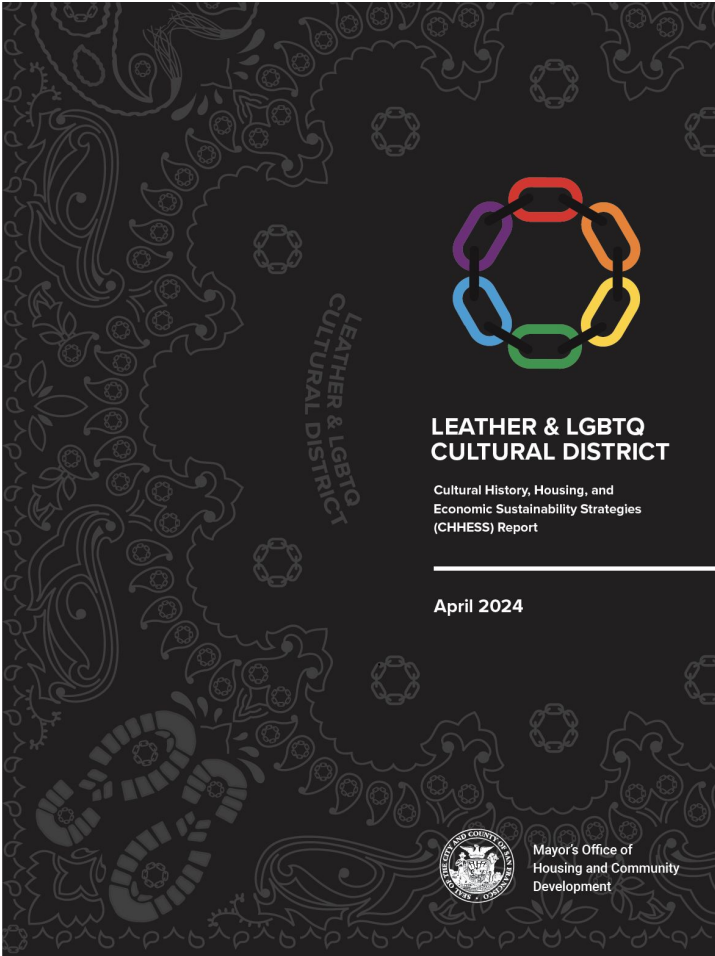


LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District Community History, Housing, and Economic Sustainability Strategies (CHHESS) Report

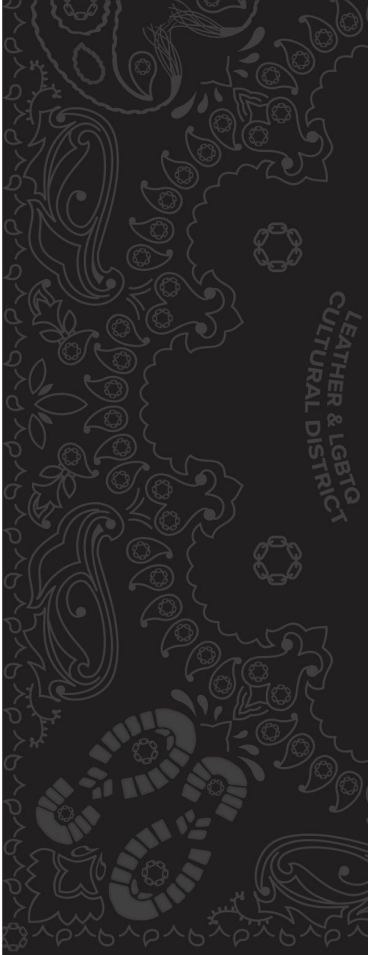
Presentation to the Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors

