

BOARD of SUPERVISORS



City Hall
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, Room 244
San Francisco 94102-4689
Tel. No. 554-5184
Fax No. 554-5163
TDD/TTY No. 554-5227

MEMORANDUM

TO: Alaric Degrafinried, Interim Director, Public Works
Tom Decaigny, Director of Cultural Affairs, Arts Commission

FROM: Erica Major, Assistant Clerk, Land Use and Transportation Committee

SUBJECT: LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

The Board of Supervisors' Land Use and Transportation Committee has received the following proposed legislation, introduced by Supervisor Haney on March 2, 2021:

File No. 210223

Resolution authorizing the placement of the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District Leather History Cruise plaques, to be installed on the sidewalks at various historic locations within and near the Cultural District in the area bounded by Brannon Street, Third Street, Mission Street, Twelfth Street and Division Street; and initiating the process set forth in Public Works Code, Sections 789 et seq., to provide for the creation of a program for and installation of commemorative plaques on the Leather History Cruise.

The proposed legislation is being transmitted pursuant to Public Works, Section 789.5 et seq. This matter is pending before the Land Use and Transportation Committee and will be scheduled for hearing upon receipt of your response.

Please forward your response to me at the Board of Supervisors, City Hall, Room 244, 1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, San Francisco, CA 94102 or by email at: Erica.Major@sfgov.org.

c: David Steinberg, Public Works
Jeremy Spitz, Public Works
John Thomas, Public Works
Lena Liu, Public Works
Susan Pontious, Arts Commission

1 [Commemorative Street Plaques - Historical Markers - LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District
2 Leather History Cruise]

3 **Resolution authorizing the placement of the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District**
4 **Leather History Cruise plaques, to be installed on the sidewalks at various historic**
5 **locations within and near the Cultural District in the area bounded by Brannon Street,**
6 **Third Street, Mission Street, Twelfth Street and Division Street; and initiating the**
7 **process set forth in Public Works Code, Sections 789 et seq., to provide for the**
8 **creation of a program for and installation of commemorative plaques on the Leather**
9 **History Cruise.**

10

11 WHEREAS, The LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District was created to preserve,
12 advance, and promote San Francisco's LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District as a local,
13 national, and international resource, and as a culturally and commercially enriched
14 neighborhood and district; and

15 WHEREAS, San Francisco's South of Market has been a local and world capital for
16 Leather culture since the 1960s, as well as one of the city's most significant and distinctive
17 LGBTQ neighborhoods since the 1950s, with a unique concentration of businesses,
18 institutions, organizations, events, individuals and artists that has been an integral part of the
19 City's cultural richness, economic prosperity, and historical significance; and

20 WHEREAS, South of Market had long been the west coast center for printing and
21 publishing, and most of San Francisco's gay and leather printers, typesetters, lithographers,
22 and publications were concentrated the South of Market, including Drummer magazine, the
23 most important national and international leather publication from 1975 to 1998; and

24 WHEREAS, After intensive police repression in the early 1960's drove gay businesses
25 from the Embarcadero, many began to flow into the South of Market, where suburbanization,

1 deindustrialization, and urban renewal had resulted in many vacant buildings, which became
2 occupied by gay bars, restaurants, and bathhouses; and

3 WHEREAS, South of Market quickly became one of San Francisco’s major LGBT
4 areas in which most of the city’s gay bathhouses were located, as were innumerable bars
5 catering to diverse populations such as lesbian bars the Hula Shack and the Baybrick Inn,
6 famous dance bars such as the Stud and the End-Up (featured in *Tales of the City*) and most
7 recently, the drag-focused Oasis; and

8 WHEREAS, The first gay leather bar in the South of Market, the Tool Box, became
9 world famous when a photo of its interior, with a massive mural painted by local artist Chuck
10 Arnett, was featured in a 1964 Life magazine article on “Homosexuality in America;” and

