of ten street plaques commemorating historical**
4 **landmarks in the Top of Broadway Community Benefit District, at the sidewalks located**
5 **along Broadway Street Corridor and Columbus Ave, in accordance with Public Works**
6 **Code, Sections 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance, accepting**
7 **the named plaques as a gift to the City and County of San Francisco.**

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9 WHEREAS, Italian American Bank located at 270 Columbus Ave, has been identified
10 as an established landmark financial institution. In 1899, Andrea Sbarboro opened the
11 second bank for the Italian community with a cooperative structure similar to modern day
12 credit unions. Sbarbora was a member of the group of community leaders rebuilding San
13 Francisco after the 1906 earthquake and fire. The North Beach location was opened on
14 January 2, 1923 and the original vaults remain in the building's basement. The Italian
15 American Bank was eventually absorbed by the Bank of America; and

16 WHEREAS, 12 Adler located at 12 Saroyan Place (formerly Adler Street), is now
17 known as the legendary North Beach Dive Bar. San Francisco's gay bars found their roots in
18 the Barbary Coast. In the 1950's, 12 Adler and the adjoining 529 Broadway were two lesbian
19 bars. Tommy Vasu, the first known lesbian to legally own a bar in San Francisco, operated
20 both establishments. It closed in 1954 as a result of a citywide crackdown on gay bars. In
21 1968, the eclectic Spec's 12 Adler Museum Café opened, and became a favorite watering
22 hole for strippers, longshoreman and artists; and

23 WHEREAS, Devil's Acre & Battle Row located at the area bounded by Kearny Street,
24 Columbus Avenue, and Broadway Street was the home of the worst criminals in town.
25 Saloons, gambling dens, brothels, and opium dens, the Devil's Acre was the most notorious

1 section on the Barbary Coast. The word “hoodlum” originated here, referring to ruffians of the
2 area. Battle Row was home of the infamous underground saloon, The Slaughterhouse, later
3 renamed The Morgue after the owner smashed a bottle over the head of a drunkard. In 1851
4 concerned citizens formed the first Vigilance Committee to clean up the area; and

5 WHEREAS, Terrific Street and the International Settlement located at Pacific Avenue
6 between Kearny and Montgomery Streets was known as the birthplace of San Francisco jazz.
7 In the 1890s, musicians nicknamed Pacific Ave from Montgomery to Stockton “Terrific Street”
8 because of the quality of music played in the bars and dance halls. Sarah Bernhardt and Al
9 Jolson performed at the Hippodrome, and Terrific Street was home to San Francisco’s first
10 jazz clubs. In the 1930s it became an entertainment zone known as the International
11 Settlement, and was popular until the late 1950s; and

12 WHEREAS, The Lusty Lady located at 1030 Kearny Street, was known as the first
13 successfully unionized sex workers in America. The Lusty Lady opened in 1976 as a theater
14 showing 16mm adult films in private booths. Live dancers were introduced in 1983. In 1997,
15 the employees formed the Exotic Dancers Union, the only sex worker organization of its kind.
16 In 2003, the employees of The Lusty Lady purchased the business and converted it to a
17 worker-owned cooperative. The Lusty Lady closed in September, 2013; and

18 WHEREAS, Mona’s Club 440 located at 440 Broadway also was known as “Where
19 Girls Will Be Boys”. Mona’s moved to 440 Broadway in 1939, and is credited with being the
20 first openly lesbian bar in the United States. The club featured female entertainers dressed as
21 men, and was popular during World War II. Mona’s became Ann’s 440 Club in 1948, and
22 comedian Lenny Bruce and singer Johnny Mathis both got their starts here; and

23 WHEREAS, The Jazz Workshop located at 473 Broadway Street, was the Center of
24 North Beach Jazz Scene. Popular in the 1950s and 60s, The Jazz workshop featured jazz
25 artists like Charlie Mingus, Stan Getz, John Coltrane, Dizzy Gillespie, and Miles Davis.

1 Between 1961 and 1964 several “Live at the Jazz Workshop” albums were recorded here.
2 Comedian Lenny Bruce also performed at the Jazz Workshop, and in 1961 was arrested here
3 on obscenity charges. The Jazz Workshop closed in the late 60s; and

4 WHEREAS, Peter Macchiarini Steps located the 1100 block of Kearny Street honoring
5 a San Francisco legend. Bordering the infamous neighborhood of Sydney Town (bound by
6 Kearny, Sansome, Green and Broadway Streets), populated by former convicts from the
7 penal colonies of Australia. In 2001, these steps were renamed in honor of Italian-American,
8 Modernist Jeweler, and Sculptor, Peter Macchiarini (1909-2001). Macchiarini began making
9 jewelry in 1936, and for more than 50 years maintained an art studio and jewelry shop on
10 Upper Grant Avenue in North Beach; and

11 WHEREAS, Finocchio’s located at 506 Broadway Street was “America’s Most Unusual
12 Nightclub”. Opened in 1936, this cabaret featured female impersonators. “Welcome to the
13 world-famous Finocchio’s, where the most beautiful women onstage are men”, was the club’s
14 well-known introduction. “Impersonators” termed used by the Nightclub, had both gay and
15 straight, performed in elaborate drag shows. Welcomed were interracial audiences during a
16 time of segregation, and sexual minorities before gay liberation. Finocchio’s closed in 1999
17 after 63 years; and

18 WHEREAS, The Old Broadway Jail located at 534 Broadway Street and Romolo Place
19 (formerly Pinkney) is San Francisco’s First County Jail in 1851. The jail was damp and dark,
20 with 60 cells that held approximately 200 prisoners. Executions took place in the jail’s
21 enclosed yard. By the start of the 20th century, the Broadway Jail had become severely
22 dilapidated and escapes were common. The building was seriously damaged in the 1906
23 earthquake and prisoners were transported to Alcatraz. The Old Broadway Jail was
24 destroyed by dynamite shortly thereafter; and

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1 WHEREAS, The Board of Supervisors declares its intent to place the ~~thirteen~~ ten
2 historical marker commemorative street plaques on the sidewalks alongside Broadway Street
3 Corridor and Columbus Avenue in honor of the colorful history of Broadway Street since the
4 1800s and in remembrance of the iconic establishments that were once the celebrated figures
5 of San Francisco entertainment industry way ahead of its time; now, therefore, be it

6 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors accepts ten historical marker
7 commemorative plaques in honor of the historical landmarks located along Broadway Street
8 Corridor and Columbus Avenue as a gift to the City and County of San Francisco from the
9 Top of Broadway Community Benefit District; and, be it

10 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with Public
11 Works Code, Section 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance, authorizes
12 the placement of the ten historical marker commemorative street plaques on the sidewalk at
13 the named locations; and, be it

14 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby urges the Arts
15 Commission to approve the design and the placement of the ten historical marker
16 commemorative plaques; and, be it

17 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Department of
18 Public Works to take all actions necessary to implement the intent of this Resolution, including
19 approval of the installation of the aforementioned plaques; and, be it

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Department of
21 Public Works to add the aforementioned plaques at the aforementioned locations on the City's
22 official list of commemorative sites effective immediately from the date of passage of this
23 Resolution.

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