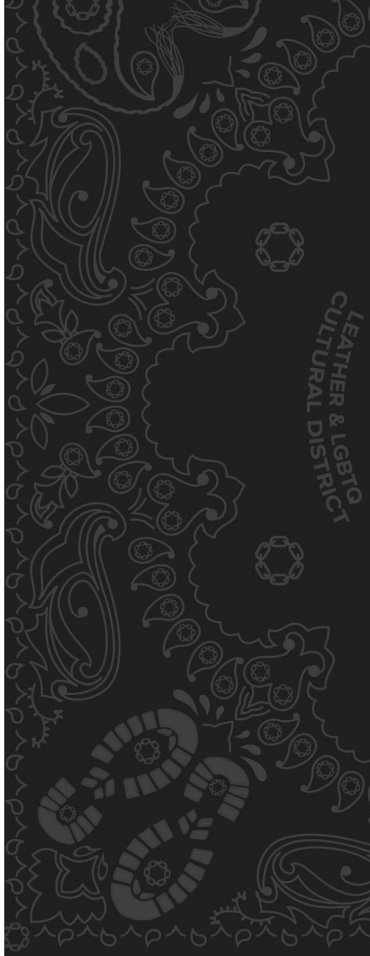


Thursday, June 13, 2024

SAN FRANCISCO'S CULTURAL DISTRICTS

- Purpose: to celebrate and strengthen the unique cultural identities of San Francisco
- Goal: better coordinate resources to assist in stabilizing vulnerable communities facing a rapidly changing City
- Strategy: Through a formalized collaborative partnership between the City and communities





Cultural History, Housing and Economic Sustainability Strategies Report

- A roadmap to community stabilization

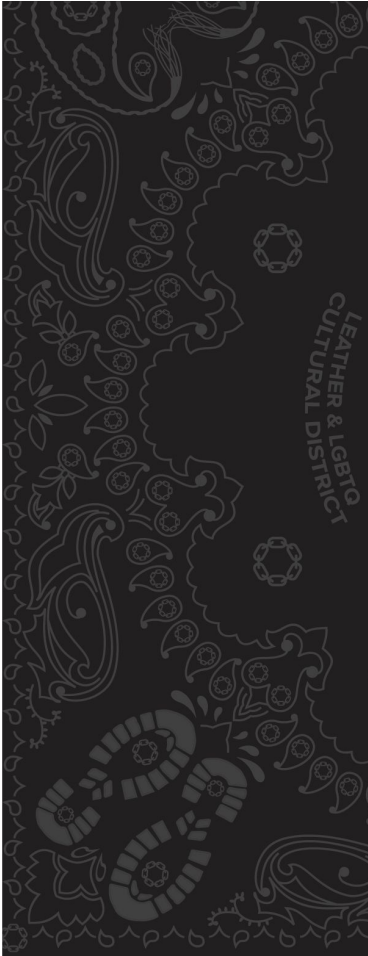
**“United, we preserve, enhance,
and advocate for the continuity
and vitality of the Kinky and
Queer communities of San
Francisco’s LEATHER & LGBTQ
Cultural District.”**

Leather & LGBTQ history in SoMa

- Initially located along the Embarcadero
- 1950's - Displaced by police
- 1954 - Publishers and orgs locate here
- 1962 - Leather culture moves to SoMa
 - The Tool Box bar opens
- 1966 - 1st Leather Bar on Folsom
 - FeBe's opens
 - The Miracle Mile begins
- Late 1970s - One of the world's most densely occupied Leather neighborhoods

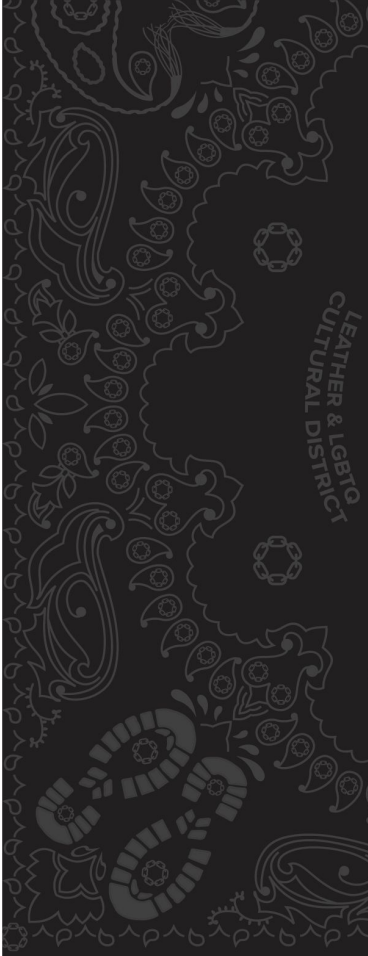


Photo Credit: Henri Leleu Bar Photographs Collection (1997-13), Courtesy of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.