11 WHEREAS, South of Market became most identified with the emerging Leather
12 community in San Francisco when leather bars such as Fe-Be’s, the Ramrod, and the In
13 Between (now the site of the Powerhouse) opened along Folsom Street, starting the formation
14 of a distinctive leather neighborhood; and

15 WHEREAS, By the late 1960s Folsom Street had already acquired the nickname of
16 “The Miracle Mile” in maps and travel guides of San Francisco, codifying a leather character
17 that expanded dramatically throughout the 1970s, such that by 1980 there were at least forty
18 South of Market bars, baths, shops, and restaurants serving the leather population, and the
19 area had the largest and most dense concentration of leather institutions anywhere in the
20 world; and

21 WHEREAS, Much of leather social life was produced by the leather motor cycle clubs
22 and leather social organizations, which used the physical spaces, buildings, and streets South
23 of Market for their meetings, gatherings, and events, and which have engaged in long
24 traditions of raising funds for charitable causes; and

25

1 WHEREAS, Leather places and groups sparked an explosion of art and iconography,
2 much of it generated by dozens of artists and photographers and sculptors whose work
3 adorned the bars and baths and club insignia, and who were featured in galleries such as
4 Fey-Way, 544 Natoma, 80 Langton, and later, Mark I Chester's studio, as well as in the many
5 art shows that were regularly displayed on the walls of bars such as the Ambush and the
6 Eagle; and

7 WHEREAS, South of Market institutions and personnel were centrally involved in the
8 construction of political organizations such as the Tavern Guild, which helped mitigate the
9 routine police harassment of LGBTQ individuals and businesses, and give San Francisco its
10 current queer friendly politics and reputation; and

11 WHEREAS, During the AIDS epidemic, using the models of mutual aid practiced by the
12 motorcycle clubs, leathermen became leaders in combating the epidemic, established
13 institutions such as the AIDS Emergency Fund, and raised hundreds of thousands of dollars
14 to provide direct assistance for people with AIDS and HIV; and

15 WHEREAS, Sex educators and AIDS activists from the leather community developed
16 and effectively disseminated some of the earliest and most comprehensive safer sex
17 guidelines and practices; and

18 WHEREAS, Despite the consensus among public health professionals that the gay
19 bathhouses were opportunities to promote safer sex practices, the city was swayed by a
20 campaign that erroneously blamed the bathhouses for the AIDS epidemic, and adopted
21 regulations that effectively closed the existing bathhouses and sex clubs in San Francisco,
22 badly damaging the gay and leather economies located in South of Market and drastically
23 reducing the gay and leather presence in the neighborhood; and

24
25

1 WHEREAS, Since the 1960s, South of Market has experienced relentless pressure
2 from the urban renewal and redevelopment projects in and around the Moscone Center and
3 Yerba Buena Complex, which have displaced thousands of residents and small businesses in
4 favor of capital-intensive civic construction and private developments; and

5 WHEREAS, The Leather and LGBTQ presence South of Market continues to be
6 imperiled by the displacement caused by rising rents and land costs resulting from the
7 ongoing economic and physical reconstruction of much of South of Market, particularly the
8 current building boom of high-end housing and retail and the escalating competition for
9 commercial space; and

10 WHEREAS, Although the first Folsom Street Fair was founded in 1984 as a protest
11 against the impact of such redevelopment in the South of Market, the Folsom Street Fair
12 evolved into an annual event that is the largest celebration of leather sexuality in the world,
13 drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors to what has become a major international festival,
14 while the smaller and more local Up Your Alley Fair, begun as an AIDS fundraiser in 1985, is
15 also a major tourist destination, and both of these street fairs are vivid and cherished
16 expressions of the leather cultural character of the neighborhood; and

