

1 [Expressing Intent to Establish the Sunset Irish Cultural District]

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3 **Resolution expressing the intent of the City and County of San Francisco to establish**
4 **the Sunset Irish Cultural District to recognize and preserve the history, legacy, and**
5 **living cultural traditions of the Irish and Irish American community in San Francisco's**
6 **Sunset District.**

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8 WHEREAS, Irish immigrants arrived in San Francisco in significant numbers during the
9 Gold Rush era of the 1840s and 1850s, driven from their homeland by the catastrophic Great
10 Famine - a disaster that killed over one million people and forced the emigration of millions
11 more; and

12 WHEREAS, By 1870, Irish immigrants constituted approximately 13% of San
13 Francisco's total population and more than 21% of its labor force, making them one of the
14 City's largest and most significant immigrant communities; and

15 WHEREAS, Irish immigrants arriving in San Francisco in the mid-19th century faced
16 documented nativist discrimination, including prejudice in housing and employment,
17 stereotyping in the press and popular culture, and organized anti-Catholic hostility that
18 explicitly sought to exclude Irish Catholics from civic participation; and

19 WHEREAS, Despite these hardships, Irish immigrants in San Francisco built
20 community institutions, labor organizations, and civic infrastructure that shaped the character
21 of the City, making enduring contributions to the founding of the City's labor movement, public
22 safety institutions, and political infrastructure; and

23 WHEREAS, The Sunset District has been home to a significant Irish and Irish
24 American community since the 1920s and 1930s, when Irish Catholic working-class families

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1 settled throughout the Outer and Central Sunset, establishing the neighborhood's residential
2 and civic character; and

3 WHEREAS, The United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco (UICC), located at 2700
4 45th Avenue in the Outer Sunset, was established in 1975 as a permanent home for the Irish
5 and Irish American community of San Francisco, built entirely by volunteer labor and
6 community contributions; and

7 WHEREAS, The UICC houses the Patrick J. Dowling Library, the first all-Irish special
8 collection library and archive in the United States, holding over 6,000 titles including books,
9 memorabilia, artifacts in both Irish and English languages, and organizational records related
10 to Ireland, the Irish American experience, and Irish history in the Bay Area; and

11 WHEREAS, The United Irish Cultural Center has served as the primary gathering
12 space for the Irish and Irish American community of San Francisco for over fifty years, hosting
13 events ranging from Gaelic sports and competitive feiseanna to céilís, concerts, lectures, and
14 civic forums; and

15 WHEREAS, The United Irish Cultural Center currently supports a growing range of
16 youth-focused cultural programming, including Irish traditional music education, youth piping
17 and drumming instruction, Irish step dance schools, and seasonal Irish cultural summer
18 camps, serving hundreds of young people from diverse backgrounds across San Francisco
19 each year and ensuring that the traditions of Irish music, dance, and cultural heritage continue
20 to thrive among new generations in the City; and

21 WHEREAS, The Sunset District is home to Irish-identified commercial establishments
22 along the Taraval, Irving and Noriega Street corridors, and the UICC hosts ongoing Irish
23 cultural programming including traditional Irish music sessions through Comhaltas Ceoltóirí
24 Éireann and competitive Irish dance instruction through various schools including the Kennelly
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1 School of Irish Dance, Murphy Irish Dance, and the Whelan Academy of Irish Dance,
2 providing the District with an active and concentrated center of Irish cultural life; and

3 WHEREAS, As the Sunset District has evolved demographically and economically over
4 successive generations, the preservation of Irish and Irish American cultural heritage in San
5 Francisco requires active institutional support and public recognition to ensure that living
6 traditions, community memory, and cultural programming endure for future generations; and

7 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Cultural Districts program, established under
8 Administrative Code Chapter 107, reflects the City's commitment to preserving the cultural
9 heritage of communities that have contributed to the City's diversity and identity; now,
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco hereby expresses its intent to
12 establish the Sunset Irish Cultural District in the Sunset District, with boundaries to be
13 determined through ongoing consultation with the community and relevant City departments;
14 and, be it

15 FURTHER RESOLVED, That in establishing the Sunset Irish Cultural District, the City
16 and County of San Francisco intends that the District serve to acknowledge and preserve the
17 history and legacy of the Irish and Irish American community in San Francisco; to support the
18 cultural assets, institutions, and gathering spaces that sustain Irish and Irish American cultural
19 life in the Sunset District; to ensure that living traditions, including traditional music, dance, the
20 Irish language, and civic heritage, endure for current and future generations; and to
21 strengthen the cultural and economic vitality of the District for the benefit of the Irish and Irish
22 American community and the broader Sunset neighborhood; and, be it

23 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco recognizes the
24 United Irish Cultural Center of San Francisco as a vital cultural institution of the Irish and Irish
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1 American community in the Sunset District and a key partner in the effort to establish the
2 Sunset Irish Cultural District; and, be it

3 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the City and County of San Francisco intends that the
4 Sunset Irish Cultural District will operate in a spirit of kinship and partnership with the Sunset
5 Chinese Cultural District and all Cultural Districts, consistent with the City's commitment to
6 celebrating and preserving the diverse cultural communities that define San Francisco's
7 neighborhoods.

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