Leather & LGBTQ history in SoMa

- The Redevelopment Agency of the City and County of San Francisco (SFRA) marked large portions of SoMa for redevelopment in the 1950s and 60s
- Redevelopment was opposed by residents and businesses
- Thousands displaced
- 1984 - Folsom Street Fair launched to oppose redevelopment
 - The fair showed SoMa as vibrant not blighted
 - Now one of the most iconic Leather events in the world
 - 200,000+ attend annually from around the world



The LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District

- Created in May 2018 by the Board of Supervisors and the Mayor
- Governed by a Board of Directors
- Full time staff of two
- Programs and initiatives include monthly street fairs, murals, public art, walking tours, business advocacy, support for: community organizations, artists & performers

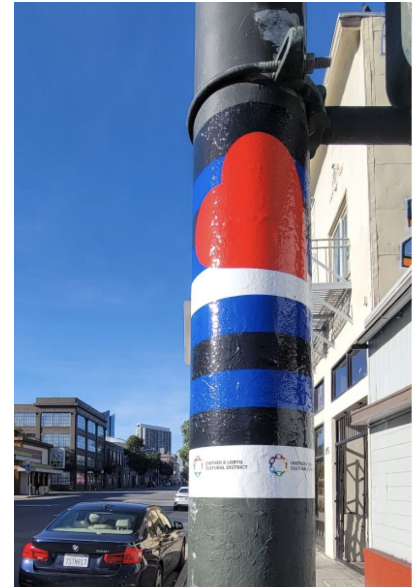


Photo Credit: Bob Goldfarb



The LEATHER & LGBTQ Cultural District

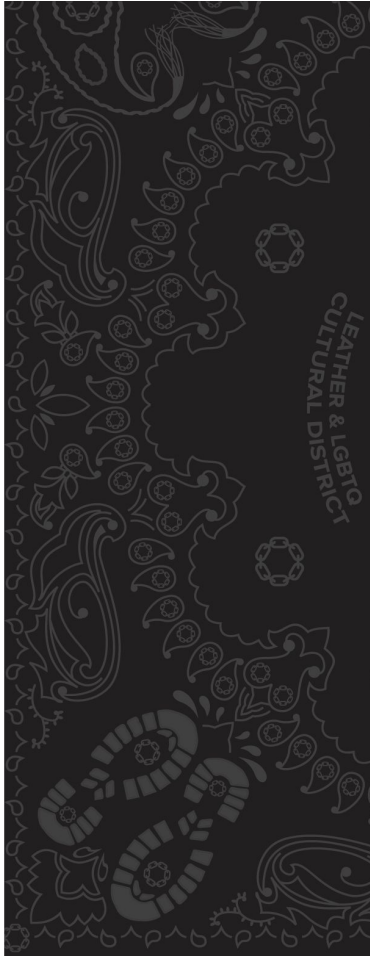
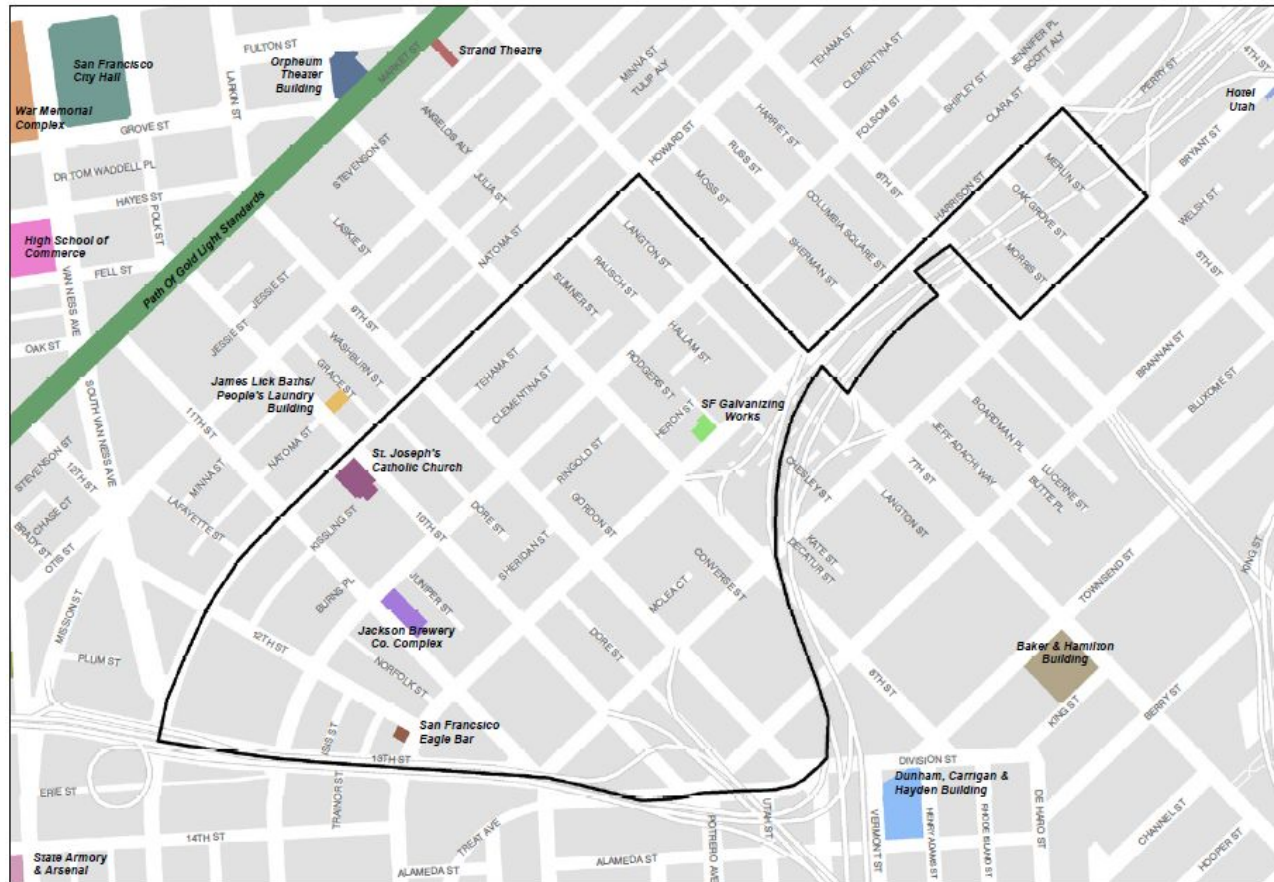
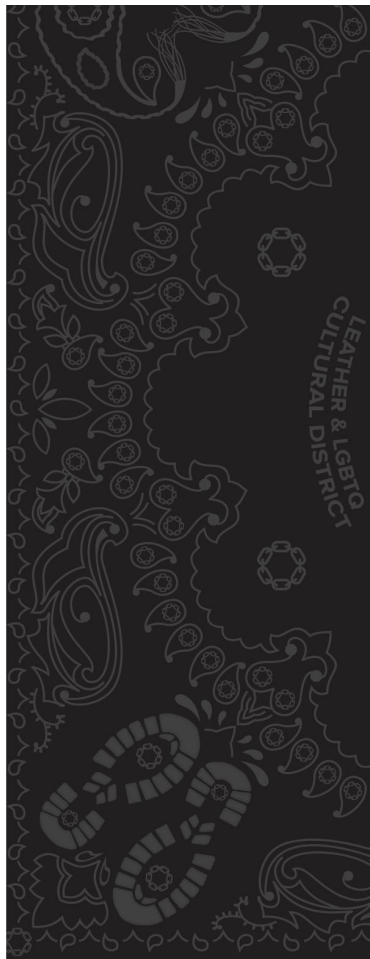