17 WHEREAS, The Western SOMA Citizens Planning Taskforce, established by the
18 Board of Supervisors in 2004, worked for almost a decade, consulting with multiple
19 stakeholders in the area in a collaborative planning process, to formulate a plan for
20 sustainable development that would enhance the existing neighborhood rather than destroy it,
21 and whose Western SOMA Community Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in
22 2013, also included proposals for a Filipino social heritage district (*Recognizing, Protecting
23 and Memorializing South of Market Filipino Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources*) and an
24 LGBTQ social heritage district (*Recognizing, Protecting and Memorializing South of Market
25 LGBTQ Social Heritage Neighborhood Resources*); and

1 WHEREAS, The importance of Leather and LGBTQ South of Market has been
2 recognized in the National Park Service LGBTQ Theme Study (*LGBTQ America: A Theme*
3 *Study of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History*), as well as in the *Citywide*
4 *Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History*, and the *South of Market Historic Context*
5 *Statement* of the San Francisco Planning Department; and

6 WHEREAS, The San Francisco Leather History Walk on Ringold Alley, and the Eagle
7 Plaza, are physical manifestations of the rich leather heritage of South of Market; and

8 WHEREAS, The following establishments represent historic locations important to the
9 communities represented by the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District,

10

11

Address	Street	Establishment
----------------	---------------	----------------------

12

399	4 th -	Tool Box
-----	-------------------	----------

13

520	4 th -	Trocadero Transfer
-----	-------------------	--------------------

14

374	5 th -	Hothouse
-----	-------------------	----------

15

161	6 th -	Animals
-----	-------------------	---------

16

224	6 th -	Mister B's Ball Room; The Warehouse; G.H. Express
-----	-------------------	---

17

240	6 th -	Labyris Auto Repair / The Buggery
-----	-------------------	-----------------------------------

18

336	6 th -	Taste of Leather
-----	-------------------	------------------

19

401	6 th -	The Endup
-----	-------------------	-----------

20

298	6 th -	The Gas Station; The Round Up; The Watering Hole
-----	-------------------	--

21

227	7 th -	Mister S Leather
-----	-------------------	------------------

22

280	7 th -	Folsom Street Warehouse Theatre; The Cave; Rawhide II; The
-----	-------------------	--

23

Rawhide/Club Rawhide/Club Hide

24

398	7 th -	The Line Up
-----	-------------------	-------------

25

164	8 th -	The Trench
-----	-------------------	------------

1	198	8 th -	Black & Blue
2	201	8 th -	Club Baths of San Francisco
3	289	8 th -	Hole in the Wall
4	154	9 th -	The Golden Rivet; The Rivet; The Bullet
5	201	9 th -	C'est Si Bon; Lipp's; The Pit/Cocktails; AsiaSF
6	282	9 th -	The Cake Gallery
7	365	9 th -	Francisco Civic Center Motel
8	367	9 th -	Brush Creek Media
9	385	9 th -	Baywood Motel; Ho Jin Inn
10	395	9 th -	Bay Area Reporter
11	399	9 th -	The Arena; The Stud
12	451	9 th -	Tattoo Works; Cliff Raven's Tattoo
13	288	10 th -	Bay Times
14	317-A	10 th -	A Taste of Leather/Mack
15	323	10 th -	Stompers Boots
16	353	10 th -	Capricorn Coffee
17	366	10 th -	The Best Impression
18	223	11 th -	Don Ramon's
19	278	11 th -	The Covered Wagon; Leatherneck; San Francisco Plunge/Dirty Sally's;
20			Drummer Key Club/Gold Coast Club; Dan's Compound; Oasis
21	314	11 th -	Transmission Theatre; Studio Z; Beatbox; Halcyon
22	375	11 th -	Chaps
23	367	12 th -	Service of Mankind Church
24	398	12 th -	S.F. Eagle
25	330		Ritch -Ritch Street Health Club; Club San Francisco/Club SF

