

1 [Planning Code - Landmark Designation - Castro Rock Steam Baths]

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3 **Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate the Castro Rock Steam Baths,**
 4 **located at 578-582 Castro Street, Assessor's Parcel Block No. 2695, Lot No. 013, on the**
 5 **west side of Castro Street between 19th and 18th Streets, as a landmark consistent**
 6 **with the standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code; affirming the Planning**
 7 **Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and**
 8 **making public necessity, convenience, and welfare findings under Planning Code,**
 9 **Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority**
 10 **policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

11 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.
 12 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.
 13 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.
 14 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.
 15 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.
 16 **Asterisks (* * * *)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code
 17 subsections or parts of tables.

18 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

19 Section 1. Findings.

20 (a) Environmental and Land Use Findings.

21 (1) The Planning Department has determined that the Planning Code
 22 amendment proposed in this ordinance is subject to a Categorical Exemption from the
 23 California Environmental Quality Act (California Public Resources Code Sections 21000 et
 24 seq., hereinafter "CEQA") pursuant to Section 15308 of California Code of Regulations, Title
 25 14, Sections 15000 et seq., the Guidelines for implementation of the statute, for actions by
 regulatory agencies for protection of the environment (in this case, landmark designation).
 Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No.

1 _____ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board of Supervisors affirms
2 this determination.

3 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that
4 the proposed landmark designation of the Castro Rock Steam Baths will serve the public
5 necessity, convenience, and welfare for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation
6 Commission Resolution No. _____, recommending approval of the proposed
7 designation, which is incorporated herein by reference.

8 (3) The Board of Supervisors finds that the proposed landmark designation of
9 the Castro Rock Steam Baths is consistent with the General Plan and with Planning Code
10 Section 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No.
11 _____, which is incorporated herein by reference.

12 (b) General Findings.

13 (1) On October 21, 2025, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution No.
14 492-25, initiating landmark designation of the Castro Rock Steam Baths as a San Francisco
15 landmark pursuant to Section 1004.1 of the Planning Code. On October 24, 2025, the Mayor
16 approved the resolution. Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in
17 File No. 250843.

18 (2) Pursuant to Charter Section 4.135, the Historic Preservation Commission
19 has authority “to recommend approval, disapproval, or modification of landmark designations
20 and historic district designations under the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors.”

21 (3) The Landmark Designation Fact Sheet was prepared by Planning
22 Department Preservation staff. All preparers meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional
23 Qualification Standards for historic preservation program staff, as set forth in Code of Federal
24 Regulations Title 36, Part 61, Appendix A. The report was reviewed for accuracy and
25 conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

1 (4) The Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of January 21,
2 2026, reviewed Planning Department staff’s analysis of the historical significance of Castro
3 Rock Steam Baths set forth in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet dated January 21, 2026.

4 (5) On January 21, 2026, after holding a public hearing on the proposed
5 designation and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning
6 Department staff and the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet, the Historic Preservation
7 Commission recommended designation of the Castro Rock Steam Baths as a landmark
8 consistent with the standards set forth in Section 1004 of the Planning Code, by Resolution
9 No. _____. Said resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No.
10 _____.

11 (6) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that Castro Rock Steam Baths has a
12 special character and special historical, cultural, architectural, and aesthetic interest and
13 value, and that its designation as a landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the
14 standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code. In doing so, the Board hereby
15 incorporates by reference the findings of the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet.

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17 Section 2. Designation.

18 Pursuant to Section 1004.3 of the Planning Code, the Castro Rock Steam Baths,
19 located at 578-582 Castro Street, Assessor’s Parcel Block No. 2695, Lot No. 013, is hereby
20 designated as a San Francisco landmark consistent with the standards set forth in Section
21 1004. Appendix A to Article 10 of the Planning Code is hereby amended to include this
22 property.

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24 Section 3. Required Data.

1 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the landmark site consists of the
2 footprint of the building that housed the Castro Rock Steam Baths, located on Assessor's
3 Parcel Block No. 2695 Lot. No. 013, on the west side of Castro Street between 18th and 19th
4 Streets in San Francisco's Castro/Upper Market neighborhood, as shown in the Landmark
5 Designation Fact Sheet.

6 (b) The characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation are described and
7 shown in the Landmark Designation Fact Sheet and other supporting materials contained in
8 Planning Department Record Docket No. 2025-010437DES. In brief, Castro Rock Steam
9 Baths, located at 578-582 Castro Street is eligible for local designation for its early association
10 with the Castro as an LGBTQ enclave. Across the street from Harvey Milk's residence and
11 camera shop in San Francisco's Castro neighborhood, this Victorian building was home to
12 one of the city's longest-running bathhouses. Opened around 1933-1934 by Alex and Kathryn
13 Sergo, who lived upstairs in the building, the bathhouse was known as the Castro Baths and
14 later as the Castro Rock Steam Baths. The Castro Rock Steam Baths became an exclusively
15 gay bathhouse in the 1970s amidst the backdrop of the Castro neighborhood initially
16 establishing itself as an internationally recognized LGBTQ enclave. Bathhouses played an
17 important role in LGBTQ community development as relatively safe and private spaces for
18 queer men to meet. The Castro Steam Baths closed in 1977 due to arson, and never
19 reopened.

20 (c) The particular features that should be preserved, or replaced in kind as determined
21 necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the Landmark
22 Designation Fact Sheet, which can be found in Planning Department Record Docket No.
23 2025-010437DES, and which are incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully
24 set forth herein. Specifically, the features that are character-defining and shall be preserved or
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1 replaced in kind are the exterior elevations, form, massing, structure, rooflines, architectural
2 ornament, and materials of the property identified as:

- 3 (1) Three-story height;
- 4 (2) Full lot width, with southerly side setback at front;
- 5 (3) Wood construction;
- 6 (4) Gable roof hidden behind parapet;
- 7 (5) Full-height, squared, three-sided box-bay windows capped by gable roof;
- 8 (6) Elaborate wooden ornamentation, including geometric designs, rounded porch
9 supports, stickwork, bullseye detailing on panels around bay windows, and wide
10 bands of trim below the cornice;
- 11 (7) Elongated brackets at the cornice line extending down the building, aligned with
12 the side framing of box-bay windows and corner boards;
- 13 (8) Angled front stairway leading to landing with wooden railings and double entry
14 doors;
- 15 (9) Wood windows with ogee lugs;
- 16 (10) Ground level entryway.

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18 Section 4. Effective Date.

19 This ordinance shall become effective at 12:00 a.m. on the 31st day after enactment.
20 Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the ordinance
21 unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within 10 days of receiving it, or the Board of
22 Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

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24 APPROVED AS TO FORM:
25 DAVID CHIU, City Attorney

By: /s/ Peter Miljanich

PETER MILJANICH
Deputy City Attorney

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