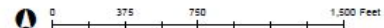
Photo Credit: Fire Dragon Photo

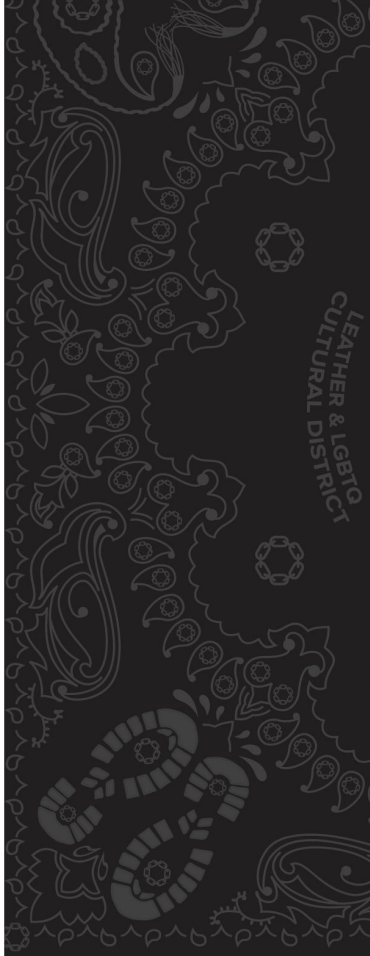


Photo Credit: Gooch



Leather & LGBTQ Cultural District: Landmarks
SAN FRANCISCO



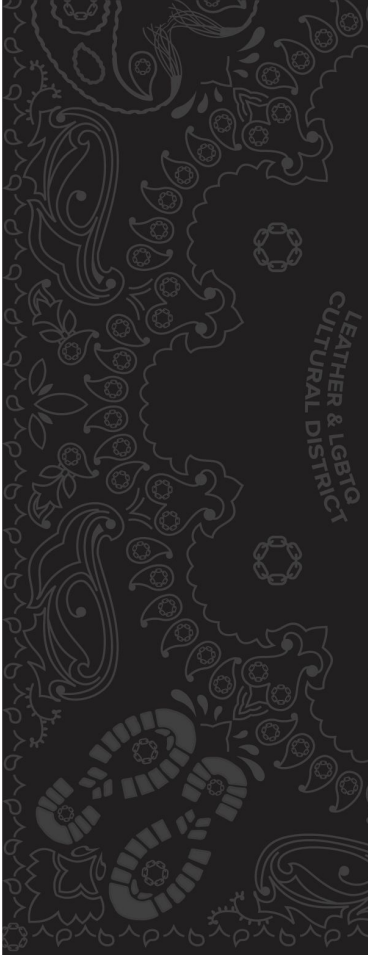


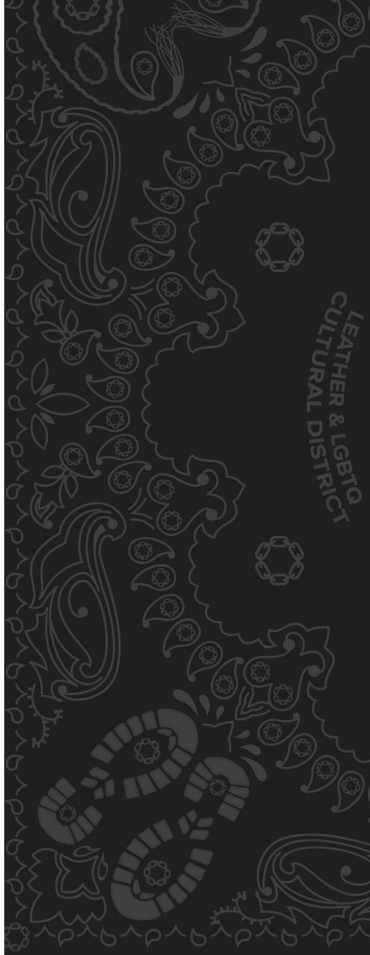
The importance of Leather and LGBTQ community in San Francisco

- Leather and LGBTQ culture has become an integral part of San Francisco's fabric
- A symbol of the city's legendary acceptance & tolerance
- The Folsom Street & Up Your Alley Fairs
 - Draw hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world
 - Gain the City worldwide press coverage
 - Fill our hotels city-wide annually
- Our communities include all demographics