1	527	Bryant -	527 Club; Chez Mollet
2	1010	Bryant -	The Bootcamp
3	715	Harrison -	Dreamland
4	933	Harrison -	Blow Buddies
5	975	Harrison -	Hotel Metropole; The Hotel; Hand Ball Express
6	1270	Harrison -	Canary Island Diner
7	1351	Harrison -	Ambush
8	1354	Harrison -	The Lone Star
9	285	Shipley -	Drummer Magazine; The Sentinel
10	875	Folsom -	Cowden Automotive
11	890	Folsom -	890 Folsom
12	960	Folsom -	Trading Post Emporium; A Taste of Leather
13	979	Folsom -	Hula Shack; South of the Slot Hotel
14	1015	Folsom -	Big Town; The Tubs; Sutro Bath House; Colossus; Product; 1015
15		Folsom	
16	1080	Folsom -	Alta Hotel; Folsom Street Hotel; Gay Rescue Mission; Sanctuary;
17		AIDS/ARC Residential Project	
18	1123	Folsom -	Stables; Double D Saloon and Grill; Julie's Supper Club
19	1127	Folsom -	Templar Hall
20	1147	Folsom -	Folsom Street Barracks; The Red Star Saloon
21	1190	Folsom -	Baybrick Inn
22	1216	Folsom -	Fakir Intensives
23	1225	Folsom -	The Ramrod; My Place; Chaps II
24	1229	Folsom -	Mark I. Chester Studio
25	1285	Folsom -	A Taste of Leather; Mack Folsom Prison

- 1 1347 Folsom - In-Between; Cow Palace Saloon; The Phoenix; The No Name; The
- 2 Bolt; The Brig; Powerhouse
- 3 1501 Folsom - Fe-Be's; Taste of Leather
- 4 1535 Folsom - The Stud
- 5 1582 Folsom - Hamburger Mary's
- 6 1600 Folsom - Brasserie; Castle Grand Bar & Restaurant
- 7 683 Clementina - Headquarters; Cat's Grill
- 8 744 Clementina - Church of the Secret Gospel/"The Church"
- 9 768 Clementina - Taylor of San Francisco
- 10 15 Harriet - Drummer Magazine
- 11 24 Howard - Sailor Boy Tavern
- 12 964 Howard - Best Hotel, Anxious Arms Hotel
- 13 1158 Howard - Worn Out West; Stormy Leather
- 14 1287 Howard - Fey-Way Studios
- 15 544 Natoma - 544 Natoma
- 16 953 Natoma - The Caldron
- 17 693 Mission - Mattachine Society; Daughters of Bilitis; Pan-Graphic Press;
- 18 Dorian Book Service Quarterly
- 19 1349 Mission - Center for Sex & Culture
- 20 1525 Mission - The Loading Dock
- 21 1198 Folsom - Thank you to supporting people and departments list

22

23 WHEREAS, The businesses and organizations identified and recognized by these

24 plaques represent a part of the extensive history of the Leather & LGBTQ Community in the

25 South of Market area of San Francisco; now, therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors accepts the aforementioned historical
2 marker commemorative plaques in honor of the historical landmarks located in the South of
3 Market area from the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District; and, be it

4 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with Public
5 Works Code, Section 789, et seq., the Commemorative Street Plaque Ordinance, authorizes
6 the placement of the aforementioned historical marker commemorative street plaques on the
7 sidewalk at the named locations; and, be it

8 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San
9 Francisco (“the Board”), consistent with San Francisco Public Works Code, Sections 789 et
10 seq., hereby establishes the LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District Leather History Cruise at
11 the locations designated herein, and initiates the process for the historical and cultural
12 reasons set forth herein; and, be it

13 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors declares its intent to initiate the
14 process in accordance with Public Works Code, Sections 789 et seq., the Commemorative
15 Street Plaque Ordinance, for installation of commemorative plaques on the Leather History
16 Cruise within said streets; and, be it

17 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors hereby urges the Arts
18 Commission to approve the design and the placement of the named commemorative plaques;
19 and, be it

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

23 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors directs the Department of
24 Public Works to add the aforementioned plaques at the aforementioned locations on the City’s
25

1 official list of commemorative sites effective immediately from the date of passage of this
2 Resolution.

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25