Community engagement methods

- Interviews with community and organizational leaders
- Eight focus groups:
 - BIPOC community members
 - Transgender community members
 - Women community members
 - Sex workers
 - Arts and culture
 - Economic vitality
 - Kink and Leather
 - Tenants' rights
- Two surveys, disseminated in the District's newsletter and other social media and at the Folsom Street Fair





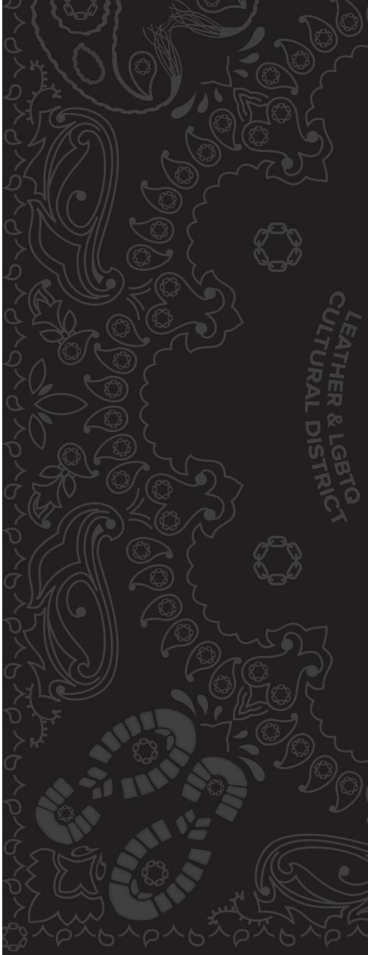
Challenges faced by the city's Leather and LGBTQ communities

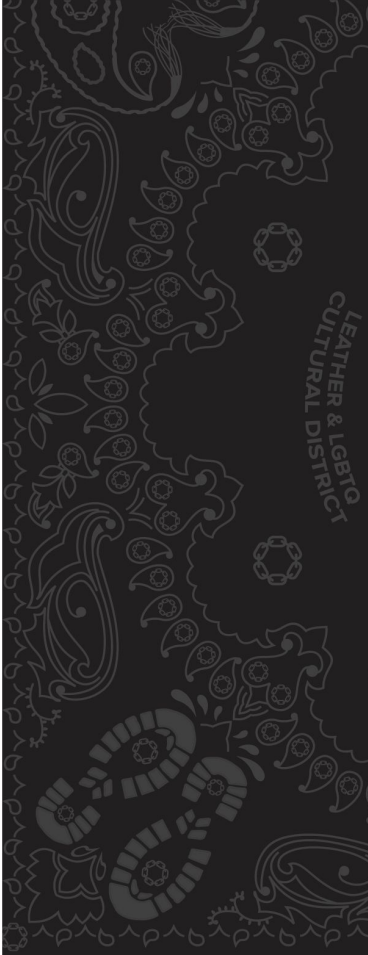
1. Many important Leather and LGBTQ spaces within SoMa have closed within the past several decades, primarily from rising rents and development pressure.
2. Leather and LGBTQ culture—and especially kink practices—remain in many ways misunderstood by wider society.
3. The cost of living in SoMa, as in many other San Francisco neighborhoods, has become prohibitively expensive for many community members to live there.
4. Business owners and organizations face difficulty opening spaces within the District.
5. Leather and LGBTQ community members expressed feeling unsafe at times in SoMa.

Strategies in the report

Strategies are broken into six categories:

1. **Historic and cultural preservation:** Researching, teaching, and preserving Leather and LGBTQ culture.
2. **Land use:** Shaping community through the built environment
3. **Tenant empowerment and eviction protection:** Fostering housing access and innovation
4. **Arts and culture:** Facilitating public art, sustaining nightlife, and diversifying event offerings
5. **Economic and workforce development:** Resourcing Leather and LGBTQ businesses, events, and community members
6. **Cultural competency:** Cultivating understanding and appreciation





CHHESS Contributors

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